

Article

Civility and Civil Religion before and after the French Revolution: Religious and Secular Rituals in Hume and Tocqueville

Spyridon Tegos 

Department of Philosophy and Social Studies, University of Crete, 74100 Rethymnon, Greece; tegos@uoc.gr or spyridon.tegos@gmail.com

Received: 3 February 2020; Accepted: 2 April 2020; Published: 10 April 2020



Abstract: In his critique of religion, Hume envisages forms of religious ritual disconnected from the superstitious “neurotic” mindset; he considers simple rituals fostering moderation. In this paper, I claim that one can profitably interpret Hume’s obsession with secular rituals, such as French highly ceremonial manners, in the sense of anxiety-soothing institutions that bind citizenry without the appeal to a civil religion, properly speaking. Let us call this path the Old Regime’s civil ritualism”. Overall, Tocqueville conceives rituals in a Humean spirit, as existential anxiety-soothing institutions. Moving beyond the Humean line of thought, he focuses on the ambiguous role of religious rituals in the context of democratic faith and the Christian civil religion that he deems appropriate for the US. Yet, he also detects novel forms of superstition firmly embedded in secular, democratic faith.

Keywords: religious rituals; secular rituals; profane rituals; democratic faith; civil religion; civility; moderation

1. Introduction

The relation between religion and politics can be conceived in three different ways. One is in terms of strict separation that goes in theory even beyond the separation of the church and the state. This seems to be a common thread in the history of liberalism. Liberals of various stripes agree on the threat that religion poses for a peaceful civic life because even moderate forms of religion easily veer off course and become intolerant. The other two options, theocracy, the supremacy of religion over the state, and civil religion, the supremacy of the state over religion, are considered illiberal scenarios. Yet civil religion projects have historically been associated with liberal projects. In the history of early modern political thought and philosophy ranging from Machiavelli to Rousseau through Spinoza, Bayle, and Hobbes, civil religion critically appropriates the pagan legacy and chiefly refers to “the civilizing/civicizing of religion—the domestication of religion for political purposes.” (Beiner 2012, p. 419) providing “... much of the glue that binds together a society through well-established symbols, rituals, celebrations, places, and values endowing the society with an overarching sense of spiritual unity ...” (McClay 2010, p. vii). The instrumentalization of religion can generate unintended consequences though—as the sacralization of the state and the nation from the 19th century onwards has bitterly proved. Dreams of national world-historic destiny or the doctrine of the chosen people bear witness of a disastrous path of ideological instrumentalization far beyond the early modern secularization projects (Weed and Heyking 2010). This powerful reminder of civil religion’s dangers vindicates the liberal project to liberate human society from the yoke of *any* form of religious dogmatism. Undeniably a founding father of liberalism, Hume’s subtle assessment of religion and its function in human nature are often overshadowed by his infamous atheism. However, the evolution of his thought betrays a civil religion strand in his thought; Hume thinks that religious rituals can be domesticated if

dissociated from other liturgical and ecclesiastical elements. Reading Tocqueville gives the impression that civil religion and liberalism are not entirely distinct intellectual traditions. There is a liberal civil religion (Beiner 2012, p. 418). Moreover, there is a liberal Christian civil religion insofar as Tocqueville argues that the separation of the church and state are not only compatible but reinforce a genuine Christian civil religion for democratic times. In a post-French revolution context, Tocqueville touches tangentially upon the issue of religious rituals; democratic taste abhors rituals as well as any sign of highly hierarchical and formalized expressions of faith. However, democratic faith needs structuring forces to sustain itself. In the history of liberalism, Hume and Tocqueville unprecedentedly converge in elevating the status of rituals, Tocqueville emphasizing Christian simple rituals while Hume opts for a blend of religious rituals and rituals of civility. In this latter case, Hume more than Tocqueville constitutes an interesting moment in the civilizing process exposed by Norbert Elias in his famous history of manners. Recorded by manuals of civility from the Renaissance onwards, the history of civility in Europe rests on a development of self-control of bodily functions and the expression of emotions (table manners, sexual impulses, and desire for revenge) (Elias 1978, pp. 51–219). Hume gives an original twist in this civilizing process regarding rituals of civility. During the Enlightenment rituals came to imply “insincerity and empty formality, the very antithesis of the Enlightenment values ...”. (Muir 2005, p. 294), He puts emphasis on the secular rites of manners.

What concerns Hume when he writes about religion? To what problems was he responding to? In the context of the pre-industrial booming market economy of early modern Scotland, Hume is an idiosyncratic proponent of the European Enlightenment built on commerce and the birth of consumerism alongside “French manners and English liberty”, as Pocock (1999, p. 20) acutely synthesizes. The main issue remains the catastrophic potential of religious zealotry. The Scottish Enlightenment is conceived as a bulwark against religious fanaticism that caused such bloodshed throughout the wars of religion and the English civil war. And what about Tocqueville? In a post-French revolution context, the triumph of industrial capitalism and the subsequent huge transformations in the social fabric and culture lead to the emergence of the masses in global history. Tocqueville thinks religion can play a key moral and political role provided that concessions will be made to mass democracy and its irreducible materialism. Religion needs to be remodeled and to a certain extent revived by transforming itself into a civil religion with special emphasis on rituals.

The first point I want to make in this paper is that Hume and Tocqueville converge in emphasizing the cultural and psychological relevance of rituals. Even if we side with Hume in rejecting as misguided any project of civilizing religion for civic purposes, the anxiolytic function of rituals goes beyond the religious dimension and gains prominence more as a cultural asset than a spiritual token. Regardless of the extent to which this position contributes to the secularization process, Tocqueville makes the case even stronger by fusing elements of Protestantism and Catholicism based on simple but irreducible rituals and turning them into indispensable components of a civilized democratic public sphere. The key role of rituals in this watered-down version of Christianity goes often unnoticed. The second point I want to stress regards the problem of authority. Both authors shift the attention to religious and secular rituals in order to preserve a sense of unassailable auctoritas amidst modernity’s demystifying tendencies. Rituals bolster mild religious or secular authority stripped of its traditionalist, sclerotic hierarchical elements. The disenchantment of the world should not eliminate an even vague sense of sacredness to which religious rituals and rituals of civility allude to.

In this paper, first I assess Hume’s critique of religious ritual then I shift the focus, mainly to the *History of England*, on the positive role of ceremonies in popular, e“false” religions. Subsequently, I address the issue of profane rituals. In this vein, I revisit some early Humean texts such as the letter of 1734 on politeness and the *Essay on Chivalry* regarding the importance of secular rituals in the civilizing process—hints of a Humean philosophy of symbolic order—before turning to a crucial historical practice for Hume, i.e., French politeness and its ritualized nature in the Old Regime.

In the second part, I turn to Tocqueville and I first examine his idiosyncratic analysis of the interaction between Protestantism and Catholicism in the US, revolving around the status of rituals.

Tocqueville's emphasis on faith communities with solid liturgical backgrounds for the moral regulation of modern republics goes against the grain of standard republican narratives. He also challenges the core of most narratives about secularization in modernity. In the second section of this part, I further scrutinize Christian civil religion and Tocqueville's interpretation of the modern public spirit and patriotism. In this context, the novel forms of superstition attached to the majority's credos and deference to its authority loom large. Modern civility, in Tocqueville's approach, rests heavily on secular faith and Christian civil religion that bring about a blend of ancient and novel rituals, some of which are charged with superstitious and crypto-despotic elements. Finally, I scrutinize the common ground in the liberalism of Hume and Tocqueville alongside the differences regarding the civilizing role of a ritual-based culture for a stable social order.

2. Hume on the Role of Religious and Secular Rituals in Modern Civility

2.1. *The Critique of Religious Rituals in Hume*

According to Hume, religion has a practical mission: even in its rudest forms, religion's function is to soothe fears of unknown causes (Hume 2007, chp. 3). To put it bluntly: more than anything else, it is a form of collective psychotherapy. This can be achieved through the poetic and symbolic imagination that invents ways to depict anthropomorphically invisible powers and establish a connection with them. Hume believes that "vulgar apprehension", in rude and civilized contexts (Berry 2018, pp. 102–3), cannot bypass any "sensible representation" of the divine that is "status, images, pictures" (Hume 2007, chp. 5). The privileged path for establishing worship is to avoid abstraction.

Rituals can better organize the direct relationship with a deity or deities and better assume the principal trait of religion as a collective practice. At this point, the vital function of ritual emerges: "[the faithful] considers not, that the most genuine method of serving the Divinity is by promoting the happiness of his creatures. He still looks for some more immediate service of the Supreme Being, in order to allay these terrors, with which he is haunted" (Hume 2007, pp. 14, 81). To be sure, adherence to ritual is self-defeating. As no sure indication of God's intentions can ever be established, "new strains of adulation" (Hume 2007, chp. 6) have to be invented. The faithful become obsessed with ceremonial observances ending up in a religious melancholy: the faithful become "trapped in a neurotic loop" (Lemmens 2011, p. 227).

However, this is not Hume's last word on rituals. Although inherently linked to superstition, rituals are collective practices deeply embedded in the human symbolic order, without which human culture seems inconceivable. Can we envisage forms of religious ritual disconnected from the superstitious "neurotic loop", that is, inconspicuous rituals fostering moderation'?

2.2. *Simple Religious Rituals: A Remedy to Superstition?*

Doubtless, the "bad influence of popular religions on morality" (Hume 2007, p. 14) can be detected throughout Hume's oeuvre. However, there are instances of an opposite attitude regarding "corrupted" religions, as if there were forces within vulgar religions that can alleviate yet not neutralize superstition.

In the *History of England (1754–1761)*, Hume unambiguously states that "there must be an ecclesiastical order, and a public establishment of religion in every civilized community" to counter the "natural tendency to pervert the true [religion], by infusing into it a strong mixture of superstition, folly, and delusion" (Hume 1983, vol. III, pp. 135–36; Mossner 1980, pp. 306–7). He also asserts, "The proper Office of Religion is to reform Men's Lives, to purify their Hearts, to inforce all moral Duties, & to secure Obedience to the Laws and civil Magistrate. While it pursues these useful Purposes, its Operations, tho infinitely valuable, are secret & silent; and seldom come under the Cognizance of History" (my italics). It is telling that Hume removed this preface to the second volume of the *History of England*, mentioning the "simple, unadorned" worship that should be offered to the "infinite mind, the author of the universe . . . without rites, institutions, ceremonies . . ." (Mossner 1980, pp. 306–7).

However, with few exceptions, scholars rarely focus on the practicalities of such “humanization” of conduct. Diverting the attention of believers from less fearful images to more joyful incarnations of the sacred (Hanley 2013) can be an object of serious consideration as Hume shifts the emphasis to the “nature of incarnate symbols” (Siebert 1995, pp. 486–87) in his later work. More to the point, the importance of the incarnate symbols for the vulgar and the refined mind alike (with very few exceptions) seems to preoccupy Hume; the situation unfolds *as if certain ceremonies properly managed can neutralize the superstitious element*. To be sure, this remains a matter of degree, not of nature.

By and large, Hume’s attitude on the importance of ceremonies for religious moderation seems to have evolved from the essay on superstition and enthusiasm to the *History of England*. In the essay “Of Superstition and Enthusiasm”, the psychological basis of superstition lies in this “gloomy and melancholic disposition” or even squarely in “ill health” or accidents that debase the human mind and sink it into phobic syndromes: real or imaginary enemies dominate human life¹ (Hume 1987, p. 74). On the other hand, enthusiasm seems more innocent and less prone to the servile and self-debasing spirit of Catholics. By contrast, superstitious behavior, routinely associated with Catholicism, cultivates servility and dependence—“an enemy to civil liberties”—and is conducive to institutionalized obsequiousness. Indeed, ceremonies are often linked to expiation from odious crimes committed in order to fulfill frivolous duties to God² (Streminger 1989).

Yet, in the course of the *History of England* Hume seems to partly revise this opinion. He ended up opting for a “happy medium” between the superstition of “Romish worship” on the one hand, and the enthusiasm of Protestantism on the other; this hybrid style of worship in which “ceremonies, become venerable from age and preceding use, were retained”. On several occasions (Hume 1983, vol. III, p. 95, vol. IV, p. 12 and broadly vol. V, p. 46), often related to Puritans or Scottish Calvinists, he insists on the importance of superstitious ceremonies for the culture of tolerance and the countering of persecution. The emphasis is laid on the abovementioned sensible form of any mediation or ritual³ (Hume 1983, vol. V, p. 460). Hume regularly discusses the negative stance of Protestant sects towards rituals. Thus, he insists on the more benign role of superstition compared to enthusiasm (Siebert 1995, pp. 486–87). In the *History of England*, King James seems fully aware of the dangers related to the “gloomy disposition” of the sectaries and the introduction of rituals supposedly fulfills the role of g-“humanizing” enthusiastic behavior⁴ (Hume 1983, vol. V, p. 46). According to Hume, “an invisible spiritual intelligence is an object too refined for vulgar apprehension, men naturally affix it to some sensible representation” (Hume 1983, vol. V, p. 49). Comparatively speaking, a moderate, church

¹ Essays 74: “As these enemies are entirely invisible and unknown, the methods that taken to appease them are equally unaccountable, and consists in ceremonies, observances, mortifications, sacrifices, presents, or in any practice, however absurd or frivolous, which either folly or knavery recommends to a blind and terrified credulity.”

² (Streminger 1989): “Because they feel that their moral acts are plainly natural, they have to find something that is done for God’s sake: rites, ceremonies, and, sometimes, oppression and annihilation of other people.”

³ (Hume 1983, V, p. 460): ‘Whatever ridicule, to a philosophical mind, may be thrown on pious ceremonies, it must be confessed, that, during a very religious age, no institution can be more advantageous to the rude multitude, and tend more to mollify that fierce and gloomy spirit of devotion, to which they are subject. Even the English church, though it had retained a share of popish ceremonies, may justly be thought too naked and adorned, and still to approach too near the abstract and spiritual religion of the Puritans. Laud and his associates, by reviving a few primitive institutions...corrected the error of the first reformers and presented to the affrightened and astonished mind, some sensible, exterior observances, which might occupy it during its religious exercises, and abate the violence of its disappointed efforts. The thought, no longer bent on that divine and mysterious essence, so superior to the narrow capacities of mankind, was able...to relax itself in the contemplation of pictures, postures, vestments, buildings.’

⁴ (Hume 1983, vol. V, p. 46): ‘The mind, straining for these extraordinary raptures, reaching them by short glances, sinking again under its own weakness, rejecting all exterior aid of pomp and ceremony, was so occupied in this inward life, that it fled from every intercourse of society, and from every cheerful amusement, which could soften or humanize the character. It was obvious to all discerning eyes, and had not escaped the king’s, that, by the prevalence of fanaticism, a gloomy and sullen disposition established itself among the people; a spirit, obstinate and dangerous; independent and disorderly; animated equally with a contempt of authority, and a hatred to every other mode of religion, particularly to the Catholic. In order to mellow these humours, James endeavoured to infuse a small tincture of ceremony into the national worship, and to introduce such rites as might, in some degree, occupy the mind, and please the senses, without departing too far from that simplicity ...’

establishment (Jordan 2002) is preferable to a plurality of fanatical sects. This comes at a cost: moderate but still superstitious rituals⁵. It is not, therefore, an exaggeration to claim that Hume's late work is concerned with the "nature of incarnate symbols" such as "images of religion and art intertwined" within moral and cultural life (Siebert 1995, p. 487).

It is telling that in one of his countless references to the "violent enthusiasm" of Protestant sects in *the History of England* VI, Hume dwells extensively on the socio-psychological profile of the Quakers; in this context, he draws a parallel between their rebuttal of ceremonies, a common trait among Protestant sectaries, and their rejection of polite formalism, which he deems hypocritical. It is worth quoting in length,

All the forms of ceremony, invented by pride and ostentation, Fox and his disciples, from a superior pride and ostentation, carefully rejected: Even the ordinary rites of civility were shunned, as the nourishment of carnal vanity and self-conceit. They would bestow no titles of distinction: The name of friend was the only salutation, with which they indiscriminately accosted every one. To no person would they make a bow, or move their hat, or give any signs of reverence. Instead of that affected adulation, introduced into modern tongues, of speaking to individuals as if they were a multitude, they returned to the simplicity of ancient languages; and thou and thee were the only expressions, which, on any consideration, they could be brought to employ.

—(Hume 1983, vol. VI, p. 97)

In his analysis of the Quakers, Hume pushes the dissection of Puritan psychology a bit further and seems to suggest that religious rituals and social rituals such as polite language are intertwined and belong to the same cultural order and, in a certain way, are co-substantial in the civilizing process. Taking a step further, Hume also turns his attention to profane rituals that retain the anxiety-soothing character of religious rituals.

3. Secular Rituals: The Importance of the Symbolic Order in the History of Civility

3.1. Profane Rituals: Secularization or Irreducible Religiosity?

In a series of insightful papers⁶, Herman De Dijn has carefully examined the relationship between profane and sacred symbols and rituals in Hume's social and moral philosophy. According to his line of interpretation, Hume often ridicules religious rituals while he makes plenty of room for apparently equally absurd profane, mainly legal, ceremonies. The reason for this double standards rests on a clear-cut divide between sacred and profane rituals (De Dijn 2003, p. 64). De Dijn draws attention to the positive evaluation of secular rituals and symbols such as legal rituals or promises, the operation of which is comparable for Hume with "transubstantiation or holy orders"⁷ (De Dijn 2003, p. 64; Hume 1987, p. 200). Hume underlines the importance of some profane symbols and ceremonies, mainly legal, for the well-being of society. In the *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Hume 1998, pp. 193–95), he asserts that legal rituals concerning property and status play a salutary role in the regulation of secular, ordinary life. Although equally absurd, legal ceremonies, in sharp contrast with superstitious religious rituals, serve the "interest and happiness of human society: But there is an immense difference between superstition and justice, that the former is frivolous, useless, and burdensome; the latter is absolutely requisite to the well-being of society."⁸ (Hume 1998, p. 94). De Dijn rightly insists upon the criteria of distinction between sacred and profane rituals: in the second *Enquiry*, Hume rejects religious ceremonies on the grounds of rigidity and futility. By contrast, customs related to property and justice

⁵ Regarding religion's benign role in 'every civilized society' see (Costelloe 2004).

⁶ (De Dijn 2003, 2012).

⁷ (De Dijn, *ibid.* pp. 63–64); (Hume 1985, p. 200).

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 94.

are both necessary and beneficial. The cultural preservation of society is often warranted through symbolic systems that “are not as rigid and closed and, therefore, as dangerous as the religions Hume subjects to criticism.”⁹

This raises, of course, the issue of the importance of taboos and broadly of cultural symbolic order in the moral life of a secularized society. Religious ceremonies such as burial rituals or wedding celebrations may deeply influence even the life of atheists while ceremonies are indulged in without any expectation of divine intervention¹⁰ (De Dijn 2003, pp. 65–66). The thesis I wish to defend is that the practice of ritualized manners is deemed necessary for the “well-being of society” in the sense of transcending social disharmonies and assuaging conflicts. And this idea seems to captivate Hume’s attention from a very early stage. To those early thoughts on the importance of ceremonial manners, I now turn.

3.2. *The Letter of 1734 on Politeness and the Essay on Chivalry: Early Thoughts on the Importance of Secular Rituals in the Civilizing Process*

Hume’s letter¹¹ addressed to Chevalier Ramsay regards the difference between the French and English expressions of politeness: “politeness” has become so “conspicuous” in France that “it is not only” a common feature among the high but the low, inasmuch as the Porters and coachmen (which were commonly described as the worst mannered brutes) “are civil.” The young Hume was clearly impressed by the fact that these vulgar men are “not only” polite towards “Gentlemen but likewise among themselves.” Although he admits that “the little niceties of the French behavior” can be described as “troublesome and impertinent”, they “serve to polish the ordinary kind of people and prevent rudeness and brutality”. Hume even goes beyond criticizing Addison’s or Shaftesbury’s legacy on the “politeness of the heart” (Langford 2002, pp. 311–31). The importance of politeness resides in its *social function*: “men insensibly soften towards each other” while they practice outward ceremonies and “the mind pleases itself by the progress it makes in such trifles”, turning into an actual inclination to be polite. Hume’s bold thesis consists in asserting that the French are more polite because they scrupulously respect the *ceremony* of politeness, “these outwards Deferences & Ceremonies.” (Hume 1932, p. 21).

Likewise, in another of his early texts on “Chivalry and Modern Honour”, the young Hume dissects the psychology of chivalric manners and, more broadly, modern honor (Mossner 1947, p. 60). Rehearsing obsessively trivial moves is the core of much of chivalric ceremonies¹². Hume emphasizes the civilizing role of these ceremonies that regulate social behavior. Quite forcefully, ritualized behavior is considered a crucial operator of civility both in the institutions of religion and politeness.

The gothic rudeness of manners, the unrefined notion of honor proper to chivalry, was conducive to an extravagant, fictitious conception of romantic love and bravery as intrinsically linked. The rituals of single combat, “tilts and tournaments” became social practice thanks to their “outmost civility” (Mossner 1947, p. 60). Here again, Hume does not fail to recall the obvious religious overtones of these rituals of civility. Indeed, Hume asserts that “... a Mistress is as necessary to a cavalier or Knight-Errant as a God or Saint to a Devotee” (Mossner 1947, p. 60).

⁹ (De Dijn 2012, p. 17). In another paper, [Response to Richard Hodgson, “The Natural History of Religion in Hume and Baron d’Holbach” (19 July 2011—Old College, Lecture Theatre)] De Dijn perspicuously remarks: “He seems to be the first, or among the first, together with Gianbattista Vico and Montesquieu, to pay attention to characteristics of human life which will be theorized about only much later by cultural anthropologists, more particularly the immersion of morality in culture. From our present perspective, one can regret two things. First, that Hume does not seem to apply his insights as to the importance of symbol and ritual or ceremony to the link between morality and culture. He does not sufficiently attend to the degree in which morality as a whole is pervaded by symbol and ritual; and this independently of the fact whether it is the morality of a religious or a secularized society. The morality even of secularized individuals, living today or in the 18th century, is strongly characterized by all sorts of moral taboos.”

¹⁰ (De Dijn 2012, pp. 65–66).

¹¹ David Hume to Michael Ramsay, 12 September 1734 (Hume 1932, pp. 19–21).

¹² (Mossner 1947, p. 60): “... Your Devotees feel their devotion increase by the Observance of trivial Superstitions, as Sprinkling, Kneeling, Crossing &c, so men insensibly soften towards each other in the practice of these Ceremonies.”

In his essays and his correspondence, Hume had, after all, gone against the grain of British (including Scottish) moralizing by extolling French manners. Gallantry is one instance of a broader test of civility: treating the powerless as powerful, idem the elder as young, the woman, the foreigner¹³, or the ambassador in foreign countries as if they were in a superior position when, in reality, they suffer physical or social weakness and inferiority. This is the crucial test of the progress of civilization: accommodating the powerless in a non-violent way while acknowledging the established social and political status quo¹⁴.

4. Civil Religion in America: Religious and Secular Rituals in Tocqueville

Realistically, according to Hume, vulgar minds will always be in need of religious beliefs and rituals, unfortunately mostly superstitious, to dispel everyday anxieties. In a Humean context, the fading of traditionally conceived public spirit gives way to early modern civility and its rituals. The extent to which this ritualistic civility remains a civil religion of a kind, given the religious overtones surrounding secular rituals, is matter for speculation. Be this as it may, ritualistic civility also enhances the fading civil auctoritas in commercial society.

Tocqueville shows special interest in the status of religion in modern democracies. In *Democracy in America* (Tocqueville 2010), he pays particular attention to religion's crucial role as a check (Kahan 2015) to democracy's individualist and materialist tendencies. He also emphasizes the quest of authority in democratic times, and the subsequent importance of Catholicism as an organized religion that, given its declared abstention from political involvement and respect of the separation between church and state, becomes a civil religion and gains influence in providing solid, coherent responses regarding transcendence within the atmosphere of democratic relativism.

4.1. Protestantism, Catholicism, and Rituals in America

In the chapter "Of religion as a political institution, how it serves powerfully to maintain the democratic republic among Americans", Tocqueville famously asserts that Americans are in possession of a Christian civil religion, more precisely a "Christianity that I cannot portray better than by calling it democratic and republican" (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 130). The status of this civil religion takes on a somehow idiosyncratic form. It is captured nicely in one of Tocqueville's letters to Count De Kergolay (Tocqueville 1861) regarding the nexus between religion, society, and politics in America. He affirms that: "The religious condition of this country is, perhaps, the most interesting subject of inquiry." (Tocqueville 1861, p. 306). Along the same lines followed in the chapter devoted to religion as a political institution in the *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville develops further in this letter a theme absent from the abovementioned chapter: the socio-psychological component of Catholicism's expansion in the US. The recurrent theme of a blue-collar desire for solid authority lurks behind his reflection.

¹³ There is a striking parallel to be drawn between the treatment of foreigners and strangers through the rites of politeness in Hume and the critique of politeness sketched by Rousseau in *Emile*. Following the drift of Humean argument, we might suggest that the treatment of foreigners is the most prominent locus of politeness as it regards the outsider par excellence, the one who by his mere presence breaks any habit and custom that informs human intercourse within the frame of a given community. In another essay, Hume evokes that the progress of civility and commerce over ancient times becomes palpable in the modern distinction between the notions of stranger and enemy that ancient ferocious manners used to conflate in the term *hostis* ('Of commerce', (Hume 1987, p. 259, n.8)).

¹⁴ (Hume 1987, p. 132): "Whenever nature has given the mind a propensity to any vice, or to any passion disagreeable to others, refined breeding has taught men to throw the bias on the opposite side, and to preserve, in all their behaviour, the appearance of sentiments different from those to which they naturally incline . . . In like manner, whenever a person's situation may naturally beget any disagreeable suspicion in him, it is the part of good manners to prevent it, by a studied display of sentiments, directly contrary to those of which he is apt to be jealous. Thus, old men know their infirmities, and naturally dread contempt from the youth: Hence, well-educated youth redouble the instances of respect and deference to their elders. Strangers and foreigners are without protection: Hence, in all polite countries, they receive the highest civilities, and are entitled to the first place in every company. A man is lord in his own family, and his guests are, in a manner, subject to his authority; Hence, he is always the lowest person in the company; attentive to the wants of everyone; and giving himself all the trouble, in order to please, which may not betray too visible an affectation, or to impose too much constrain on his guests. Gallantry is but an instance of the same generous attention."

Those among the Protestants in desperate need of certainty, unshaken beliefs and submission to the “yoke of authority . . . throw off with pleasure the heavy burden of reason and become Catholics”¹⁵ (Tocqueville 1861, p. 307). This phenomenon has a twofold explanation: “equality disposes men to want to judge by themselves, but, from another side, it gives them the taste and the idea of a single social power . . . ” (Tocqueville 2010, vol. III, p. 30).

At this juncture, the Humean theme of anxiety-soothing religious rituals and ceremonies gains prominence but this time clearly concerns the working instead of the middle class: “Again Catholicism captivates the senses and the imagination, and suits the masses better than the reformed religion; thus the greatest number of converts are from the working classes” (Tocqueville 1861, p. 307). By contrast, Pantheism and Unitarianism appeal to the educated strata and their mentality. In this vein, he sketches the portrait of “Protestants of cold, logical minds, the argumentative classes men of intellectual and studious habits” making an “almost public profession of pure theism” (Tocqueville 1861, p. 308). The lack of partisan spirit and the lack of ridicule are mutually reinforcing within American sects, contrasting similar movements in France such as the St. Simonians, vividly depicted as enthusiast sectarians in their doctrine and worship. Unitarian theists are “unaffectedly serious and their ceremonies are simple” (Tocqueville 1861, p. 308). In other words, there is an irreducible liturgical and functional core that renders this sect viable. On the contrary, mainstream Protestantism, squeezed between Catholics and Unitarians, loses ground among Christians. Tocqueville speculates on the potential shrinking, even collapse, of Protestantism.

Upon several occasions, Tocqueville worries less about secularization per se and more about the domination of atrophic forms of spiritualism incapable of fulfilling religion’s function expressed through rituals that crystalize collective sentiments. As has been shrewdly observed, the main distinction in *Democracy in America* is drawn between “institutionalised, regularised, and ritualised religion and episodic, de-ritualised religion characteristic of bucolic gatherings in the West during the Second Great Awakening.” (Craiutu and Holbreich 2015, pp. 143–44). The recurring emphasis on forms and formalities (Craiutu and Holbreich 2015, p. 144) regarding “sanctioned rules and practices for religious worship” is a key element. It is clear that for Tocqueville, the function of religion cannot fully play out unless a solid structure comprehending basic elements of dogma and worship, especially rituals, is established. “In all religions, there are ceremonies that are inherent in the very substance of belief and that must be kept from changing in any way. That is seen particularly in Catholicism, where form and foundation are often so closely united that they are one” (Tocqueville 2010, vol. III, n.i, p. 180). Resuming Hume’s revisionist gesture regarding Catholicism’s emphasis on rituals, Tocqueville makes similar points regarding the civilizing effect of forms and ceremonies. A milder form of Catholicism gains the favor of the middle class in America for the same reasons that an Episcopalian Protestantism, that is a watered-down but more ritualized version of Protestantism, attracts the attention of the “middling rank” in Presbyterian Scotland; it renders abstract truths tangible, therefore, accessible. This is no less an anthropological milestone, expressed by Tocqueville in almost the same terms encountered in Hume,

I firmly believe in the necessity of forms. I know that they fix the human mind in the contemplation of abstract truths, and forms, by helping the mind to grasp those truths firmly, make it embrace them with fervor. I do not imagine that it is possible to maintain a religion without external practices, but on the other hand I think that, during the centuries we are entering, it would be particularly dangerous to multiply them inordinately . . . ”.

—(Tocqueville 2010, vol. III, p. 27)

¹⁵ (Tocqueville 2010, vol. III, p. 30): “You see today more than in earlier periods, Catholics who become unbelievers and Protestant who turn into Catholics.”

Indeed, Tocqueville slightly ironically notices that “Protestantism is the government of middle classes applied to the religious world.” Tocqueville displaces the abovementioned twofold Humean association between Puritans and liberty on the one hand, and Catholics and servile submission to legitimate authorities on the other, and overhauls the connection between religion and politics. Henceforth, he reclaims the status of civil religion and patriotism. The paradoxical valorization of Catholicism as the most suitable religion for a democratic era contains more substantial elements than those contained in Tocqueville’s disillusionment regarding the Catholic Church’s obsessive self-destructiveness in its reactionary political options. The recurring point of America’s Puritan origins and background, rehearsed ad nauseam ever since, should not obscure Tocqueville’s twofold critique of spiritualism and Pantheism, whether individualist or sectarian. He perspicuously detected the civilizing effect of rituals as expressions of collective sentiments and the tensions between “Protestantized” Catholicism or “Catholicized” Protestantism¹⁶ within the frame of tolerance and separation of church and state (Zuckert 2016, p. 497) in the US. In democratic times of equality, no human authority should be suspected as foundational of human dignity and personality. Human rights and human dignity should be perceived as imposed by faith.

The abovementioned interaction and exchanges between Protestantism and Catholicism¹⁷ (Tocqueville 2010, p. 133) are far from being condemned alongside religious dogmatic or ceremonial hybridity. Insofar as any sect avoids the pitfalls of obsessive ceremonials and “small observance”, in other words, formalities that recall authoritarian aristocratic manners and the subsequent codified behavior, they should be accepted by democratic people, in need of a saving minimum of religious rituals to “support a general belief in the dignity and rights of all individuals” (Zuckert 2016, p. 497).

By contrast, both Protestants and Catholics engender, especially under the banner of Catholicism for the abovementioned reasons, a Christian civil religion of a novel kind including superstitious elements, the nature of which should be clearly circumscribed.

4.2. *Patriotism and Christian Civil Religion in America*

Tocqueville clearly asserts that Christian churches without exception are necessary for republican institutions, albeit not in the same degree as we have seen above; this is an opinion running across class or status divides (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 135) and shared nationwide. According to Tocqueville, it reflects a patriotic stance. Throughout the various occasions upon which he expresses his views on the link between religion and politics, it becomes clear that he has a twofold agenda: seizing the example of the US to show that modern republicanism, therefore liberty, and Christian civil religion are intimately linked while defending the paradoxical position that Catholicism is not only compatible but even more appropriate for a Christian civil religion in a republican context. Indeed in both chapters devoted to the question, “Of religion considered as political institution, How it serves powerfully to maintain the democratic republic among the Americans” and “Indirect influence exercised by religious beliefs on political society in the United States”, he obsessively persists in refuting the foundations of French republican atheism and anti-clericalism alongside the alleged intimate link between Catholicism and absolutism.

While Tocqueville insists on the regulating power of religion over mores and family bonds via women, he also pauses on the restraining force of religion amid general permissiveness—religion by restraining imagination and binding conscience calibrates liberty and averts anarchy and anomy. Moreover, how to prevent the spread of brutishness and vulgarity of the sovereign people, especially

¹⁶ For a comparison with Rousseau that takes into account this dialectic between moderate forms of Protestantism and Catholicism see (Beiner 2012, pp. 251–52).

¹⁷ (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 133): “... and what is more important for society is not so much that all citizens profess the true religion but that they profess a religion. All the sects in the United States are, moreover, within the great Christian unity, and the morality of Christianity is the same everywhere. [In America there are Catholics and Protestants, but Americans profess the Christian religion.]

its most unrefined parts, if “while the political bond grows loose, the moral bond does not become tighter? And what to do with a people master of itself, if it is not subject to God?” (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 135). A sovereign people without inner restraints is uncontrollable and self-destructive. This religious prerequisite of popular sovereignty against the fear of democracy reflects the recurring moral prerequisite of independence and free government in democracy: “Those who are not able to control themselves will inevitably find themselves controlled by others. No one can be independent or self-governed who is not self-controlled” (Zuckert 2016, p. 499).

At the end of the chapter (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 135), Tocqueville proceeds to an original tableau of political regimes moving beyond Montesquieu—the crucial test being the type of connection between religion and liberty, the latter should be understood broadly as constant motion and restlessness in the social and political world. Despotism does not need faith but sheer repression, republics need religion more than monarchies and democratic republics more than republics (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 136).

By preserving and expanding religion, Americans believe that they secure republican liberty; “this is how religious zeal in the United States constantly warms up at the hearth of patriotism” (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 135). In the chapter of the *DA* devoted to the public spirit in the US, Tocqueville draws a distinction between antiquated and modern patriotism that runs parallel to his analysis of the Christian civil religion proper to America’s democratic spirit. The old fashion love of country is a “kind of religion, it does not reason, it believes; it feels . . . ” and binds “the heart of the man to the places where man was born. This instinctive love is mingled with the taste for ancient customs, with respect for ancestors, and the memory of the past” (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 75). This kind of affective investment has as a prerequisite the simplicity of mores and an uncontested legitimacy of an older order of things. On the other hand, the modern love of country confuses civic spirit with the exercise of political rights. According to Tocqueville, this is a form of rational self-interest. As “each person, in his sphere, takes an active part in the government of society” and having grasped the link between general and personal prosperity, he identifies with general prosperity and develops a civic spirit that rests on non-material interest. As he shrewdly notes, “An American in his country resembles a lover of gardens on his grounds” (Tocqueville 2010, vol. III, p. 76). The lack of traditional civic spirit gives way to an unprecedented secular, patriotic faith. Democratic patriotism exists in a psychological identification with the nation that involves an “alternative spirituality”, not radically different from religious spirituality (Kahan 2015, p. 105).

In a parallel move, Emile Durkheim’s theoretical intuitiveness does not refrain from detecting a novel “strong” cult (Chriss 1993)—more than a civil religion—having as an object the individual dignity and replacing the gradually eroded traditional beliefs and practices. Durkheim claims that the novel cult of the individual person emerges alongside novel superstitions and dogmas. It is beyond the scope of this paper to draw a parallel between the cult of the individual in Durkheim and the cult of the majority in Tocqueville; be this as it may, the founder of the French school of sociology reaches his most insightful moments regarding the analysis of secular faith, “As all the other beliefs and all the other practices take on a character less and less religious, the individual becomes the object of a sort of religion. We erect a cult in behalf of personal dignity which, as every strong cult, already has its superstitions” (Durkheim 1933, p. 172).

Regardless of the connection between Durkheim and Tocqueville, Tocqueville follows this insight and detects superstitious elements in democratic faith. He observes, “As citizens become more equal and more similar, the tendency of each blindly to believe a certain man . . . decreases. The disposition to believe the mass increases, and more and more it is *opinion that leads the world* (my italics) (Tocqueville 2010, vol. III, p. 15). Therefore “faith in common opinion will become a sort of religion whose prophet will be the majority”. This assertion shows Tocqueville’s concern about the emergence of a novel form of absolute, therefore crypto-despotic auctoritas under the cloak of “the absolute power of a majority” that leads to a novel threat to independence, a “new face of servitude.” (Tocqueville 2010, vol. III, p. 16). Put bluntly, democratic absolutism rests on a secular, democratic faith of a kind, the ambiguity of which is promised to a long future of democratic triumphs and disasters.

4.3. Hume and Tocqueville: A Comparative Assessment

The difference between religious ritual and civic ritual is crucial, specifically insofar as the former is not just psychological but also individual, whereas the latter goes beyond the psychological and individual to embrace the political and the collective. There is a radical change in ritual and its processes when it is transformed from a set of individual (religious) acts intended to secure individual psychological tranquility, to collective acts with very different intentions. Hume himself does not comment explicitly on this but this opens up an intriguing field of research regarding civic rituals that lies beyond the scope of this paper.

Hume insisted on equating religion with servitude but he seems to mitigate this assessment regarding the function of religious rituals. Tocqueville treated servitude as a result of the cult of the majority by modern societies. In Hume's analysis, the connection between religious ritual and superstition strikes as obvious yet the evolution of his thought calls attention to Hume as a civil-religion theorist; he thinks that we can domesticate and instrumentalize not religion as such but religious rituals insofar as there is no excess of formalist zeal, in tune with Hume's approval of a minimum ecclesiastical hierarchy necessary to guarantee social peace (Beiner 2012, p. 417). Since secular ritual is not devoid of superstition just because it is secular, according to Tocqueville, why must religious rituals be superstitious just because they are religious? Moving beyond the standard association of Catholicism with servile superstition and "enthusiast" Protestantism with anarchic freedom, Hume strikes a *via media* between hierarchical, sclerotic Catholicism and Puritan disorder in reclaiming the role of rituals. Through the dilution and propagation of ritual elements, he indirectly reinvigorates an element of authority better suited to commercial society. We need to recall that Hume famously holds that "liberty is the perfection of civil society; but still authority must be acknowledged essential to its very existence and in those contests, which so often take place between the one and the other, the latter may, on that account, challenge the preference" (Hume 1987, p. 41). To be sure, the ritualistic element refers less to sacredness than to a certain prestige surrounding persons and acts. On the other hand, Tocqueville subtly rescalars the democratic public space both in his native France—he desperately attempts to save French Catholic church from its authoritarian outdated traditionalism—and the US Protestantism from a Protestant melting pot and a pantheistic elitism that gradually turn religious authority into nonsense. Simultaneously, he defends the dilution of simple and general rituals as proper to democratic times. Thus, he thinks that minimal deference to authority will be preserved amidst the all too superstitious democratic deference to a majority devoid of genuine prestige and spirituality. Christian civil religion diffuses, *faute de mieux*, ritualistic deference to authority endowed with minimal stability. "General ideas relative to God and human nature are, therefore, among all ideas, the ones it is most fitting to shield from the habitual action of individual reason and for which there is most to gain and least to lose in recognizing an authority" (Tocqueville 2010, vol. II, p. 418; Kries 2010, pp. 183–85).

5. Concluding Remarks: Civil Religion or Rituals of Civility?

In the first part of this paper, I argue that Hume envisages forms of religious ritual disconnected from superstitious neurotic behavior. Thus, he considers simple rituals fostering moderation, while his obsession with secular rituals, such as French highly ceremonial manners, is due to their anxiety-soothing function. This engenders an affective solidarity that binds citizenry without the appeal to a civil religion properly speaking. Let us call this path the Old Regime's civil ritualism.

In the second part, I illustrate the ambiguous role of religious rituals in the context of democratic faith and Christian civil religion in Tocqueville. Overall Tocqueville conceives rituals in a Humean spirit, as anxiety-soothing institutions. Moving beyond the Humean line of thought, he detects novel forms of superstition firmly embedded in secular, democratic faith.

Hume originally claims that *certain religious ceremonies properly managed could evacuate substantial parts of its superstitious elements*. To be sure, this remains a matter of degree, not of essence¹⁸. It has been convincingly suggested that “The morality even of secularized individuals, living today or in the 18th century, is strongly characterized by all sorts of moral taboos” (De Dijn 2011). Religious rituals within proper bounds are indispensable for social life, yet necessary *evils* due to their endemic, historically attested, incompatibility with common morality. Yet the “middling rank” in the Enlightenment’s vernacular—i.e., the middle class—can potentially develop a different mentality. Undoubtedly, middle-class mores are also in need of “anxiolytic” institutions, the question is whether they could be merely secular. One can take a step further and argue that simple, accessible and inclusive rituals of manners can be considered as rituals transcending religious boundaries and cultural fixed identities (Stasch 2011, pp. 159–74); therefore, they could be further developed as more suitable to middle-class mores within contemporary multicultural communities.

At this juncture, Hume-inspired reflections pave the way to Tocqueville’s idiosyncratic views regarding the democratic faith embedded in Christian civil religion. Can we envisage profane rituals that retain the anxiety-soothing character of religious rituals? Arguably “the civilizing qualities of faith communities” are negligible when “religious institutions are absent from or marginal to culture” (De Dijn 2011). Tocqueville locates an underlying trend within the process of gradual erosion of aristocratic distinction. Religious practices gradually drop their sclerotic aspect and transform themselves into watered-down versions of Christian faith, resembling cultural practices with high functional (Craiutu and Holbreich 2015, p. 139) value more than spiritual forms of life per se. According to Tocqueville, parallel to this process a secular faith proper to democratic times emerges: the sanctity of common opinion. Tocqueville explicitly designates the majority as the “prophet” although opinion makers and trend blazers are not yet nominated as messengers of this “prophet”. Tocqueville makes an important point here regarding the sacralization of common opinion: “...whatever the political laws may be that govern men in centuries of equality, you can predict that faith in common opinion will become a sort of religion whose prophet will be the majority” (Tocqueville, vol. III, p. 14). Common opinion is erected in modern authority. Yet faith in democratic era carries along unprecedented superstitious elements and the Tocquevillean gaze perspicuously unearths the most insidious of them.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers and Ryan Hanley for comments and suggestions and assistant editor for her work on my paper.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

- Beiner, Ronald. 2012. *Civil Religion: A Dialogue in the History of Political Philosophy*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Berry, Christopher. 2018. *Essays on Hume, Smith and the Scottish Enlightenment*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Chriss, James J. 1993. Durkheim’s Cult of the Individual as Civil Religion: its Appropriation by Erving Goffman. *Sociology and Criminology Faculty Publication* 97: 251–75. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Costelloe, Timothy. 2004. ‘In Every Civilized Community’: Hume on Belief and the Demise of Religion. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 55: 171–85. [[CrossRef](#)]

¹⁸ On the other side of the channel, Rousseau, equally concerned with superstition within religious institutions, inaugurates a different tradition of thought: he famously expresses a wholesale rejection of modern manners while setting forth an idiosyncratic civil religion, see (Rousseau 2012, pp. 263–72). Rousseau rejects manners precisely as empty ceremonial while he sacralises the social contract’s basic tenets. Both philosophers, suspicious about progress in religious matters, seek to evacuate superstitious elements from social life without dismissing the affective dispositions of human nature.

- Craiu, Aurelian, and Matthew N. Holbreich. 2015. On individualism, Authority, and Democracy as a New Form of Religion: A few Tocquevillian Reflections. In *Combining the Spirit of Religion and the Spirit of Liberty: Tocqueville's Thesis Revisited*. Edited by Catherine Zuckert. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- De Dijn, Herman. 2003. Promise and ritual: Profane and sacred symbols in Hume's philosophy of religion. *The Journal of Scottish Philosophy* 1: 64. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- De Dijn, Herman. 2011. The Natural History of Religion in Hume and Baron d'Holbach. Paper presented at Hume Society Conference, Old College, Edinburgh, UK, July 19.
- De Dijn, Herman. 2012. Spinoza and Hume on Religion as a Natural Phenomenon. *Hume Studies* 38: 1. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Durkheim, Emile. 1933. *The Division of Labor in Society*. Glencoe: The Free Press of Glencoe. First published 1893.
- Elias, Norbert. 1978. The Civilizing Process. In *The History of Manners*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. First published 1939.
- Hanley, Ryan. 2013. Hume's Critique and Defense of Religion. In *Enlightenment and Secularism: Essays on the Mobilization of Reason*. Edited by Christian Nadon. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Hume, David. 1998. *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. Edited by Tom L. Beauchamp. Oxford: OUP. First published 1751.
- Hume, David. 2007. *The Natural History of Religion*. Edited by Tom L. Beauchamp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. First published 1757.
- Hume, David. 1932. *The Letters of David Hume*. Edited by J. Y. T. Creig. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2 vols.
- Hume, David. 1983. *The History of England*. Edited by William B. Todd: Liberty Classics. First published 1754–1761.
- Hume, David. 1985. *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding and concerning the Principles of Morals*, 3rd ed. Edited by Peter H. Nidditch. Oxford: Clarendon Press. First published 1748 and 1751.
- Hume, David. 1987. *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*. Edited by Eugene F. Miller. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund. First published 1742–1751.
- Jordan, W. R. 2002. Religion in the Public Square: A Reconsideration of Hume and Religious Establishment. *The Review of Politics* 64: 687–713. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Kahan, Alan. 2015. *Tocqueville, Democracy, and Religion: Checks and Balances for Democratic Souls*. Oxford: OUP.
- Kries, Douglas. 2010. Alexis de Tocqueville on "Civil Religion" and the Catholic Faith. In *Civil Religion in Political Thought/Its Perennial Questions and Enduring Relevance in North America*. Edited by Ronald Weed and John Von Heyking. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, pp. 167–205.
- Langford, Paul. 2002. The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness. *Transactions of the RSH* 12: 311–31. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Lemmens, Wim. 2011. Beyond the Calm Sunshine of the Mind. Hume on Religion and Morality. *Aufklärung und Kritik* 1: 423–60.
- McClay, Wilfred M. 2010. Foreword. In *Civil Religion in Political Thought/Its Perennial Questions and Enduring Relevance in North America*. Edited by Ronald Weed and John Von Heyking. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, pp. i–ix.
- Mossner, Cambell Ernst. 1947. David Hume's "An Historical Essay on Chivalry and Modern Honour". *Modern Philology* 45: 1. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Mossner, Cambell Ernst. 1980. *The Life of David Hume*. Oxford: OUP.
- Muir, Edward. 2005. *Ritual in early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pocock, John Greville Agard. 1999. Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment, Revolution and Counter-Revolution: a Eurosceptical Enquiry. *History of Political Thought* 20: 125–39.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. 2012. On the Social Contract. In *The Major Political Writings of J.-J. Rousseau*. Edited by John T. Scott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. First published 1762.
- Siebert, Thomas. 1995. Hume on Idolatry and Incarnation. In *David Hume: Critical Assessments*. Edited by Stanley Tweyman. London: Routledge.
- Stasch, Rupert. 2011. Ritual and Oratory Revisited: The Semiotics of Effective Action. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40: 159–74. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Streminger, G. 1989. Religion, a threat to morality: an attempt to throw some new light on Hume's philosophy of religion. *Hume Studies* 2: 277–93. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Tocqueville, Alexis. 1861. *Memoirs, Letters and Remains*. Translated by Napoleon's Correspondence with King Joseph. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co.

- Tocqueville, Alexis. 2010. *Democracy in America*. Historical-Critical Edition of *De la Démocratie en Amérique*. Edited by Eduardo Nolla. Translated by James T. Scheifer. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 4 vols. First published 1835–1840.
- Weed, Ronald, and John Von Heyking. 2010. Introduction. In *Civil Religion in Political Thought/Its Perennial Questions and Enduring Relevance in North America*. Edited by Ronald Weed and John Von Heyking. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, pp. 1–15.
- Zuckert, Catherine. 2016. The saving minimum? Tocqueville on the Role of Religion in America—Then and Now. *American Political Thought: A Journal of Ideas, Institutions, and Culture* 5. [[CrossRef](#)]



© 2020 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).