

When Passions Constitute Peace: Tocquevillian Equality as Political Ethics of Pacificism

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Abstract

As political passions continue to fuel world conflicts, the conditions under which passions constitute peace become of scholarly and policy importance. Passions understood as socio-political guarantees of peace open a possibility of exploring the ethics of war and peace through the often ambiguous role of political passions. This essay discusses the possibility that the passion for equality represents a solid claim in the political ethics of pacificism through the analysis of egalitarian passions in Tocqueville's Democracy. Tocquevillian democracy, best characterized by "equality of conditions," rests primarily on passions. As a particular form of pacificism, such equality can create and sustain peace by shaping peace-loving citizens and regimes. In order to build upon potentially violent passions, a peaceful egalitarian system requires that passions be structured in a hierarchy that is established through equality as long as it maintains social ties without harming freedom. When seen as both passion and a form of existence – in other words as a 'dialectic' – democracy becomes the interpretive and ethical key for understanding the source of a political system's strength, stability and peace. The analysis of Tocquevillian equality contributes to the development of the theory of pacificism as a nuanced and theoretically sound form of an ethics of peace.

Keywords: Passions; Equality; Pacificism; Tocqueville; Peace; Political Ethics

Introduction

In this year that commemorates the centennial of the outbreak of World War I, political passions continue to mark, sometimes violently, the national and international arenas. In 2014 alone, the use and abuse of political passions contributed to conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Ukraine, and elsewhere. Passions have inflamed international political rhetoric, spurred claims of territorial irredentism, entrenched ideological and nationalist discourses, and provided fuel for combat and war. For this reason, policy makers and scholars have often understood the passions – such as anger, fear, envy, greed, resentment – as obstacles to freedom and peace, and have denigrated their role. Political and moral theorists have frequently considered passions more through negative than positive portrayals. The relationship between passions, peace and war has thus remained largely unaddressed in contemporary ethical debates.

Passions are a central and unavoidable component of political life and a legitimate object of scholarly discussion. This paper is an attempt to reopen discussion about the role of passions in peace efforts. It addresses the following questions: What are the conditions under which political passions become constitutive of peace instead of war or violent revolution? Moreover, how should peace be secured and on what philosophical premises can political guarantees of peace be justified? These questions open the possibility of exploring the ethics of peace in political thought through the often ambiguous role of political passions. Also, they allow for a revision of the place of political ethics in discussions on war and peace.

The study of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* proves particularly opportune to scholarly endeavors in peace studies. Tocqueville's philosophical analysis of political passions correctly predicts the sustainability of peace despite the ongoing change of socio-political contexts. What is more, the study of Tocquevillian democracy opens the possibility of defending a "pacifist" approach to war and peace (as defined in the following section). Tocqueville's study of passions in the socio-political system of equality of conditions allows for ethical claims that promote peace while being free from defending war as just.

This analysis shows that equality can be a solid claim in the political ethics of pacificism. Equality of conditions becomes a particular form of pacificism that can create and sustain peaceful socio-political contexts. The analysis of Tocquevillian equality thus contributes to the development of the theory of pacificism as a nuanced and theoretically sound form of pacifism. What may be called Tocquevillian pacificism recognizes the importance of passions through equality and their continued role in shaping peace-loving citizens, societies and regimes.

In fact, Tocquevillian democracy, best characterized by "equality of conditions", rests primarily on passions. However, the most important of the passions, equality, can overwhelm liberty when the corrective mechanisms to egalitarianism's internal threats, such as mild despotism or tyranny of the majority, are no longer guaranteed. Examining Tocqueville's solutions to the potentially violent passion for equality, as seen in revolutionary upheavals in France at the time of Tocqueville, this essay argues that a peaceful democracy requires passions structured in a hierarchy that is established through equality as long as it maintains social ties without harming freedom and peace. The main thesis of this study is that a peaceful regime requires political passions structured in a hierarchy that is established through equality as long as it maintains social ties without harming freedom.

This article first defines pacificism as a one of scholarly and policy approaches to war and peace. Unlike realism, pacificism applies moral claims to resolving conflicts and sustaining peace. Unlike just-war approaches, pacificism goes against the ethical possibility of any war understood as just. Pacifism does not categorically or consequentially reject war, as pacifism would, since the overall goal of pacificism is global peace (in national and international arenas). This view further begs the question of whether peace is and should be justifiable at any price, and leads this study to analyze Tocqueville's passions and equality.

After defining pacificism, this paper contextualizes Tocquevillian passions, analyzes his theory of equality and provides tentative conclusions for the contemporary study of ethics of peace and war.

Pacificism as Political Ethics

The prevention of war has been a centuries-long policy approach and an intellectual endeavor for the study of such proposals. These political and scholarly traditions have relied on specific ideologies and concomitant ethical theories of peace and war, ranging from realism through just-war theories to pacifism. Within this range, Martin Ceadel (1987) was among the first to suggest the ethical position of “pacifism.” Pacificism implies a view which, while not endorsing pacifism as such, does not see war, in any form, as a possible site of justice, as the just war tradition would. The core, and controversial, proposition of just war theory is that, sometimes, states can have moral justification for resorting to armed force (Orend 2008).¹ Neither does pacificism embrace realism, which refrains from applying any moral concepts whatsoever to foreign policy, as it understands war as an issue of power and national security.²

While pacifism and pacificism do not share realism’s moral skepticism or see wars as “just”, they diverge in important ways. Unlike pacifist theories, pacificism advocates for peaceful conditions to war. As Nicolas Rengger puts it, this view sums up the liberal view of war (2002, 357; 2013, 44). Pacificism accepts that some wars may be necessary if they advance the cause of peace. This approach this represents is a step away from so-called conditional pacifism, which rules out war or the use of force except in very exceptional circumstances. According to pacificism, military means may be used to defend the political achievements that have generated peace – with the overriding goal of global peace (cf. Moseley 2005).

Richard Norman (1995) situates pacificism between pacifism and so-called defencism. Like the just-war approach, defencism justifies defensive wars and acts of deterrence, but it rejects aggression. Pacificism may also justify war³ for peace’s sake, but unlike defencism, pacificism may rule out a defensive war if it harms overall stability (international or national) – and unlike pacifism, pacificism offers a more down-to-earth approach to war (cf. Moseley 2005). Since the overall concord is pacificism’s ultimate goal, pacificism may allow for an aggressive war of intervention in extreme cases in order to secure greater peace. For

1 While the so-called “deontological” pacifists claim that it is always and categorically wrong to kill innocent human beings, just war theories substitute the proposition that what is wrong in peace and war, is to kill innocent human beings intentionally and deliberately (See Orend 2008). A similarly “consequentialist” but still pacifist view would maintain that benefits accruing from war can never outweigh the costs of fighting it. Nevertheless, consequential pacifists consider the latest costs and benefits, choosing the best option amongst feasible alternatives.

2 Realists see the international arena as anarchy, in which the will to power enjoys primacy and where moral concepts should not be employed as descriptions of, or prescriptions for, state behavior.

3 Pacificism may justify a war, which however does not make a war just *per se*. Just war theory contends that, for any resort to war to be justified, a political community, or state, must fulfil each and every one of six requirements outlined by its proponents and tradition. While according to the proponents of just war theory, the goal of just war is peace, it remains unclear if a just war can produce quality or even just peace. “Just” in their sense means justified all things considered, and not a right or righteous deed – as just war is the last resort. N. Biggar sees the just war tradition rooted in a Christian tradition, cautioning however that there is no expectation that the war will be pure (cf. Biggar 2013). Justifying a war is therefore a response to a greater injustice to rectify it, a paradigm of humanitarian intervention through the responsibility to protect, sometimes understood as punishment, i.e., a hostile reaction against injustice by using force.

pacifism, war may be morally acceptable and justified but never just.⁴ A “justified” action is therefore not a positive contribution to the world but rather, at best, a necessary action, according to the particular historical circumstances and potentially contributing toward the realization of the best possible world (Hunsinger 2008).

Overall peace, the ultimate goal of pacifism, brings its doctrine along the lines of a long tradition of political theorists and ethicists. Political ethicists in particular see peace as the most favorable condition of socio-political life. The data show that throughout human history warfare has limited trust and growth in the population and the economy (cf. Ridley 2011, 45). For example, in relating peace and trade, Charles de Montesquieu observes that wherever the ways of men are gentle (agreeable manners, *moeurs douces*), there is commerce, and wherever there is commerce, the ways of men are gentle (cf. 1914 [1748], book XX). Similarly, David Hume thinks that within international relations, states connected by commerce and policy are most conducive to the rise of politeness or civility, and therefore of liberty and peace (cf. 1987 [1742], I.XIV.16). Markets, in other words, “can turn many individually irrational individuals into a collectively rational outcome ... [and] many individually selfish motives into a collectively kind result” (Ridley 2011, 105). Based on such premises, and particularly on Kant’s theory of perpetual peace (2007 [1795]), Schumpeter (1955 [1919]) as well as Mansfield and Pollins (2001) argue empirically that capitalism makes modern states inherently peaceful and opposed to war and imperialism, which economically favored aristocratic elites.

Since peace allows human and social activity to flourish, (pacifist) ethicists claim that conditions conducive to peace are to be sustained politically. Pacifism becomes an obvious example of not only moral philosophy but also political ethics. That is, individuals, societies and political regimes ought to promote and, if necessary, defended peace. Such peace, moreover, is not just absence of violent conflict or war but what some have recently called just peace or even quality peace (Lindgren et al. 2010). In this sense, peace cannot and should not be justifiable nor justified at any price (e.g., *Pax Romana*, *Pax Britanica*, *Pax Sovietica*).

The crucial question is exactly how such peace should be secured and on what philosophical premises any such political guarantees and actions can be justified. This question opens the possibility of exploring the political ethics of pacifism in political thought. As the following section indicates, the study of Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* proves particularly opportune as his theory of egalitarian passions correctly predicts the sustainability of peace despite the ongoing change of socio-political contexts.

Passions in Political Thought and Politics

Tocqueville’s Personal Quest and Research Question

The relationship between passions and peace was Tocqueville’s personal issue and a research question rooted in modern political thought. Egalitarian Passions tore apart his country (cf. Furet 1978). However, what Tocqueville discovered in America is that these same passions resulted in peace, even apathy. The French aristocrats at the beginning of the nineteenth century would rarely have understood the passions as useful or appropriate for the art of governing. By 1830, the experience of two revolutions convinced the French aristocracy that passions are harmful and destructive. The people’s passion for equality, in particular, led thousands of French to the guillotine or into exile. However, when visiting the United States of America, Tocqueville realized that the same passions that induced his compatriots to massacres would actually help the Americans to build a harmonic, democratic system.

⁴ The approach of pacifism is thus prone to criticism from both pacifists and defencism-ists. Pacifism cannot offer a moral principle (such as in deontological pacifism) as it relies on changing circumstances and interpretations of an event. Pacifism thus may justify war for the sake of peace.

Returning to the old continent, the young aristocratic French lawyer and politician tried to explain how, on different sides of the Atlantic, the same passions produce different effects in the social and political life of a country. His questioning, moreover, was rooted in the history of political philosophy, representing a particular paradox. What Tocqueville and other late Moderns observed is a modern republic founded not on virtue (as claimed by the Ancients) but on the private interest of each citizen (cf. Mansfield 1996). The study of democracy in America thus allowed Tocqueville the quest for a practical solution to the classical dilemma of political theory and ethics: How to avoid tyranny or despotism and secure peace? In other words, in his comparative study, Tocqueville tried to find the precise difference between democracy of the American type, to which he gave his reasoned support, and French revolutionary democracy, which he viewed as harmful (cf. Furet 1985).

Passions, Conflict and Peace in Theory and Practice

Individual and communal passions have an impact on political and social life. In politics, they give rise to, and sustain partisanship, populist movements and nationalist aspirations. They usually provide crucial fuel for violent political outcomes such as civil unrest and even wars. Passions also contribute to identity politics and inform the processes of self-determination. Examples from contemporary politics run the gamut from identity politics and warfare in Ukraine to sectarian violence in Iraq, Syria and Palestine.

Passions are no stranger to the broader social life. Passions such as communal and individual greed, envy and self-interest have been blamed for the 2008 economic downturn. The desire for recognition often drives competition in economic and academic markets. Passions for equality and liberty give flavor to democratization discourses in Africa and Asia. Finally, they explicitly or implicitly inform the study of politics and ethics, especially in the field of peace and war research.

The quest for peace through the knowledge of passions and in the life of politics has undergone important semantic evolution since the beginning of modernity (cf. Hirschman 1980). Machiavelli was among the first to indicate that a realist theory of the state presupposes knowledge of human nature. In order to contain destructible passions, and so to avoid tyranny or despotism, the (Ancient) moral theory of passions seemed no longer sufficient. Modernity transcended the traditional dichotomy in regards to human behavior, seen as based on either passion or reason. The modern philosophical evolution began by the attempts of containing and repressing the passions through the use of state force. Next, the state became understood rather as a catalyst, enabling the passions to receive their value. Passions were to undergo a metamorphic process in order to be subdued. Finally, theorists began to understand (certain) passions as sufficient and useful in fighting (other) passions. Compensatory passions could thus serve as a counterbalance to more violent passions – as human nature continued to be seen from a pessimistic perspective. The notion of a compensatory passion, seen as in-between reason and passion, has become defined in terms of interests.

Tocqueville on Passions

Tocqueville realizes that the American socio-political system functions well despite its passions – or rather because its passions – and therefore develops a theory of passions on anthropological and sociological premises. In his anthropology, Tocqueville locates passions in the human heart (vol. II, pt. I, ch. I), in which passion can contain a large space (vol. I, pt. I, ch. III). The human heart contains its “weaknesses,” i.e., passions (vol. I, pt. II, ch. IX), which keep the heart constantly unquiet. Most importantly, the constant dissatisfaction of desire generates and sustains the passions. There is one immovable place in the heart, and one only:

personal interest (vol. I, pt. III, ch. XXIII). Tocqueville establishes his sociology of passions on personal interests.

The sociological understanding of passions is inseparable from Tocqueville's anthropology: the social trait of equality of conditions raises and sustains passions. Equality opens the heart to passions (vol. I, Introduction). More precisely, the cause of passions is envy. This envy comes into existence through a special social "spectacle:" simple citizens, all being equal in democratic times, see a person exiting their ranks, which generates in them surprise, envy and suspicion (vol. I, pt. II, ch. V). Envy is born out of comparison, which is itself made possible by the fact that all citizens are equal. Since democratic citizens can reach honor by economic achievement only, the dissatisfaction of their desire will push them to advance economically in every way possible. Unlike aristocratic societies where honor comes through an inherited social status, honor pertains to economic success in democracies.

Besides the passion for reputation and power, the passion for well-being or wealth represents a "*passion mère*" (passion mother). The passion for well-being is a generative and primary passion. It is born of the desire for wellbeing (as long as this desire is not satisfied) and fostered by equality. Citizens of a democratic state are for that reason naturally driven to commerce, since equality promises continuing gain. At the same time, general wellbeing favors political stability. Unlike Montesquieu, however, Tocqueville does not see in the passion for material well-being an innocent passion. This passion may lead to envy, mistrust and regrets (vol. I, pt. II, ch. IX). Individual interest may also endanger the disinterested love for country if commercial interests predominate over political concerns. Nonetheless, the passion for wellbeing would not be honored, were it not useful to the democratic community and therefore constitutive of peace. In order to understand this logic, a short discussion on the place of war in democracies is necessary.

Tocqueville on War, Peace and Honor

The Tocquevillian political theory of war and peace is not easily identifiable within a philosophy of war and peace on the wide spectrum of contemporary approaches ranging from realism and pacifism. In *Democracy*, Tocqueville does not seem to take an explicit ethical stand towards the question of war and peace. Tocqueville deals briefly but explicitly with the problems of war and the preparation for it in democratic societies in Chapters 22-26 in Volume II of *Democracy*. His moral take on the political ethics of war and peace is indirect. However, in studying his treatment of war and peace, the strong ethical assumptions he makes allow for a classification his position closely along the moral and political philosophy of peace.

Tocqueville makes a sharp distinction between war and peace (Cohen 1985, 207).⁵ The analytical distinction is based upon a particular understanding of a democratic society through its fundamental passions and *mœurs* [habits of heart]. In democracies, the spirit of war is the opposite of the desires of the populace and their military poorly developed. Tocqueville observes (vol. II, pt. III, ch. XXII):

The ever increasing numbers of men of property who are lovers of peace, the growth of personal wealth which war so rapidly consumes, the mildness of manners, the gentleness of heart, those tendencies to pity which are produced by the equality of conditions, that coolness of understanding which renders men comparatively insensible to the violent and poetical excitement of arms, all these causes concur to, quench the military spirit.

⁵ This position is in stark opposition to Carl von Clausewitz, the theorist of war of Tocqueville's era. He claims that war is a continuation of political intercourse, with the addition of other means (cf. Clausewitz 2004 [1832], book 1, ch. 1), where passion, organizational skill and strategic acumen of the government play the crucial role.

At the same time Tocqueville argues that democratic men are able to conduct formidable wars –once their mind is set to warfare. “When a war has at length ... roused the whole community from their peaceful occupations and ruined their minor undertakings, the same passions that made them attach so much importance to the maintenance of peace will be turned to arms” (vol. II, pt. III, ch. XXIV). Tocqueville continues:

War, after it has destroyed all modes of speculation, becomes itself the great and sole speculation, to which all the ardent and ambitious desires that equality engenders are exclusively directed. Hence it is that the selfsame democratic nations that are so reluctant to engage in hostilities sometimes perform prodigious achievements when once they have taken the field.

The distinction between democracies in war and in peace is explicit and sharp. The distinction is possible precisely because the political ethics of peace in democracies is based on a completely different mindset than the ethics of warfare.

There is one common point connecting war and peace: the question of honor. Honor through achievement and recognition drives democratic men to desire both peace (in the time of peace) and warfare (once the war has become a *sine qua non* of a society’s survival and individual’s acknowledgment). Because of their unstoppable movement towards equality, democracies, in fact, have a particular system of rewards (through aspirations) that energizes men to desire peace (and war in rare but clear circumstances). In order to defend this position, one needs to put into perspective Tocquevillian notions of honor and equality.

Tocqueville’s account of war and peace of all types, including honor, is inextricably linked to his notion of honor and its persistence in the modern world. Tocqueville argues that “every time men come together to form a particular society, a conception of honor is immediately established among them, that is to say, a collection of opinions peculiar to themselves about what should be praised or blamed” (vol. II, pt. III, ch. XVIII). In the medieval world, honor revolved primarily around class differences. However, in a modern democracy, classes become level, often leaving the nation itself as the only source of honor (cf. Barbeau 2012). Honor in a democracy is more base and citizens often omit the patriotic aspirations towards honor until they are somehow forced into war. Tocqueville thus not only provides an explanation for the empirical reality of nations, but also makes a normative claim. Nations, along with civil society, family, and religion, serve as a buttress against tyranny and violence. Voluntary associations as well as patriotism can represent mediating institutions between the individual and the state and among states. In this role as intermediary associations that honor through patriotism may perform a salutary function, one which Tocqueville can help recover for contemporary ethics of war and peace.

Nevertheless, aristocratic notions of honor, patriotic sentiments, and wars are rare in democracies because democratic honor through achievement, coming from equality, necessitates peace. Equality (as desire, passion and state) thus becomes a kind of moral conviction, constitutive of peace. How is equality then to be understood in order to secure peace?

Equality of Conditions as Constitutive of Peace

Equality as a Dialectic

This essay suggests that the Tocquevillian understanding of peace and democracy can only be properly examined as a dialectic between equality understood as passion and equality understood as state (état). Dialectic brings the complementary notions of passion and state together into a whole, which is a peaceful American democracy. Equality is at the same time a fact and a passion for this reality. Equality, never fully realized, becomes the desired norm.

Tocqueville affirms: “The desire for equality becomes all the more insatiable in the measure to which equality grows” (vol. II, pt. II, ch. XIII).

The first part of the dialectic is equality of conditions understood as a state (of being, of fact). As a socio-political state, equality enables a movement from equality of social conditions (no hereditary wealth, etc.) to political values and legislation. Equality is in fact “the primary cause of the majority of laws, customs, and ideas that govern the conduct of the nation” (vol. I, pt. I, ch. III). Equality as a state nourishes the passion for equality since equality of conditions is never completely realizable or possible. This is an equality of an equal distribution of conditions (no hereditary statuses). In order to earn respect or honor, one needs to earn it through achievement, particularly in the realm of economic success. Equality as a state orients everyone towards material wealth. By arguing that “Men of property are lovers of peace” (vol. II, pt. III, ch. XXII) Tocqueville sees commerce, equality and peace intertwined. This inter-relatedness has been often confirmed by contemporary scholars of political economy: “The interdependence of the world through trade is the very thing that makes modern life as sustainable as it is” (Ridley 2011, 42).

The second part of the dialectical movement is equality understood as passion. Passion for equality is rooted in the social state and shared by all as all tend to ameliorate their life. Democracy fosters the belief that all are equal by presenting possibilities for social advancement and material amelioration. Moreover, the more uniformity, the more the economic dissemblance becomes apparent. At the heart of an increasingly perfect uniformity, the smallest injustice seems shocking and unbearable. Because of this, the love of equality grows with equality itself. In egalitarian societies, inequality becomes an incentive for the poor to become rich. As a consequence, the more equality, the greater the incentives for peace.

Within the dialectic of equality as state and equality as a passion, the “desire for equality becomes all the more insatiable in the measure to which equality grows” (vol. II, pt. II, ch. XIII). Equality is an aspiration and a state of being (a condition). As a state and fact, it is always a “certain equality” only. As a passion, it is also a goal, norm and value, i.e., an egalitarian rule. However, within the dialectic, equality as a passion is more important. Democracy is fundamentally a disposition and a sentiment of resemblance. Precisely because there will always be a level of inequality, the democratic spirit fosters the hope of realizing a society without established and inherited differences. Equality as state offers political forms and a realistic belief in socio-material equality for all and as a socio-political passion therefore leads to peace and prosperity. A dialectic between the two is necessary for peace.

Dangers of, and Remedies to, Equality

Passions, and especially the passion for equality, contain inherent tensions and dangers. The first is a threat to liberty and social ties. Tocqueville argues that if equality cannot be obtained in liberty, people will want it in servitude and at the cost of diminishing virtues of social grandeur and beauty. As equality, wellbeing and peace are interrelated, the citizens of a democracy may be driven to social apathy and indifference, providing the state with immense power due to the individual isolation created by the drive to succeed. The passion for equality may also lead to revolutions (e.g., Tocqueville’s France) as equality may create democratic elements without establishing conditions for the functioning of democracy.

For this reason, it is essential to continually recall citizens back to participation in civic affairs. Tocqueville emphasizes the crucial role of marriage, family, laws, and religion in moderating commercial passions and helping individuals to go beyond merely personal interests. This includes political and social participation, creating occasions of communal action, and charging the citizens of minor administrative work in a community. Local and associative engagement creates liberty and social bonds. These correctives allow equality to

continue exerting an irresistible force while at the same time creating and sustaining conditions for lasting peace.

Conclusion: Tocquevillian Equality as Pacificism

Passions understood as socio-political guarantees of peace open a possibility of exploring the ethics of war and peace through the often ambiguous role of political passions. This essay has examined how Tocqueville, in his work *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, crafts a new perspective in political theory, one in which he understands passions as constitutive of not only a democratic system but also of peace. The essay suggests that a people's passion for equality fosters their political action, and it further develops a dialectical definition of democracy, paving the way for socio-political steps towards peace. This Tocquevillian peace is not any kind of peace but a peace where equality (as passion and state) and liberty are intertwined in a functioning socio-political system, corrected, if necessary, through associations, religion, and family life.

What creates democracy and peace is first of all a particular hierarchy of passions, among which priority is given to equality. The passion for equality allows the dispositions to peace to depend on "men of property who are lovers of peace." As with other modern philosophers, Tocqueville sees commerce, equality and freedom as intertwined.

Secondly, for a Tocquevillian democracy to be commercial, it must depend on an equality constantly corrected by freedom. Equality, consisting of egalitarianism and uniformity (social state) and in legislation (political state), orients "everyone" not only towards material wealth but towards the passion for equality, which is fundamentally a disposition to democracy.

Thirdly, a peaceful democracy can only function in what I have called a "dialectic" between equality understood as passion and equality understood as socio-political state. This is a constant dialectic: democracy as a balance between liberty and equality as well as between individual and public concerns. A 'dialectic' movement emerges between democracy as an aspiration (the desire/passion for equality) and democracy as a state of being. One aspect is democracy's 'nature,' its 'instinct': the democratic individual passionately wants to refocus all aspects of social life onto himself. The other is 'the art of democracy': the mix of institutions and traditions that allows citizens to foster among themselves the bonds that form civil society. When seen as the norm and form of existence, in other words as a 'dialectic,' democracy becomes the interpretive key for understanding the source of a political system's strength and stability. In this movement, priority is given to passion: once democracy is established as a socio-political state, the passion for equality exercises an irresistible pressure and secures peace, as long as the passion for equality does not override the passion for liberty but makes it possible. This is therefore a philosophy of pacificism. A peaceful socio-political system is *sine qua non*. Wars are exceptional to the spirit and the state of democracy.

The analysis of Tocqueville's moral philosophy of pacificism can shed new light on how and why political passions become the crucial for a peaceful political system. When seen as the norm and form of existence – in other words as a 'dialectic' – democracy becomes the interpretive key for understanding the source of a political system's strength, stability and peace. In other words, Tocquevillian democracy requires and necessitates peace. The analysis of *Democracy* shows that nothing justifies peace being taken away. Peace allows for many crucial economic, social and political benefits. It also influences a special development of habits of the heart, being connected to the questions of honor and achievement. For Tocqueville, wars in democracies are exceptional. If engaged in war, democracies underperform at the outset of war but outperform other regimes eventually. Predicting the rise of America due to its peaceful conditions, Tocqueville may in fact be advocating for pacificism, arguing for peace globally.

This analysis has further asked whether in Tocqueville there is an ethical claim towards peace (or war): Should wars be fought or not? Are they just? Should there be peace? The preliminary response is that Tocqueville's ethics of peace is implicit (only): it is his intent to prevent violent passions in France. Tocquevillian peace is peace that ensures and fosters equality, liberty, and associations (and *vice versa*). Such outcomes finally provide this study with a possibility to uncover specific conditions for passions to be pacifist. Such conditions are primarily two: First, equality needs to be understood as dialectic between passion and state; and, second, in order to secure peace, passions need to be structured hierarchically through equality, with the correctives of social ties and freedom.

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De Tocqueville's quotations are taken and translated from the following edition: Alexis de Tocqueville, *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, Tomes I et II, GF Flammarion, Paris 1981.

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