

Anglo-Americans:

During his nine-month journey through the United States, Tocqueville, who traveled from New York to Boston, from Boston to the Great Lakes, thence to New Orleans before reaching Washington and departing, was always very interested in the diversity of the population, which he sometimes viewed as an ethnologist—for example, in late July 1831, when he arrived at Saginaw Bay, which was on the Northwestern frontier at that time. In what was merely a sort of clearing with about thirty inhabitants, he expressed his emotion at encountering Indians, *Bois-Brûlés* (Métis born of the union between French trappers and Indian women), French-Canadians, and Englishmen, after having met immediately before the "new man," the American settler. He felt the same surprise in New Orleans; the city and its inhabitants constituted a motley mix of French, English, and Spanish elements, of Blacks and Métis...

But beyond this diversity, there is indeed a dominant element characterizing the population and the civilization that is being established, which distinguishes itself from the minorities it dominates. Of course, there are "Americans"—by which we mean inhabitants of the United States—but the term that seems to suit him best, to be the most pertinent, is that of "Anglo-Americans," which he introduces as early as Chapter II, Part One, of the first *Democracy*: "Origin of the Anglo-Americans, and its Importance in Relation to their Future Social Condition," not doubting that while this terminology is the one best adapted to the situation of the moment, it is destined to be replaced by that of "Americans," which he already uses and continues to use, even though it is not truly pertinent to define only the inhabitants of the United States. (The French terms *états-unien* or *étatsuniens* are not attested until 1926 and 1937, respectively). Furthermore, the concept of the "Anglo-American," which Tocqueville never explicitly defines, nevertheless has a very specific meaning that emerges from the seventy-four occurrences in the two *Democracies*. It evidently excludes all inhabitants of the Union who are not of English or British origin: Indians, the French, other immigrants of European origin, Hispanics coming from Mexico...

But while the inhabitants of Canada—except for the Indians, the *Bois-Brûlés*, and the French—are English, the Anglo-Americans constitute a new genre made up of different subgroups. The English who populated Virginia in 1607 were of a different nature than the Pilgrims who settled on the East Coast in 1620. The new settlers establishing themselves in the West are also a different group, less civilized, less cultivated; yet they belong no less to this new ensemble of Anglo-Americans, whose establishment in a new country has allowed them to acquire new mores that distinguish them from the English, to whom they are simultaneously close in origin and yet so different in matters as essential as language (which contributes to shaping the spirit of a people), manners, and the way of behaving toward strangers.

Thus, in the second *Democracy*, Tocqueville devotes an entire chapter to explaining: "How American Democracy has Modified the English Language." Passing from an aristocratic country to a democratic country, the language has changed somewhat in nature; similarly, English and aristocratic manners have given way to an astonishing vulgarity, by which he is surprised but which amuses him, so considerable is it: "the simplicity of manners has almost irresistible charms: their familiarity is engaging and even their coarseness does not always displease." While the English who meet abroad remain reserved and seek to avoid one another, Anglo-Americans go toward one another as if they had known each other for all eternity, and: "Americans, however, are attached to England by their origin, religion, language, and partially by their mores; they differ from it only in their social state. It may therefore be said that the

reserve of the English flows from the Constitution of the Country much more than from that of the citizens."