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## 公開講演会報告

## Remaking Religion, Remaking Civil Society: Connections and Differences, c. 1750–1850

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David Hall of Harvard Divinity School reflected on a classic question in American history, the relationship in antebellum America between Protestantism, on the one hand, and civic and political culture on the other. What were the connections between these different aspects of American life? Were they in harmony, each following the same path as the other?

These questions become even more interesting when we insert the rise of voluntary associations into the story. Quantitatively, the process of change in religion, politics, and civic life seems to follow the same path. In religion, with every denomination functioning as a “voluntary” organization, attendance, participation, and membership rise sharply in the ante-bellum period, with Baptists and Methodists leading the way. In politics, the percentage of men who voted in national elections gradually doubles between 1824 and 1840, thanks in part to increasingly contested elections and the emergence of national parties (the Second Party System). In civic life, the relatively few voluntary societies in 1790s America begin an astonishing rate of increase, with moral reform societies (temperance, anti slavery) joining libraries, improvement societies, school committees, fire departments, home and foreign mission societies, and a host of others. It is easy to forget how different the eighteenth century was in these respects; for these trends seem to define what is most “American” about the nation’s public and religious life. For example, in Northampton, Massachusetts, the town where Jonathan Edwards practiced his ministry, the Congregational church was the only religious organization and no voluntary societies existed.

To historians who narrate the “democratization” of American culture, as Gordon Wood does in *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (1991), a near perfect harmony exists between Protestantism, here reduced to revivalism, and an emerging political culture founded on broad participation and a dismantling of old hierarchies. But in *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville painted a more nuanced picture. For him, of course, “democracy” was a social phenomenon, a dissolving of traditional forms of authority; and he wondered aloud in the pages of the *Democracy* about the consequences of this shift: would Americans fall victim to the “tyranny of public opinion” and their vaunted individualism give way to conformity? Hoping to identify structures and practices that would sustain a democratic society, Tocqueville cited the emergence of voluntary societies (and of churches that, unlike the Catholic church in France), also functioned as voluntary organizations. He felt that the multiple and overlapping forms of association in civil society could serve as a bulwark against the negative aspects of democracy.

What Wood omits from his telling of the story, as do most historians of Protestantism, is any recognition of the dismay of many clergy and lay Christians as they watched Americans riot (against Catholics, against abolitionists, etc.) in the 1830s, and as they saw demagogues rise to political power. One of the best places to encounter this anxiety is in the writings of Catherine Beecher, oldest of the Beecher daughters and famous for her concept of the women-led home



as the haven or safeguard of true freedom. Beecher had good company. The Whig Party, also ignored in most accounts of "Jacksonian America," was led by men who worried about the excesses of populist democracy and who favored institutions such as the common school, seeing in them a possible counterweight to other tendencies.

Whigs had an ally in some wings of Protestantism, in particular the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and (some) Methodists and Baptists, all of whom regarded churches as sites for creating and sustaining the moral discipline, or virtue, that would enable democratic society to survive and flourish. In effect, these denominations reiterated a tradition of complaint that we find in seventeenth-century New England in the theme of "declension." For them, however, there was a special urgency to ensuring that the new nation would survive as a moral entity. Hence the great projects of *home* missions, including tract and bible societies. Hence the promoting of temperance, a cause endorsed by some Whigs but never by Jacksonians. Self-control lay at the heart of the evangelical program and, as Daniel Walker Howe has shown, at the heart of the Whig program as well.

To say that Protestantism and political culture moved in the same paths and mutually influenced each other is, therefore, misleading if we use "democratization" as their common bond. Instead, Whigs and most evangelicals understood liberty not as absolute freedom but, in keeping with the Bible and older versions of Protestantism, as obligation: liberty to do what was right.

The story as told by Wood and many others must therefore be supplemented with what has just been argued.

(本稿は2010年9月11日に大東文化大学国際比較政治研究所の主催で行なわれた講演の要約である。また日本学術振興会科学研究費補助金基盤研究(B)「日米における政教分離の起源と展開」[課題番号21330032]による研究成果の一部である)