Abstract

Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations and Alexis de Tocqueville’s Democracy in America are two of the most important and valuable contributions to debate surrounding democracy and civil society. In addition, they are two transcendent socio-economic and political analyses of their time. Their current relevancy takes root in the narrow relation that they maintain with respect to the liberal tradition and the need to understand -from this critical horizon opened by these great thinkers- the relevancy that civil society acquires in the construction of our respective democratic claims. As is known widely, Smith and Tocqueville proposed to explain the new society that arose and developed before their eyes. It was a new historical reality in which civil society became the central element of their understanding. Contrary to every thought by the scholastic liberalism so in vogue at present, these studies were a product of two tireless minds that, by closely examining the components of the civil society, criticized the excesses of that new social order.

Keywords

Civil Society, Democracy, Citizen-merchant, liberalism, equality.