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Book Review “ Religion in America: A political History”

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Introduction

Denis Lacorne is a French renowned history scholar, religious critical thinker, and a researcher. Apart from writing various books and journals, Denis Lacorne is also known for shaping France and American religious history and French social development. In addition, Lacorne is an established commentator and an anchor in French televisions. The popularity of Lacorne in United States of America and European countries is especially enhanced by his brilliant contribution in the analysis of American religious development and global politics and economic development. Numerous scholars have described Denis Lacorne as a friendly observer of America religion, culture, and politics.

In his book, *Religion in America: A political history*, Denis Lacorne has systematically explored the America religion in a vivid, systematic, and wise manner. In his book, Denis Lacorne has tried to compare the America religious development and France current religious beliefs and practices. The book has not only portrayed Denis Lacorne as a prominent writer but has also brought out clearly the similarities and differences between America religion and religious practices from other global societies (Lacorne, 2011 p. 37). Denis Lacorne can be described as one of the most reliable and effective analyst of America religion beliefs and practices. He used American myths to describe and explore the origin and development of American culture and religion.

Being born and matured as a religious believer in France, Denis Lacorne has

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effectively used his competence in coming up with a valuable and dependable writing on America religion. As a scholar, Denis Lacorne has been a religious researcher who have complied numerous writings on various religious themes. Despite attaining numerous rewards from renowned organisation and accreditation entities, Denis Lacorne has been a senior lecturer in various America universities. Denis Lacorne has as well participated in numerous global and local conferences and public congregations that address America religious beliefs and practices. At present, Denis Lacorne has published more than 20 journals that explore the America culture and religious history. The subsequent essay will therefore provide a book review the “ Religion in America: A political history” by Denis Lacorne. In the book review, the writing will use Denis Lacorne point of view to examine the American religious development and the role of religion in American lives.

In his writing, Denis Lacorne has identified various problems that affect American religious history and development. The author of the book Religion in America: A political history has as well attempted to offer solution to the identified problems and challenges in America religion. As described by Denis Lacorne in his writing, American religion is non-contradiction between Protestantism and enlightenment. Denis Lacorne further observes that, a good number of young Americans do not understand their religious practice and beliefs. It is therefore importance for American population to be educated and trained their religious beliefs and practices in order to avoid confusion and contradiction. Denis Lacorne observed that, there are no

systematic structures and mechanism in American education systems that educate community members on issues regarding the indigenous American religious beliefs. In the book, the author asserts that American religious beliefs is contaminated by beliefs from other societies. The contamination is largely brought about by the increase in the number of immigrants in United States of America as well as scientific development in the country. In his observation, Denis Lacorne has as well started that, religious beliefs and practices in United States of America has played a noticeable role in advancing the American democracy and social development. According to Denis Lacorne explanation in his book, in the past two decades, the America religion has been a blend of American pragmatism, enlightenment, religious entrepreneurialism and innovation.

In his work, Denis Lacorne has acknowledged the exiting misconception between various religious scholars on the role and contribution of religion in America life. As explained in the book, there is consistent contradiction and misconception between European and French scholars and intellectuals on the significant of religion among Americans. The misconception has therefore result to the emergence of conflicting interpretation of the role of America religion among American social and political life. As explained by French elite, America religion has very limited role in America life. American public is largely determined by the existing economic development, technological invention, and political factor. On contrary, some American scholars have argued that, religious is the pillar of American social, economic, and political life. The confusion on the role and significant of American religion among Americans' social life have therefore resulted to the

emergence of contradictory impulses and ironic utterances among American scholars and French intellectuals. However, in demonstrating his understanding of American religious beliefs, Denis Lacorne in his book has tried to come up with a neutral position on religious issues. In his work, Denis Lacorne has stated that, the Americans' life is not only shaped by emerging political, technological and scientific factors but religion as well has a recognisable role in influencing their way of life.

Reasons for writing the book “ Religion in America: A political history”

Denis Lacorne decision to write this book was influenced by various conflicting factors. Initially, Denis Lacorne decision to writing a religious book on American population was influenced by his intensive passion of American religion. Denis Lacorne desire to understand American religious beliefs and practices therefore motivated him to undertake intensive and systematic research on American religion. The huge stock of ideas and knowledge that Denis Lacorne acquired from his research therefore enriched the content that was used to compile the book. Secondly, having stayed in America for a considerable period, Denis Lacorne had adequate understanding on American religion. As opposed to other French religious intellectuals, Denis Lacorne believed that he had adequate information and facts to compile a dependant writing on American culture and religious beliefs. In writing this book, Denis Lacorne as well intended to address the existing confusion and conflicts between American religious intellectuals and other intellectuals from other European countries. In his book, he tried to compare the

similarities and differences that existed between American religion practices and religious beliefs from other communities in the world.

Methodology used by the author in the book “ Religion in America: A political history”

In his work, Denis Lacorne utilised various compatible scientific methodologies. Employment of various methodologies therefore gave Denis Lacorne the ability to effectively and systematically present his argument. In collection and analysis of his evidence, the author used survey research method. In this method, the author collected and analysed the relevant information that was appropriate in his research. On the other hand, the author used observation method to understand the trend and pattern of American religious beliefs and practices. He spared most of his research time in observing the manner in which community members responded and reacted to various religion teachings. Denis Lacorne as well participated intensively in religious activities in America. In his participation, Denis Lacorne interviewed American citizens in order to understand the significant and role of religion in their daily activities.

Subsequent to intensive and well-organised exercise of collecting and analysing the relevant and reliable information, the author reported his work in form of writing a religious book. In his book, the author has constantly quoted other scholars and religious thinkers. Referring to the work of other scholars have not only advanced the credibility of his work but has as well enriched the content of his book. Moreover, in his book, Denis Lacorne has also used various writing styles. The use of a variety of writing styles including stories within a story, flashbacks and similes has significantly

helped in encouraging readers of the book to continue reading the book.

There is also systematic flow of the content in the book. The systematic flow of the book's content has therefore created suspicion that encourages readers to read the book (Crook, 2012 p. 4).

Hypothesis of Denis Lacorne

As defined, a hypothesis is a set of statements that attempts to explain a specific state of affair. It aims at expanding facts in a unified and precise manner. In most instances, hypothesis forms the basis of an experiment that is intended at establishing plausibility. The Denis Lacorne hypothesis in his book is that religious beliefs and practices in United States of America has a systematic role and contribution in shaping American social economic, scientific, and political life. According to the research findings, there is enough evidence to assert that religious is a very valuable factor that shapes and influences Americans' life. Despite shaping the America ways of life, religion also brings about peace and stability among different communities that lives in United States of America. Moreover, based on the America history, a good number of social transformation and development in America revolves around American religious beliefs and practices.

Although other religious have significantly transformed the America religious beliefs and practices, there are adequate materials and resources that describe America religious beliefs. As explained by Denis Lacorne, American historians have also claimed that, the America history is incomplete without the inclusion of religious transformation and history. Politically, states activities such as swearing in of political leaders are based on the existing

religious beliefs. In reference to this book, the author have largely succeeded in supporting his hypothesis. In his book, Denis Lacorne has presented adequate and reliable evidence that support his hypothesis. Although the hypothesis is subject to challenges from other scholars, the evidence that is presented to support the hypothesis can stand the test of time. However, despite succeeding in defending his hypothesis with sufficient evidence, Denis Lacorne evidence is largely based on his own observation as opposed to scientific research and evaluation (Holoch, 2011 p. 34).

The manner in which the authors question was answered

Strengths of the book

Initially, the book is based on numerous empirical evidences and statistical facts. Prior to compiling this book, the author engaged in intensive research to understand the American culture and religious beliefs and practices. The utilisation of empirical evidences has therefore advanced the credibility of the book. Secondly, the author has used various writing styles in the book. Effective employment of various writing styles has not only encouraged the reader to read the book but has also enhanced effective representation of the author's argument. The book also has a strong a clear thesis that the reader can easily identify. The scholar was able to raise his argument that is supported accordingly throughout the book. This presents a strength of the book since with a clear argument, the reader is able to scrutinize and understand the author's argument. Moreover, using numerous writing styles has a well-demonstrated writer's ability of writing quality writings. The book also has quoted the work and researches from various scholars from

different professional and religious backgrounds. The work of other scholars is used to support the author's argument thus advancing the credibility of the book. The book has as well addressed audiences from different religious backgrounds and generation. Therefore, the book is likely to remain relevant and beneficial for a long period. Denis Lacorne is renowned scholars and a critical religious thinker. Therefore, his work is likely to attract many readers and scholars due to his reputation.

Weakness of the Book

Firstly, the author has used his work and experiences on America religion to undermine the work of other scholars. In the book under study, the author has used the collected evidence to challenge other scholars. Secondly, instead of relying on evidence that is collected through scientific method, the author has over utilised the information that is acquired from other means such as observation and personal experiences. Moreover, the book is also written using very complicated language and religious jargons. This makes it very difficult for a leader to understand the author's argument regarding the America religion. Employment of various writing styles is also interfering with systematic flow of the content of the book. The author has also failed to offers adequate examples to support his argument on American religion. Instead, the author has used his own knowledge and personal experience to support his argument.

Concepts learnt from Lacorne's work and the relevance of the book in understanding the contemporary world and the contemporary religious and socio-political challenges of USA in the 21st century?

Through reading Denis Lacorne work, the reader is able to understand the significant of religious among Americans. Contrary to the argument from various scholars who underrates the role of religious among America, Denis Lacorne has claimed that, religious plays a very essential role in shaping American development. By reading Denis Lacorne, the reader will as well understand the role of religious in American history. As claimed by Denis Lacorne in his book, the American history is not complete without the involvement of religious transformation and development. The understanding of contemporary world is also useful in understanding transformation and development in modern in social and economic sector. Moreover, the understanding of contemporary world will as well help an individual to predict future changes in one's economic and social life. The knowledge on the contemporary religious and social-political challenges in America in the 21st century is also essential in understanding the significant of religion in the society. In addition, the understanding of the United States of America challenges in 21st century is also help in acknowledging the relationship between religion and socio-political development in America.

Intellectual opinions and reactions about the book

The book, " Religion in America: A political history" by Denis Lacorne have largely helped in facilitating the understanding of America religious beliefs and practices. In spite of providing the historical development of American religion, the book has as well explored the role and importance of religion in political economic and social development. The book has also offered an opportunity for the reader to predict future religious development in

America. Despite offering adequate and comprehensive analysis and explanation of America religion, the author should have intensively included the opinion and ideas of other scholars. Effective employment of various writing styles and it has relied on empirical evidence has also advanced the reliability of the book. Therefore, in order to understand the history of American religion and the significant of religion in shaping American lives, scholars and students are highly encouraged to read this book.

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