ABSTRACT

BOWLER, KIMBERLY ANNE. The Noble Savage from Amerindian to Arab: Continuities in French Perceptions of the Other. (Under the direction of Akram Fouad Khater.)

Previous discussions of the development of French racial stereotyping of the Arabs and Kabyles in Algeria overlook the continuities upon which these stereotypes were built. The archetype of the Noble Savage, particularly as inspired by the Amerindians of New France, played a critical role in the evolution of French perceptions of the Arabs. The Noble Savage influenced French perceptions of the Arabs during the Napoleonic conquest of Egypt, but his influence gained momentum during the French colonization of Algeria. Although the Arabs did not conform completely to the image of the Noble Savage, the indigenous Kabyles of Algeria appeared to be his embodiment. The French had encountered the Noble Savage in New France and his image had been disseminated further through the popular travel accounts and the "natural man" of French intellectuals such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In discovering the Kabyles, the French discovered the perfect Noble Savage. The valorization of the Kabyles as Noble Savages resulted in the demonization of the Arabs as barbaric and ignorant. This led to a division in French attitudes between the "good" Kabyle and the "bad" Arab. Although French colonial and imperial interests in Algeria contributed to the formulation and perpetuation of this division, the long-standing and pervasive French understanding of and sympathy for the Noble Savage significantly facilitated its development.

THE NOBLE SAVAGE FROM AMERINDIAN TO ARAB: CONTINUITIES IN FRENCH PERCEPTIONS OF THE OTHER

by
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BIOGRAPHY

Alys Kingen Bowler and Robert H. Bowler welcomed their first child, Kimberly Anne, into the world on 9 March 1971. In 1975, the Bowler family moved north from Peekskill, New York to the outskirts of the metropolis of Salt Point. Consisting of only a post office and a small convenience store, Salt Point remained home to Kimberly throughout her childhood and until she graduated from Arlington High School in 1989.

Kimberly spent the next four years as an undergraduate at Cornell University, graduating in 1993 with a B.A. in Near Eastern Studies. After several unsatisfying professional experiences, Kimberly entered the M.A. in History program at North Carolina State University.

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INTRODUCTION

Nearly four hundred years separate the initial French forays into the Canadian wilderness from the 1830 French conquest of Algiers, and yet French attitudes toward and perceptions of the indigenous peoples of North America and North Africa bear many striking similarities. The qualities apparently embodied by the Arabs in Egypt and the Kabyles[1] of Algeria overlap significantly with the qualities that the French believed the Amerindians possessed. The Noble Savage archetype provides the essential link connecting these disparate groups. First appearing as early as the first century C.E. in Tacitus' descriptions of the Germanic tribes, the Noble Savage experienced a renaissance during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The popularity and availability of voyage accounts from the New World contributed to this renaissance as did the political and social writing of intellectuals such as Michel de Montaigne and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, both of whom used the figure of the Noble Savage in their work.

Previous scholars have overlooked the significance of the continuity of the Noble Savage archetype in French perceptions of the Other, and the continuity of cross-cultural racial stereotyping remains largely unexplored. Although French knowledge of the Arabs and Muslims reaches back to the eighth century Arab invasions of southern Europe, through the Crusades, and to subsequent trade relations with the Ottoman Empire, the

[1] In Algeria, the two main ethnic groups are the Arabs, who lived primarily near the coast, and the Berbers, who lived primarily in the interior of the land. The Kabyles were a subgroup of Berbers; the term was applied loosely, but over time came to be used to refer to the mountain-dwelling Berber tribes of the Djurjura region. Patricia M. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities* (London and New York: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 1995; paperback reprint 1999), 5.

effect this produced on French perceptions of the Arabs and Muslims has been analyzed.[2] Scholars have devoted inadequate attention, however, to the Amerindian Noble Savage and his relationship to the Arabs and the Kabyles. This connection holds particular significance because in the nineteenth century, the Kabyles came to embody the image of the "Noble Savage." The view of the Kabyles as the model Noble Savages exerted considerable influence on French attitudes toward not just the Kabyles but the Arabs as well.[3] The long-term intellectual and sociopolitical background of French racial stereotyping is central to understanding French responses to the Arabs and Kabyles.

Moreover, scholars have over-emphasized the role imperialism played in the development of racial imagery and stereotyping. Certainly, indigenous peoples suffered under European colonial regimes. Just as certainly, racism combined with a Eurocentric sense of superiority contributed to European rationalizations for and perpetuation of oppression of indigenous races.[4] Nonetheless, it is an over-simplification to define the racial stereotyping of Arabs and Kabyles in North Africa as the product of the French colonial mission or of French Republicanism.[5] Such stereotyping might have been an

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[2] For example, see Henry Laurens' *Les origins intellectual de l'expedition de l'Égypte: l'orientalisme islamisant en France (1698-1798)* (Istanbul: Editions Isis, 1987).

[3] The result of this is the "Kabyle Myth." Patricia Lorcin traced the Myth's development in *Imperial Identities*. The "Kabyle Myth" refers to the racial theory that the indigenous Berber tribes of North Africa were a separate race from, and superior to, the Arabs. Nineteenth century French scholars devoted much effort to discovering the historic and genealogical origins of the Kabyles whom they theorized to be descendents of the Germanic tribes that had conquered North Africa several centuries earlier.

[4] This is more true for nineteenth and twentieth century colonialism but arguable, however, for earlier French imperial ventures. This debate exceeds the range of this paper, but for a general discussion of alternate intellectual underpinnings of imperialism, readers could consult Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and the Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

[5] Patricia Lorcin reached this conclusion and continued to add that the "valorization of the Kabyles and their society was the symbolic endorsement of the values of French Republican society . . . [Colonial

intentional policy that the French government implemented in Algeria,[6] although this remains open to question, but colonialism alone fails to provide an adequate explanation for the creation and influence of racial stereotypes. The archetype of the Noble Savage, pervasive among the French, provided a familiar and compelling image around which to form understandings of the Arabs and Kabyles. The Noble Savage supplied the buildings blocks for the foundation of the Kabyle Myth.[7] Without the French experiences in the New World, the Amerindians of the voyage accounts, and Rousseau's "natural man," the Kabyle Myth lacks sufficient power of imagery.

This thesis will explore the deeper cultural themes underlying French perceptions of the Other. To do so requires the examination of sources, travel literature and classical works, too often ignored by previous scholars, as well as contemporaneous political and social discourse. The wider imperial and intellectual climate of the nineteenth century as it applies to the French mission in Algeria also will be considered. Previous scholars have argued that racial stereotyping of the Arabs and Kabyles resulted from France's imperial mission. I intend to demonstrate that such stereotyping was a more nuanced, complex, and long-term trend.

The first section will explore early modern travel literature. Writings generated by the voyageurs and later travelers to the New World established an influential

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myths and ethnic categorization] were the metaphors of control and instruments of marginalization arising out of the need to maintain dominance without perpetual recourse to force." Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 241.

[6] The scholar Charles-Ageron wrote that the Kabyle Myth was a "determined political reflex" of the French government's policy of divide and conquer. As interpreted by Patricia Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 11.

[7] See page two, footnote three, for an explanation of the Kabyle Myth.

precedent for French discussions of the Other. The Amerindians provided the first example that the French encountered in a colonial context. The descriptions of Amerindians influenced later representations of Arabs and Kabyles. Next, I will discuss some of the literary and philosophical reflections inspired by depictions of the Amerindians. Amerindian society led intellectuals such as Michel de Montaigne and Jean-Jacques Rousseau to draw wider conclusions about human society and nature. Descriptive accounts of New World travels included sociological and anthropological hypotheses. Finally, I will bring the Other to North Africa, where the "Scientific Missions" of Napoleon in Egypt and the French colonization of Algeria reincarnated him in the Arab and the Kabyle.

CHAPTER ONE

I am a traveler and a sailor, that is to say a liar and a fool according to that class of lazy, arrogant writers who, in the darkness of their study philosophize till kingdom come on the world and its inhabitants and subject nature to their personal imagination.[8]

-- Louis-Antoine de Bougainville

At its peak of popularity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the voyage account supplanted even romances in popularity in France.[9] The French scholar Paul Hazard writes that the mere word "voyage" in a title excited the interests of readers.[10] Colorfully, Hazard asks, "Did not these travelers unfold to an age that was steeped in intellectualism pictures and scenes that laid a magic spell upon it?"[11] Travel literature gave rise to another popular literary genre, travel fiction. Tales of real or imagined voyages to exotic lands combined to create popular notions of these far-off places and their inhabitants.[12] The majority of Europeans never traveled to the New World themselves, so the voyage accounts presented to them the only available view of the new lands. Voyage accounts and travel literature played an important role in the creation and

[8] As quoted by Lucien Lebvre in *A New Kind of History and Other Essays*, ed. Peter Burke, trans. K. Folca. (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers; Harper Torchbooks, 1973), 235.
[9] Olive Patricia Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage* (Edmonton, Alberta: The University of Alberta Press, 1984), 6.
[10] Paul Hazard, *La Crise de la Conscience Européenne* (Paris, France: Boivin & C^{ie}, Editeurs, 1935), 14.
[11] Paul Hazard, *The European Mind, 1680-1715*, trans. J. Lewis May (Cleveland, Ohio: The World Publishing Co., 1953), 359.
[12] Geoffrey Symcox, "The Wild Man's Return: The Enclosed Vision of Rousseau's *Discourses*," in *The Wild Man Within*, ed. Edward Dudley and Maximillian E. Novak (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972), 225.

dissemination of racial stereotypes. They were popular and widely circulated, and they clearly influenced later thinkers.

This introduced a significant contributing element in French racial stereotypes. Scholars have not sufficiently appreciated voyage accounts because of the often fantastical descriptions and overt biases this literature contains. For most early modern Europeans, however, foreign lands were accessible only through the literature that described these lands. When the voyage accounts were written, they were widely believed to provide true accounts of the foreign lands and peoples they described. These voyage accounts and travel literature provided the popular images of the Other, and the images became a template that would be placed over other places and groups of people.

Three examples of early voyage accounts provide insight into prevailing perceptions of the Amerindians in early modern France. The writing of Marc Lescarbot, an attorney, Father Gabriel Sagard, a lay brother with the Recollect missionaries, and the Baron de Lahontan, a military officer, consistently reinforced Amerindian stereotypes. Lescarbot, Sagard, and Lahontan represent the range of people who traveled to the harsh and inhospitable Canadian wilderness, and they allow us to glimpse the various motivations that led such men to make and write about such travels. Lescarbot, Sagard, and Lahontan sought personal rewards in the New World, not the imposition of French rule over the Amerindians; furthermore, these men regarded themselves as members of a larger French mission to colonize the New World. Their writings included nothing about hopes of or expectations for a larger political role for France in the New World, although

both Sagard and Lescarbot worked to spread Christianity and Lescarbot believed that the French had a Christian duty to do so. Nonetheless, all three writers depicted a fairly uniform image of the Amerindians; an image that later resurfaced not only in the political and social writings of French intellectuals but also in French descriptions of the Egyptian Arabs as well as the Algerian Arabs and Kabyles.

Marc Lescarbot published his *History of New France* in 1609 and then again in 1611 and 1612. Lescarbot compiled the accounts of earlier travelers, such as Cartier, Champlain, Laudonnière, and de Poutrincourt, to the New World "in order to bring them again to life, and by thus collecting them endeavor to give them more strength to resist the all-consuming quicklime of time."[13] In the *History of New France,* Lescarbot combined information from earlier sources with an account of his own experiences as a resident of the Port Royal colony in New France between 1606 and 1607.

Lescarbot settled in New France because he wanted to live a simple life working the land, away from the intrigues of French society; hence the label one scholar applied to Lescarbot, "Rousseau before Rousseau."[14] Escapism, therefore, might have served as Lescarbot's greatest motivation to move to Port Royal. Unfortunately, financial difficulties suffered by his colony forced Lescarbot to return to France after only about a

[13] Marc Lescarbot, *The History of New France,* vol. 1, trans. W. L. Grant, intr. H.P. Biggar (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), 30.
[14] George M. Wrong, introduction to *Long Journey to the Country of the Hurons,* by Father Gabriel Sagard-Théodat ed. George M. Wrong, trans. H.H. Langdon (New York: Greenwood Press for Champlain Society, 1968), xiii. Wrong draws an analogy between Lescarbot and Rousseau because Lescarbot sought to lead a simple and honest life working the land in New France and hoped that this opportunity would entice other Frenchmen to move there as well.

year. Despite his own lack of success in New France, Lescarbot continued to believe in and support the establishment of colonies in the New World.

A devout Christian, Lescarbot appealed to his compatriots' Christianity and national pride to encourage them to move to New France. Lescarbot wrote

> For as though their [the French people's] wish was to oppose the conversion of these poor Western peoples, and the advancement of the glory of God and of the King, we find a set of men full of avarice and envy, who would not draw a sword in the service of the King, nor suffer the slightest ill in the world for the honour of God,. . . men who prefer to see the English and the Dutch win possession of it instead of the French and would fain have the name of God remain unknown in these quarters.[15]

In publishing his *History of New France*, Lescarbot therefore might have hoped that he would galvanize others to participate in his vision of New France, a vision that required the sharing of the "name of God" with the Amerindians.

The *History of New France* included many of Lescarbot's personal observations about the Amerindians who lived around Port Royal. He wrote that the Amerindians often suffered from hunger and starvation during the winter months because they did not store food in anticipation of the bad winter weather[16] and claimed that he never saw a dwarf among the Amerindians nor any with birth defects or deformities.[17] Lescarbot's Amerindians possessed great athletic prowess and physical strength as well as highly developed senses; allegedly, some of the savages possessed olfactory skills such that they

[15] Lescarbot, *History of New France*, 1: 251-252.
[16] Lescarbot, *History of New France*, 3: 52.
[17] Lescarbot, *History of New France*, 3: 137; 143.

could tell the hand of a Spaniard from the hand of a Frenchman by the smell.[18] Additionally, Lescarbot observed that the savages enjoyed peace as a result of the simplicity of their lives

> That which further aids the health of our savages, is the concord which reigns among them, and the small care they take for the commodities of this life, for which we vex ourselves. They have not that ambition, which in these parts gnaws men's minds, and fills them with cares, bringing blinded men to the grave in the very flower of their age….[19]

Amerindians, therefore, were physically whole, healthy, and attractive and enjoyed a peace of mind derived from the simplicity of their lifestyles.

Reflecting their outward beauty, the Amerindians possessed an innate virtue and goodness. Lescarbot wrote that the Amerindians exhibited great generosity and hospitality, giving without the expectation of receiving anything in return. Because the Amerindians were satisfied with anything given to them honestly and did not bargain, Lescarbot believed them to be "high-minded."[20] This nobility of spirit extended to the treatment of their enemies' wives and little children; demonstrating "humanity and mercy," the Amerindians spared their lives.[21]

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[18] Lescarbot, *History of New France*, 3: 146.
[19] Lescarbot, *History of New France*, 3: 189.
[20] Lescarbot, *History of New France*, 3: 212-213.
[21] Lescarbot, History of New France, 3: 215.

Father Sagard arrived in New France in June 1623 and lived there until the autumn of 1624 when he was ordered to return to France.[22] Sagard published his memoirs, *Sagard's Long Journey to the Country of the Hurons*, first in 1632 and then again in 1636.[23] Father Sagard, a member of the Récollect missionaries[24], lived among the Hurons to teach them about Christianity and, in the process, carefully documented their lifestyle and customs. Because Father Sagard, like the Jesuits, sought to convert the Amerindians to Christianity, his reasons for writing the *Long Journey to the Country of the Hurons* probably were similar to the reasons that motivated the Jesuit missionaries to write the *Relations*, their accounts of the New World.

Beginning in the early seventeenth century, the Jesuits embarked upon extensive missionary efforts in New France. Published by the Jesuits, the *Relations* provided accounts of their adventures and missionary work. The Jesuits noted the Amerindians' apparent cruelty and immoral behavior, but on the whole the Jesuits depicted the Amerindians as inherently virtuous and good but lacking in knowledge of Christ. Because the Jesuits believed that man was good and that no sinner was irredeemable, their optimistic outlook contributed to their favorable view of the Amerindians. Also, the Jesuits needed to justify and defend their missionary efforts in New France, and so they

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[22] Gabriel Sagard. Answers.com. Wikipedia, Wikipedia, 2005. http://www.answers.com/topic/gabriel-sagard, accessed August 18, 2005.
[23] Wrong, *Journey to the Country of the Hurons*, xvi-xvii.
[24] The Récollects, established in France in 1570, were a branch of the (Roman Catholic) Franciscans. The Récollects were the first missionaries to arrive in New France in 1615. During the French Revolution, the order was suppressed. From "Recollect" link followed from "Gabriel Sagard." Answers.com. Wikipedia, Wikipedia, 2005. http://www.answers.com/topic/gabriel-sagard, accessed August 18, 2005.

needed to believe that the Amerindians ultimately could be converted.[25] Sagard probably also sought "Christian" qualities and values among the Amerindians to justify his own conversion efforts and to present this goal as obtainable and worthwhile. The man of god held a moral responsibility to teach Christian doctrine, practices, and faith to the Amerindians.

Echoing Lescarbot's earlier observations, Father Sagard praised the Amerindians' generosity and hospitality, commenting that the tribes among whom he and his fellow missionaries traveled had treated them very kindly. In contrast to the French, the Amerindians displayed an innate goodness toward and compassion for their brethren. Father Sagard wrote that

> They reciprocate hospitality and give such assistance to one another that the necessities of all are provided for without there being any indigent beggar in their towns and villages; and they considered it a very bad thing when they heard it said that there were in France a great many of these needy beggars, and thought this was for lack of charity in us, and blamed us for it severely.[26]

The Amerindians selflessly cared for all the members of their community, unknowingly following Christ's example. Additionally, Sagard noted that "they rarely wrong one

[25] Symcox, "Wild Man's Return," 227.
[26] Father Gabriel Sagard-Théodat, *Long Journey to the Country of the Hurons*, ed. and intr. George M. Wrong, trans. H.H. Langdon (originally published as *Le grand voyage au pays des Hurons*, Paris, 1632; reprint as *Sagard's long journey to the country of the Hurons*, Toronto: Champlain Society 1939; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press for Champlain Society, 1968), 88-89 (page citations are to 1968 reprint edition).

another,"[27] suggesting that the Amerindians treated each other with honesty and respect. In victory, they exhibited mercy and kindness toward the women and children of their enemies, sparing their lives and generally treating them well.[28] In general, the image Sagard presented of the Amerindian was that of a kind, noble, and compassionate warrior who lived a simple and virtuous life. The Amerindians' greatest faults were their ignorance of Christ and European manners. Regardless of the motivations behind the Jesuits' and Sagard's positive assessment of the Amerindian character, the positive qualities they emphasized contributed to the development of the "nobility" of the Noble Savage archetype.

The Baron de Lahontan's *Voyages to North America* provides a concluding example of a voyage account from the New World. Between 1683 and 1693, the Baron de Lahontan traveled extensively throughout the New World, from the colonies of New France in Canada to the Mississippi, Ohio, and Illinois Rivers. Originally a member of troops sent to New France to guard the colonies against the attacks of the Iroquois, Lahontan distinguished himself in the military and enjoyed advancement and success. A series of misfortunes and political missteps resulted in Lahontan's exile from both New France and France itself. A suggestion that Lahontan's *Voyages to North America* "was avowedly printed as a last resource on the part of the bankrupt fugitive" seems quite plausible.[29] Counting on the anticipated financial rewards of publishing a voyage

[27] Sagard, *Journey to the Country of the Hurons*, 95.
[28] Sagard, *Journey to the Country of the Hurons*, 140.
[29] Reuben Gold Thwaites, introduction to Baron De Lahontan, *New Voyages to North America*, by Baron De Lahontan, 2 vols. (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1905; reprint of 1703 English edition), xi; xxxiv.

account, Lahontan sought to write a book that would provide the public with the literary adventures for which it hungered. Because Lahonton's motivation in writing was financial gain, it is unlikely he desired to stray far from the formulas established by earlier travel literature in order to ensure a readership for his book. Therefore, because *Voyages to North America* remained within the established framework of previous voyage accounts, it both reinforced and further disseminated the Amerindian stereotypes previously established.

In *Voyages to North America*, published in 1703,[30] Lahontan recounted his travel adventures and painted an idyllic picture of life among the Amerindians in the forests of New France. The Amerindian was "a creature of rare beauty of form, a rational being thinking deep thoughts on great subjects, but freed from the trammels and frets of civilization, bound by none of its restrictions, obedient only to the will and caprice of his own nature."[31] Lahontan commented also on the physical wholeness of the Amerindians, "'Tis a great rarity to find among any among them that are Lame, Hunch-back'd, One-eye'd, Blind, or Dumb." They also are unacquainted with many of the diseases that afflict Europeans.[32] The Amerindians led easy lives, according to Lahontan, because they were "wholly free from care; they [did] nothing but Eat, Drink, Sleep, and ramble

[30] Gold Thwaites, *New Voyages*, xxxiii.
[31] Baron De Lahontan, *New Voyages to North America*, intr. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1905; reprint of 1703 English edition), xxxv.
[32] Lahontan, *New Voyages*, 415; 418.

about in the Night when they are at their Villages."[33] These descriptions closely resemble those of Marc Lescarbot and Father Sagard.

In a lengthy section of the book, Lahontan introduced his Huron assistant, Adario, who displayed typical Amerindian wisdom and kindness. Using the form of a dialogue between the writer and Adario, Lahontan criticized and ridiculed the luxuries of civilization and praised the simplicity of life in the wilderness. Adario said

> When you speak of Man, you ought to say French-Man; for you know that the Passions, the Interest, and the Corruption we speak of are not known among us…. The Innocence of our lives, the Love we tender our Brethren, and the Tranquility of Mind we enjoy in contemning the measures of Interest: These, I say, are three things that the Great Spirit requires of all Men in General. We practice these Duties in our Villages, naturally; while the Europeans defame, kill, rob, and pull one another to pieces in their Townes.[34]

Adario's fellow Hurons displayed the innocence, kindness, and compassion upon which Lescarbot and Sagard had commented, also. Consistently the Amerindian, with his honesty and sincere goodness, presented a striking contrast to the corrupt Frenchman who lived a degenerate life in France.

Voyage accounts included descriptions of negative Amerindian qualities as well. Travelers commented upon the apparent "devil-worship," cruelty toward captive enemy warriors, and immodesty that some Amerindian tribes displayed. These negative traits, however, were viewed as arising from the Amerindians' isolated location and ignorance

[33] Lahontan, *New Voyages*, 432.
[34] Lahontan, *New Voyages*, 550.

of European religion and culture and not from flaws inherent to the Amerindians as a race. Furthermore, some travelers attempted to create links between the Europeans and the Amerindians. For example, a frequent criticism of the Amerindians in New France was their apparent lust for war. Marc Lescarbot admitted that the Amerindians were addicted to war and hunting, but he pointed out that so were the ancient Gauls[35] and that when the Amerindians did make war, they did so "as did Alexander the Great, that they may say 'I have beaten you;' or else for revenge, in remembrance of some injury received."[36] By offering this interpretation of the Amerindians' behavior, Lescarbot hoped to demonstrate that the Amerindians bore similarities both to the ancestors of the French and to a hero of the ancient world; moreover, instead of bloodlust, a competitive spirit and a desire for justice motivated the Amerindians to make war. On the whole, the positive images of the Amerindians in New France dominated travel accounts and exerted the greatest influence on French intellectuals. It was this positive and sympathetic image that facilitated the development and dissemination of the Noble Savage archetype. The primitive man of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Second Discourse* embodied the Amerindians' strengths and lacked their weaknesses.

[35] Lescarbot, *History of New France*, 3: 145.
[36] Lescarbot, *History of New France*, 3: 263.

CHAPTER TWO

[Among the Germani], good customs have greater influence than good laws elsewhere. . . . In every home the young, naked and dirty, grow to possess these limbs, these bodies, which we admire. . . No other people indulge more freely in feasts and hospitality. . . . They delight in gifts, but neither attach any conditions to what they have given nor feel bound by what they have received.[37]

-- Tacitus

Beginning in the late fifteenth century with Columbus' tales of his travels, literature about the New World reached European audiences. In 1497, the first traceable appearance of a voyage account appeared in France, Sebastian Brant's *Le Nef des folz du monde*.[38] So by the mid-eighteenth century, voyage accounts possessed a long-established history as both a valuable source of information and a viable and popular form of literary expression. In accordance with their popularity, voyage accounts solidified the Noble Savage's image. The Amerindian, in the eyes of many eighteenth century intellectuals, came to embody innocence, honesty, and simplicity; they were living examples of the "natural man," uncorrupted by the evils of modern society. Enlightenment thinkers frequently expressed disillusionment with the artifice and

[37] Tacitus, *Germania*, trans. and intr. Herbert W. Benario (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips Ltd, 1999), 33-35.
[38] Patricia Olive Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage* (Edmonton, Alberta: The University of Alberta Press, 1984), 6.

corruption of their society. The Noble Savage and his community presented an idealistic alternative to the ills of modernity.

Although these voyage accounts were critical for the perpetuation of the Noble Savage's image, he originates in classical sources. The classics had long been a foundation stone for education in France, and in the eighteenth century they continued to serve as the basis of French secondary education.[39] In ancient literature, the Noble Savage was a common theme.[40] The *Germania* , written at the end of the first century C.E., provides one of the earliest examples of the Noble Savage; significantly, it also is a text to which Enlightenment thinkers and later travelers to the Middle East frequently referred as an authoritative source about the Other. In the *Germania*, Tactius described the various tribes that resided in the region of modern Germany. These tribes, collectively referred to as the *Germani*, were depicted as a brave, hardy, democratic, and free people who selected their "kings on the basis of noble birth [and] their generals on the basis of bravery."[41] The kings did not exercise limitless or arbitrary power. The Germani women were attentive mothers and chaste wives. The men married only one woman, and both sexes honored the marital state with respect.

Tacitus referred to the tribes of Germania as "barbarians," but the word did not carry the strongly negative connotation in the ancient world that it does today. In the sixth and seventh centuries, B.C., the ancient Greeks coined the word *barbaros* to refer to

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[39] Patricia Lorcin, "Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Algeria's Latin Past," *French Historical Studies* 25 (2002): 298.
[40] Herbert W. Benario in preface to *Germania*, by Tacitus (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips Ltd, 1999), 3-4.
[41] Tacitus, *Germania*, 21.

people who could not speak Greek. If a people did not speak Greek, they existed outside the *poleis*, or city-states/civilization, and did not participate in Hellenic culture.[42]: We do not know precisely why Tacitus wrote the *Germania*, but Hoxie Fairchild suggests that Tacitus intended to contrast the Germani's virtuous, moral, and simple society with Rome's "complex and pretentious" one.[43] Tacitus set up a dichotomy between the wholesome "barbarian" Germani tribes to criticize Roman culture, thus essentializing both. The Germani, therefore, mattered less as a historical or factual group of people than they did as archetypes or ideals. As a document, the *Germania* says nearly as much about Roman society as it does about the Germani tribes.

The Noble Savage stereotype manifested itself in many ways in French thought; among his manifestations were the writings of Michel de Montaigne. Anthony Pagden wrote of Lahontan's Huron companion, Adario, that "almost every *bon sauvage* of Canadian origin created by succeeding writers owes something, if not everything, to Adario."[44] Michel de Montaigne's essay "Of the Caniballes" provides an early example of the influence of the Noble Savage archetype on French intellectuals. Montaigne published Books I and II of his *Essays* between 1571 and 1580.[45]. The first book contained the essay "Of the Caniballes" in which Montaigne recounted details he learned from a man who "had lived for ten or twelve years in that other world which has been

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[42] Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 5.
[43] Hoxie Neale Fairchild, *The Noble Savage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928), 5.
[44] Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters With the New World* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1993), 121.
[45] Donald M. Frame in introduction to *Essays and Selected Writings*, by Michel de Montaigne (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), xiii.

discovered in our century."[46] The essay's information, however, in actuality derived from earlier interviews Montaigne conducted with some Tupinambá[47] that adventurers had transported to Rouen.[48] In praise of the Tupinambá's uncomplicated way of life, Montaigne wrote

> The laws of nature still rule [the Tupinambá], very little corrupted by ours; and they are in such a state of purity that I am sometimes vexed that they were unknown earlier…. [Theirs] is a nation … in which there is no sort of traffic, no knowledge of letters, no science of numbers, no name for magistrate or for political superiority, no custom of servitude, no riches or poverty, no contracts, no successions, no partitions, no occupations but leisure ones, no care for any but common kinship, no clothes, no agriculture, no metal, no use of wine or wheat. The very words that signify lying treachery, dissimulation, avarice, envy, belittling, pardon – unheard of.

Montaigne admired the Tupinambá for their innocence and simplicity. The troubles that plagued French society were absent from the lives of the Tupinambá, resulting in their honesty and nobility. This description reinforced the images of the Amerindians already established by the voyage accounts; additionally, according to Montaigne the Tupinambá lived more virtuous lives than did his fellow Frenchmen. This reinforced the use of the Noble Savage as a positive counter-example to the degeneracy of French society.

The Noble Savage became a central image in the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who emerged from the Enlightenment as one of its most influential social and political

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[46] Michel de Montaigne, *Essays and Selected Writings*, ed. and trans. Donald M. Frame (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), 81.
[47] natives from the region of modern Brazil
[48] Dickason, *Noble Savage*, 184.

theorists. Rousseau did not create the Noble Savage paradigm, but he was instrumental in disseminating and popularizing it. Rousseau could be said to have "fathered" the cult of the Noble Savage and "foisted [it] onto the minds of his time;" he was the "high priest of the cult of primitivism, . . . [who] shocked the jaded sensibilities of the Age of Reason by extolling the factitious age of lost innocence and unspoiled virtue, embodied in the person of the Noble Savage.[49] Whether or not one believes that Rousseau's political thought is the "lynch-pin of the political consciousness of the entire modern period,"[50] his *Second Discourse* solidified and romanticized the Noble Savage stereotype.

In 1755, the Academy of Dijon sponsored an essay contest and posed the question "What is the origin of inequality among men, and is it authorized by natural law?"[51] As a submission in the contest, Rousseau wrote one of his most famous works, the *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men* (or the *Second Discourse*). Throughout the *Second Discourse*, Rousseau explained his theory of the origins of human society and traced its development from an idyllic primitive state, or the state of nature, to its developed, yet corrupted, one. During this process, Rousseau also defined the "natural man" and sought to establish the essence of human nature. Rousseau's conjectures about society's development served as a foundation for his social and political theories. Contemplating the justice and happiness he perceived in the state of

[49] Symcox, "Wild Man's Return," 227.
[50] Helena Rosenblatt, *Rousseau and Geneva* (New York: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1997), 1.
[51] Jean-Jacques Rousseau. "Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men" in *Rousseau's Political Writings*, ed. Alan Ritter and Julia Conway Bondanella (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 3.

nature, Rousseau explained that natural law originates in the innate goodness of man and in the egalitarianism of early civilizations.

In addition to using specific factual references, Rousseau adopted many of the general characteristics attached to the Amerindians and attributed them to the natural man of his *Second Discourse*. The natural man and the Amerindian bore such striking resemblance to each other that, read in the context of the voyage accounts, the *Second Discourse* read as a generic summary of the traits of the stereotypical Amerindian. Thus for Rousseau, the Amerindians served both as models of and justifications for his theories about the "natural man" and natural law. In contrast to the effete, degenerate, and corrupt French society, the Amerindian society shined as the model of a civic utopia Rousseau believed Europeans should strive to achieve.[52]

In his *Second Discourse*, Rousseau offered the "natural man" and the "state of nature" as both a criticism of French society and an ideal. In its "outward wealth and inward poverty," French society during the Enlightenment has been compared to the social conditions of the Roman Empire at the time that Tacitus wrote the *Germania*.[53] Similar to Tacitus' use of the Germani, then, Rousseau might have sought to present his "natural man" as a foil to the corruption he saw in French society. Rousseau possessed extensive knowledge of ancient history and classical sources; he frequently referred in the *Second Discourse* to ancient Sparta and the Roman senate and quoted Pliny and Brasidas, a Spartan general. In addition to the structural similarity between the *Second Discourse*

[52] Ray Allen Billington, *Land of Savagery, Land of Promise* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1981), 18.
[53] Fairchild, *Noble Savage*, 5.

and the *Germania*, Rousseau further demonstrated his familiarity with Tacitus' work by quoting his works several times throughout the *Second Discourse*.

The Roman Republic itself inspired Rousseau; he admired the disciplined qualities of the Republic because for him, virtue was masculine and martial.[54] The scholar Helena Rosenblatt claims that Rousseau's background as a citizen of Geneva – a republic like Rome – strongly influenced his political and social beliefs. Rosenblatt noted that Rousseau dedicated his Second Discourse to Geneva's General Council, and that in the Dedication Rousseau refers to the ancient Romans as the "model of all free peoples." Rosenblatt's intention is to link Rousseau's political ideal with the republican values of "[s]elf-government, sovereignty, and liberty."[55] As Roman political institutions and ideals influenced Rousseau, so also did Roman intellectual and literary models, including the Noble Savage.

Basing his own theories largely on the Noble Savage model, Rousseau broke from earlier secular political and social theorists who believed that natural man possessed neither innate goodness nor even innate ideas. One such a theorist was Thomas Hobbes, who believed that without a strong government to enforce the rule of law, men would live in a perpetual state of mutual destruction and conflict. Hobbes wrote that

> Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as is of every man against every man. …. It may seem strange to some man, that has not well

[54] Peter V. Conroy, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998), 15.
[55] Rosenblatt, *Rousseau and Geneva*, 159-161.

> weighted these things; that Nature should thus dissociate, and tender man apt to invade and destroy one another.[56]

In accordance with the theories of John Locke, the mind possessed no innate principles. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke explained that

> It is an established opinion amongst some men that there are in the understanding certain innate principles, some primary notions, … stamped upon the mind of man, which the soul receives in its very first being and brings into the world with it. It would be sufficient to convince unprejudiced readers of the falseness of this supposition, if I should only show … how men, barely by the use of their natural faculties, may attain to all the knowledge they have, without the help of innate impressions, and may arrive at certainty without any such original notions or principles.[57]

In contrast, Rousseau posited that human nature is innately good and that the mind possessed an inherent benevolence toward other living creatures, especially humans. The "natural man" did not exhibit the aggression and violence described by Hobbes; neither did he possess Locke's *tabula rasa*. Natural man's benevolence originated from the "two principles prior to reason, of which one makes us ardently interested in our well-being and preservation, and the other inspires in us a natural repugnance to seeing any sentient being, and principally our fellow man, perish or suffer."[58] In the state of nature, because they possess these benevolent characteristics,

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[56] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1950), 103-104.
[57] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, abr. and ed. John W. Yolton (London: J.M. Dent Orion Publishing Group, 1947), 17.
[58] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 6.

men will act not only in self-preservation but also with compassion toward fellow humans.

The natural man possesses superior health and physical strength. Because he must survive in harsh conditions, with only his own fortitude and wit as survival tools, the natural man is hardy and resourceful. Men who are too weak to survive do not do so; "[n]ature treats them precisely as the law of Sparta treated the children of citizens; it makes strong and robust those with good constitutions and lets all the others perish."[59] Because he must defend himself against the attacks of animals and hunt down his own food, the natural man develops impressive speed, agility, and stamina; "[h]is best-developed faculties must be those devoted principally to attack and defense," including acute senses of sight, hearing, and smell.[60] The natural man therefore possesses abilities that border on the super-human. In contrast, civilized man has lost these impressive abilities because the conveniences of civilized life "soften both body and mind."[61]

Despite these advanced physical abilities, Rousseau's natural man lacks "refined" senses. Feelings such as touch and taste remain undeveloped and crude. Furthermore, natural man's intellect is stunted; animalistic instincts motivate him.[62] Basic survival needs define the limits of his understanding. Despite, or because of, his limited intellect the natural man enjoys a peaceful and worry-free life. The natural man's simple needs and pleasures keep him content. "[N]othing could be as tranquil as the soul or as limited

[59] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 11.
[60] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 15.
[61] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 37.
[62] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 19.

as the mind of savage man, who desires only the things that he knows and knows only the things he has the power to possess or are easy to acquire."[63] Rousseau's natural man is happy because his "heart is at peace and … [his] body is healthy."[64]

The natural man's tranquility of spirit results also from his freedom from the "moral aspect of love." An artificial sentiment, "born of social custom and celebrated by women with much care and cleverness to establish their ascendancy," the moral aspect of love does not trouble the natural man for whom any woman suffices. "[J]ust as [the natural man's] mind cannot form abstract ideas of regularity and proportion, so his heart is not susceptible to the sentiments of admiration and love."[65] This freedom from the ties of love and marriage results for the savage man in a more peaceful society. Thus

> Limited to what is physical love, and fortunate enough to be ignorant of those preferences that inflame this sentiment and increase its difficulties, men must feel the ardors of their temperament less frequently and less sharply, and must, consequently, have fewer and less cruel disputes among themselves. Imagination, which wreaks so much havoc among us [civilized men], does not speak to savage hearts; each peacefully awaits the impulsion of nature, yields to it involuntarily, with more pleasure than fury, and, once the need is satisfied, all desire is extinguished.[66]

[63] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 20.
[64] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 26.
[65] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 30.
[66] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 30-31.

As easily satisfied as an animal or a child, the savage of Rousseau's *Discourse* lives to gratify his simple needs and desires. Life might present survival challenges, but overall it remains relatively happy and free of cares.

These conditions depict man in his independent pre-social state, but Rousseau explained that, gradually, the individual natural man began to develop relationships with other individuals. Each grew to depend upon mutual assistance. "[I]mperceptibly [they came] to acquire some crude idea of mutual commitments and of the advantage of fulfilling them."[67] Family ties developed, and then ties developed among different families. "Each family became a small society all the more united because reciprocal affection and liberty were its only bonds."[68] Instead of foraging in the woods and hunting, natural man adopted a sedentary way of life. Thus, a simple form of civilization developed, and men came together, "united by moral habits and character."[69]

It is at this point that society's corruption begins. As a necessary part of sedentary life, metallurgy and agriculture develop, and so Rousseau blamed iron and wheat for helping to civilize men and ruin the human race.[70] The concept of private property takes root, causing further complications. Men begin to identify inequalities in abilities and skills among themselves, and the community thus grows to value some men more than others. Inequality originates from the subsequent desire men develop for public esteem.

[67] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 36.
[68] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 37.
[69] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 38.
[70] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 40.

Women contribute to the development of inequality by creating the moral aspect of love and by establishing hierarchies of beauty that did not exist in the state of nature. Because each woman wants to attract the most prestigious mate, she must appear more desirable than the other women.[71] This leads to conflict among and between men and women as bonds of love develop and possessiveness ensues. "Jealousy awakens with love, discord triumphs, and the gentlest of passions receives sacrifices of human blood."[72]

Despite its flaws, this early stage of human society remains, for Rousseau, the best one. Life remains relatively simple for the natural man who, naturally good and compassionate, works cooperatively with others to further the best interests of the community. The dependence on luxuries and conveniences that corrupts modern society has not yet reached full flower. "[S]ociety offers nothing more to the sage's eyes than an assemblage of unnatural men and artificial passions which. . . have no real foundation in nature. . . . [S]avage man and civilized man differ so much in the depths of their hearts and in their inclinations that what constitutes the supreme happiness of one would reduce the other to despair."[73] In the early stages of civilization, despite the conflicts and inequalities that developed, savage man remained free of most of the corruption and debasement of more "advanced" societies, such as France in the eighteenth century. Thus, for Rousseau, "[T]his period of the development of human faculties, maintaining a happy medium between the indolence of the primitive state and the petulant activity of

[71] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 30-31.
[72] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 38.
[73] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 56.

our self-love, must have been the happiest and most enduring epoch."[74] Rousseau and his contemporaries believed that it was at this point of social development that the Amerindians lived.

Travel literature appeared to support this belief. The various depictions of Amerindians reflected similar general themes: Amerindians were healthy and strong as well as generally honest, peaceful, and generous. Within Amerindian communities, disputes and quarrels were almost nonexistent, and each member of the community received help and food if needed. Sexual intercourse appeared casual and open. Observers noted that the Caribs, for example, practiced polygamy and that they observed no restrictions in their sexual partners, freely engaging in sexual activity.[75]

Despite his detailed descriptions about the progression of society from the natural to the civilized, Rousseau clearly stated at the beginning of the *Second Discourse* that he did not intend to write a strictly factual and historical account of the state of nature. Rousseau wanted to establish that the *Discourse* is conjectural and philosophical, not historical. "Let us begin, therefore, by setting all the facts aside, for they have no bearing on the question."[76] Rousseau aimed to "explain the nature of things, [not] to reveal their

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[74] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 39.

[75] Dickason, *Noble Savage*, 11.
It is necessary to note here that Rousseau interpreted the open sexuality of some indigenous peoples positively, viewing it as indicative of an absence of jealousy and possessiveness. Rousseau believed that women should serve as communal "property" in the way that land or material goods should. Tacitus praised the monogamy and chasteness of the Germani, but Rousseau approved of polygamous sexual relationships. When later writers discussed the Kabyles and the Arabs, the Kabyles received praise for practicing monogamous marital relationships, whereas the Arabs were criticized for their polygamy. Sexuality of the Other remained an ambiguous issue for many Europeans but is beyond the scope of this paper.

[76] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 9.

true origin;"[77] he wanted to establish a general theory about human development and in this sense, Rousseau was an early anthropologist. Peppering the *Second Discourse* with specific examples of indigenous peoples – "natural men" – Rousseau looked to these "facts" to support his theoretical arguments.

To demonstrate that savage man is not subject to jealousy and possessiveness in love, and therefore lives a happier life, Rousseau wrote, "[T]he Caribs, among all existing people who have, up to now, deviated least from the state of nature, are in fact the most peaceful in their loves and the least subject to jealousy."[78] The Carib exemplified the savage man's inability to plan for the future because, according to Rousseau, the Carib will sell his cotton bed in the morning and come "weeping to buy it back in the evening."[79] To prove the savages'[80] good constitutions, Rousseau explained that they "rarely experience any illnesses other than wounds and old age."[81] Beyond simple good health, the savages possessed amazing sensory abilities. Rousseau offered the example of the Hottentots of the Cape of Good Hope who can see ships on the sea as well as the Dutch can with their telescopes. The Amerindians can track Spaniards by smell as well as the best dogs can. Finally, Rousseau adds that "all these savage nations endure their nakedness with ease, sharpen their palate with red pepper, and drink European liquors like water."[82]

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[77] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 10.
[78] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 30-31.
[79] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 20.
[80] Rousseau referred to the indigenous inhabitants of "undeveloped" or "uncivilized" lands as "savages." To remain consistent with Rousseau's terminology, the word "savage" is used here.
[81] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 13.
[82] Rousseau, "Second Discourse," 15.

As he stated clearly at the start of the *Second Discourse*, Rousseau did not intend to produce a factual account of the state of nature. Nonetheless, Rousseau did not hesitate to include specific examples from the perceived state of nature of indigenous peoples to support his theories. By frequently referencing and displaying obvious familiarity with the accounts of indigenous peoples, Rousseau clearly demonstrated an extensive knowledge of existing travel literature. Nonetheless, by claiming that he was setting the facts aside, Rousseau attempted to establish a distance between the voyage accounts and his *Second Discourse*. Rousseau knew that his theories depended upon and drew influence from travel literature, but he did not want them tainted by the questionable veracity of the travel accounts. The *Second Discourse* established Rousseau's view of society and humanity. To link the *Discourse* too closely to the genre of travel literature might undermine the social and political points Rousseau wanted to make. But the voyage accounts' influence on Rousseau's formulation of the natural man cannot be ignored. Despite the errors within the voyage accounts, Rousseau recognized the value of the information they contained. Amerindian society presented the most accurate image of man in his "natural" state that the Europeans could access. Rousseau drew upon current accounts of the Amerindians and incorporated many specific examples into his *Second Discourse*.

Although widely read and generally believed, the voyage accounts met with some skepticism; Rousseau recognized the flaws of the literature. Acknowledging that the travel literature did not present the most accurate information, Rousseau lamented that

travel writers were mendacious and that the missionaries did not necessarily possess good powers of observation. To correct the errors of the existing sources of information, Rousseau suggested that the scientific academies send expeditions of "philosophical" observers to the New World to study the peoples there. These philosophical observers, trained to be more "scientific," could conduct valuable studies in the New World that might serve as instructive models for Europeans.[83] Napoleon's sponsorship in 1798 of an extensive scientific and cultural study of Egypt as well as the formation in 1840 of the Scientific Commission to conduct a study of Algeria in many ways can be viewed as Rousseau's suggestion implemented.

[83] Arthur O. Lovejoy, *Essays in the History of Ideas* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1955), 18.

CHAPTER THREE

The Arabs are the best of people; ignorant of the vices of polished nations, incapable of disguise, they know neither falsehood nor knavery. Haughty and generous, they repel insult by arms, and never employ treachery; hospitality is sacred among them.[84]

-- Claude Étienne Savary

Napoleon invaded Egypt in July 1798 with thirteen ships, thirty-six thousand soldiers, one hundred and sixty-seven members of the Commission of Arts and Sciences, and several hundred assorted hangers-on.[85] The Egyptian campaign marked, to date, the largest and most extensive interaction between the French and the indigenous peoples of a prospective colony. Egypt was a populous land with established urban centers, extensively cultivated fertile land, and a rich cultural heritage.

In contrast, the previous colonies in the New World had developed incrementally from trading posts and without military involvement. Amerindian tribes in New France resided in scattered small settlements, often temporary, among vast forests. The tribes possessed no written language and their ancestors had constructed no awesome physical monuments. Contact between the local French settlers and the Amerindians remained

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[84] Claude Étienne Savary, *Letters on Egypt, containing, a parallel between the manners of its ancient and modern inhabitants, its commerce, its agriculture, government, and religion; with the descent of Louis IX at Damietta, extracted from Joinville, and Arabian authors*, 3rd ed. anonymously translated from the French of M. Javary, (London: Robinson, Paternoster-Row, 1799), 220.

[85] J. Christopher Herold, *Bonaparte in Egypt* (New York: Harper and Rowe Publishers, 1962), 24.

restricted partly as a result of the geographic distances between the French and the Amerindians as well as the relatively small number of people involved on both sides.

The arrival of Napoleon and his troops in Egypt initiated a new stage in French imperialism and therefore in France's relationship with indigenous populations. New France and Egypt appear as dissimilar as the distance between them is vast, but carried with the soldiers to Egypt were the images of the Noble Savage created by the voyage accounts from New France. The use of voyage accounts as valid and reputable sources of information maintains the continuity between French approaches to the Amerindians and to the Arabs in Egypt. The Egyptian campaign perpetuated pre-existing French perceptions of the Other while at the same time contributing to nineteenth century perceptual shifts. By 1830 when France launched its full-scale invasion and colonization of Algeria, eighteenth century frameworks of viewing the Arab as a variety of Noble Savage had begun to transform into a perception of the Arab as a distinct and inferior race. Concurrently, the French transferred the Noble Savage mantle to the Kabyles.

France initiated its role as a modern imperial power with Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798. Although French forces remained in Egypt only a few years (1798–1801) and did not succeed in establishing Egypt as a permanent colony, Napoleon's Egyptian campaign launched France's efforts to establish colonies in the Middle East. Moreover, in the words of Edward Said, the French occupation of Egypt "gave birth to the entire modern experience of the Orient as interpreted from within the universe of discourse

founded by Napoleon in Egypt."[86] Included in this experience of the Orient is the French view of the Arabs.

Even if we accept Said's interpretation of the Egyptian campaign as accurate, and accept that it shaped the French understanding of the Arab "Other," the resulting understanding is quite different from the originating one. French imperialism in the New World and later imperial ventures in the Middle East, starting with Egypt and concluding tragically with Algeria, should be viewed as belonging to a continuous narrative in the development of French perceptions of the Other. The image Noble Savage of New France, brought to life in the voyage accounts, was carried to Egypt with Napoleon's French troops. After the Egyptian campaign, partly as a result of the campaign itself and partly as a result of coincident shifts in the genre of voyage accounts, the French perception of the Arab moved away from the framework of the "Noble Savage" and developed a more distinct "Oriental" image. Napoleon's Egyptian campaign contributed to the shift toward, but was not particularly marked by, an "Orientalist" view of the Arabs.

Neither the Directory nor Napoleon originated the idea to invade Egypt. The plan had a long history, but it acquired a strong advocate in the Duc de Choiseul. After France lost the Seven Years' War and therefore its North American and Indian colonies to England in 1763,[87] Louis XV's Foreign Minister Étienne, Duc de Choiseul (1719-1785)

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[86] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978; Vintage Books Edition, 1979), 87 (page references are to Vintage Books edition).

[87] Treaty of Paris, 1763. John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 457.

suggested that Egypt might compensate for this loss.[88] Many arguments against the idea existed, however, as did an absence of pretext for such aggression against France's long-standing ally, the Ottoman Porte.

But by the late 1790s, French national politics had changed – the Revolution and its accompanying upheavals had subsided into the Directorate. French national interests required new commercial ventures as well as a weakened England. In this new context, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, the Foreign Minister under the Directory, came to support enthusiastically the previous Egyptian goals of the Duc de Choiseul. France decided to attack Egypt in part because it offered an indirect way to attack England.

This coincided with Napoleon's ambitions. After Napoleon's impressive victories in Italy, the Directory awarded him the command of the Army of England with the order to prepare an invasion of Britain. After inspecting the French ports, however, Napoleon determined that a direct attack would not be possible. He suggested an alternative: Egypt. The French could not invade Britain proper, but they could attack Britain indirectly through its colonies. Napoleon hoped to use Egypt both as a base from which to attack British ships on the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean as well as a possible starting-point for a land invasion of India. Toward that goal, Napoleon hoped to acquire allies from among the indigenous peoples to assist in driving the British from India.

The British dominated Mediterranean and Eastern trade, and their colonies in India generated great wealth and provided markets for British goods. France wanted both

[88] Fernand Beaucour, Yves Laissus, and Chantal Orgogozo, *The Discovery of Egypt*, trans. Bambi Ballard (Paris: Flammarion, 1990), 10-11; Somerset de Chair, *Napoleon on Napoleon, An Autobiography of the Emperor* (Avon, Great Britain: Bath Press, 1992), 58.

to protect and expand its own trade in the East and to hurt Britain by weakening its lucrative stranglehold on Eastern trade. "The day is not far off," Napoleon wrote to the Directory in 1797, "when we realize that in order to destroy England we must seize Egypt. The rapid decline of the Ottoman Empire means that we must take the necessary measures quickly if we wish to preserve our commerce in the East."[89] For agricultural ventures, Egypt held great commercial promise: its fertile soil and warm climate could support the cultivation of cash crops such as cotton, indigo, and sugar. Additionally, Egypt would provide the base from which France could launch further commercial and military enterprises in the East.

Although technically still part of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt long had enjoyed relative autonomy from Ottoman control. This autonomy resulted from many factors: Egypt's geographic distance from Constantinople, its exemption from the *timur*[90] system, and local Mameluke rule. In 1230, the Turks first brought the Mamelukes from the Caucasus region to Egypt to serve as an elite military corps for the pasha administering the region. In 1252, however, the Mamelukes revolted, took control of Egypt, and established a dynasty that lasted until the French conquest. The Mamelukes maintained a distinct racial identity throughout their long rule by marrying only Caucasian women and importing young Caucasian slave boys to replenish Mameluke ranks. Constantinople continued to send pashas to administer Egypt, but the pashas served only as symbols of

[89] Beaucour, *Discovery of Egypt*, 10.
[90] In its conquered territories, the Ottomans imposed their own fiscal and military system of organization, the *timur*. Because Egypt already possessed entrenched and effective systems of its own, the Ottomans allowed Egypt to maintain them. M.W.Daly, ed., *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3.

Ottoman control; the Mamelukes ruled in actuality and kept the pashas imprisoned within their palaces.[91] As the power of the Ottoman government declined throughout the eighteenth century, its territories, especially Egypt, appeared increasingly vulnerable to European attack. The French consul in Cairo, Charles Magallon, confirmed this when he visited Paris in 1797-98 and reported to the Directory that "Egypt was a fruit ready to be plucked."[92] Egypt was ripe, as was the time for action. Circumstances and needs converged: France would acquire Egypt.

Napoleon's use of voyage accounts for the Egyptian campaign remains consistent with eighteenth century perceptions of voyage accounts as authoritative sources of information. Voyage accounts, although recognized as imperfect, still provided the primary method of learning about foreign lands. Just as voyage accounts influenced seventeenth and eighteenth century intellectuals, they influenced Napoleon, his soldiers, and the savants of the Commission of Arts and Sciences. Accounts written specifically about Egypt supplied needed details about the land and people. More generally, voyage accounts from the New World influenced Napoleon and the members of the Egyptian campaign, as well as the authors of the Egyptian voyage accounts who worked within the frameworks and adopted the language that the earlier voyage accounts had established and popularized.

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[91] Herold, *Bonaparte in Egypt*, 7-8.
[92] Nathan Schur, *Napoleon in the Holy Land* (London: Greenhill Books; Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1999), 26.

By the end of the eighteenth century French writers had produced at least twenty-seven travel accounts of Egypt.[93] Among his many motivations for invading Egypt, Napoleon might have sought to add his name to the list of famous intrepid explorers: he viewed himself as continuing the tradition of the great explorations of the eighteenth century.[94] In preparation for his Egyptian adventures, Napoleon relied particularly on two accounts published shortly before the campaign: *Travels through Syria and Egypt* (*Voyage en Syrie et en Egypte*), by Constantin Francois Chasseboef, Comte de Volney, and Claude Savary's *Letters on Egypt*. Savary traveled throughout Egypt in the late 1770s and published *Letters on Egypt* shortly after returning to France. Based on his own travels between 1782 and 1785, Volney published *Travels Through Syria and Egypt* in 1787.

Prior to arriving in Egypt, Napoleon as well as many of his soldiers and savants had read the *Letters on Egypt* and *Travels Through Syria and Egypt*.[95] For those who had not already read these books and others he deemed useful for the campaign, Napoleon ordered the assembly of a large library to be brought on the ships and encouraged his soldiers to read.[96] Because travel accounts possessed a long history as useful sources of information, it follows that the works of Savary and Volney would be consulted. Napoleon himself clearly did so; when writing his memoirs on Saint Helena, he specifically referred to Volney's guidelines for fighting a war in the Orient. According to

[93] Donald Malcolm Reid, *Whose Pharaohs? Archaeology, Museums, and Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 27.
[94] Beaucour, *Discovery of Egypt*, 144.
[95] Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 106.
[96] Beaucour, *Discovery of Egypt*, 72.

Volney, to achieve hegemony in the Orient [Egypt and the Near East], "any French force would . . . have to fight three wars: one against England, a second against the Ottoman Porte, and a third . . . against the Muslims."[97] Ultimately, this is exactly what Napoleon had to do. One scholar suggests that it was Volney's descriptions of Egypt and Syria "languishing under Oriental despotism" that "unintentionally helped prepare the way" for Napoleon's conquest.[98]

To whatever extent the voyage accounts did or did not inspire the conquest of Egypt, they did provide vivid descriptions of the land and people. Sometimes these descriptions raised hopes that reality dashed. Captain Joseph-Marie Moiret, an officer in the 75th Demi-Brigade, wrote in his memoirs of the campaign, "We turned our hopes toward Egypt; our imagination [was] inflamed by our memory of history. . . . Our arrival and stay in Egypt certainly made us reconsider our fond illusions, and we often thought with regret of the banks of the Po, the Tiber, the Rhine, and the Oder. How many times did we curse the lying descriptions of the author of *Letters from Egypt*!"[99] The soldiers found Egypt a disappointment, but the savants of the Commission of Arts and Sciences journeyed to Egypt to learn and study, and in these activities they found rich reward. Many savants also had read Savary and Volney's accounts; in his own memoir of the campaign (*Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt*, published in 1803), the artist Vivant

[97] As quoted in Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 81.
[98] Reid, *Whose Pharaohs?*, 28.
[99] Captain Joseph-Marie Moiret, *Memoirs of Napoleon's Egyptian Expedition 1798-1801*, trans. and ed. Rosemary Brindle (London: Greenhill Books; Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001), 38-39.

Denon refers to them several times. Claude Savary and the Comte de Volney, in writing their accounts, followed the long-established tradition of the voyage account genre.

Constantin Francois Chasseboeuf, Comte de Volney, wrote that he desired to travel to Egypt and Syria because he believed that in these regions originated the religions and customs that governed his own country, France. Most Europeans possessed neither the time nor the opportunity to travel to these areas, and so Volney took on the task himself, intending to acquaint his fellow Europeans with Egypt and Syria by writing about his experiences.[100] Claude Savary wrote that his goal in traveling to Egypt was to "gain a view of the Egyptians" – live among them, learn their language, and see them "such as they are."[101] Such adventurousness and curiosity characterized many of the earlier voyage account writers as well, along with an intention to describe their travels in objective terms from a detached perspective.

Savary devotes much of his book to descriptions of Egypt's geography, history, and monuments, relying on his own observations and making extensive references to Classical authors such as Strabo and Herodotus. Despite Savary's professed aim to gain a view of the Egyptians, specific discussions of the people of Egypt, relative to descriptions of the land and climate, occupy a small percentage of the text. Volney did not state from the outset that he intended to focus his work on the Egyptians, but his account indicates an interest in learning from and interacting with them. After arriving in Egypt Volney realized that his primitive knowledge of Arabic too seriously hampered his

[100] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: v.
[101] Savary, *Letters on Egypt*, 1:2.

efforts at travel and communication to make continuing his journey worthwhile. To remedy this, Volney spent eight months in Lebanon, living among the Druze and learning Arabic, before re-embarking on his travels in Egypt.[102] As did Savary, Volney devoted considerable attention to describing the physical characteristics of the Egyptian land, its climate, wildlife, and history, but Volney supplied more information about the Egyptian people.

Neither Savary nor Volney universally applied Noble Savage stereotypes to the Arabs; nonetheless, there are many passages in Savary and Volney that recall descriptions of the Amerindians and thus indicate influence from existing voyage accounts. Savary described the Egyptians as healthy, strong, skilled in physical activities, and "exceedingly well-formed."[103] These qualities resulted from the Egyptians' active and simple lives. Savary also praised the Egyptians' child-rearing methods for producing children that are healthier and more "pious and robust" children than the French methods do. Among the Arabs, there were no "rickety children and crooked people."[104] Volney commented that the Egyptian peasants possess a hardy mind and body.[105] The Amerindians cared for the weak and needy members of their community. According to Volney, the Arabs treated their animals with charity and kindness, noting that the Egyptians routinely fed the dogs that roamed the streets and even had established

[102] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: v.
[103] Savary, *Letters on Egypt*, 1: 2.
[104] Savary, *Letters on Egypt*, 1: 158.
[105] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: 128.

charitable foundations to provide bread and water for the dogs. Thus both Amerindians and Arabs demonstrated kind-hearted natures.

Moreover, the Arabs displayed a respect for law. Savary wrote, "Their judgments are, mostly, dictated by equity, and, under this paternal government, man, enjoying all his liberty, is attached to his prince by ties, only, of respect and gratitude, to whom he speaks freely, and praises or blames as he finds occasion."[106] This description resembles those of the Amerindians' orderly societies and their mutually respectful, open, and positive relationship with their leaders. A significant difference between the Amerindians and the Arabs, however, was that the Arabs were Muslim. Although neither Arabs nor Amerindians were Christian, the Muslims at least were not idolatrous pagans, as the French viewed the Amerindians. Perhaps this is the reason that both Volney and Savary credited Islam with a positive role in Arab culture, whereas the Amerindians' religion often was blamed for the disagreeable characteristics they displayed. Savary acknowledged the value of the Koran's legal traditions and praised the wisdom of Islam for leading to the abolishment of the "barbaric" Egyptian custom of throwing a young virgin into the Nile each spring.[107] Volney goes so far as to suggest that Muslim women might be better off than the women in France, and he wrote that "it is remarkable that, throughout the empire, the character of Christians is greatly inferior to that of the

[106] Savary, *Letters on Egypt*, 2: 218.
[107] Savary, *Letters on Egypt*, 1: 111.

Muselmen." [108] French perceptions of the Arabs thus were not universally negative, and this resulted in part from the perceived beneficial elements of Islam.

Early voyage accounts had described the Amerindians as culturally undeveloped, naïve, and child-like; qualities that reflected the Amerindians' "primitive" state. The Egyptians, on the other hand, did not exist in a pure and primitive state, because their magnificent ancient monuments and hieroglyphics testified to an advanced and sophisticated civilization that stretched from the far reaches of the past. In the absence of similar physical evidence, the Amerindians appeared considerably more "savage." In a curious passage, however, Savary suggests that "[t]he philosopher, who would study man in his primitive state, should reside among the Arabs . . . . "[109] This recalls earlier discussions of the Amerindians, yet the comment appears inconsistent with the general acknowledgement of Egyptians as the descendants of a great civilization.

A possible explanation is that this comment follows a discussion of the Bedouin, who Savary considers just another "species" of Arab.[110] Savary fails to explain to what group he refers by the term "Arab." It is likely that Savary, in accordance with prevailing eighteenth century beliefs, viewed the nomadic peoples – in Egypt, the Bedouin -- as more primitive than the sedentary peoples, but Savary does not make the distinction between nomadic and sedentary Arabs clear. Savary applied the term "Arab" equally to all indigenous Egyptians who he does not otherwise identify as Turks or Copts. Thus, while all Bedouin are Arabs, not all Arabs are Bedouin.

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[108] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: 145; 149.
[109] Savary, *Letters on Egypt*, 2: 107.
[110] Savary, *Letters on Egypt*, 2: 231.

Savary did not bother to categorize the specific cultural and social qualities that applied exclusively to the sedentary Arabs versus those that applied to the Bedouin. Given Savary's otherwise keen observations, it seems unlikely that he failed to perceive a difference between the two groups. More likely, Savary assumed that, in keeping with contemporary perceptions, his readers would understand that an obvious difference existed between a sedentary and a nomadic culture. In the *Second Discourse,* Rousseau had ranked nomadic societies below sedentary ones in his assessment of the hierarchy of civilizations. The Amerindians of New France resembled the Bedouin because neither groups established permanent settlements or engaged in agriculture. In this sense, if a "philosopher" could not reside among the Amerindians, the Bedouin might provide an adequate substitute for "primitive" man.

Volney also categorized the Bedouin as Arabs, but he supplied a more detailed analysis of Egyptian racial categories. He broke down the races of Egypt into four groups: the Turks, the Mamelukes, the Copts, and the Arabs who then are divided further into three subcategories: the Arabs descended from those who arrived at the time of the Muslim conquest, the Arabs descended from those who arrived after the conquest, and the Bedouin.[111] After providing the reader with these categories, though, Volney did not further identify the Arabs by the group to which they belonged, including whether they were nomadic or sedentary. In fact, Copts and the Arabs often were lumped into a single category, "Egyptians." Volney makes no mention of "primitive man," however, and he

[111] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: 50-51.

limits his discussion of racial characteristics to descriptions of the Turks and the Mamelukes, both of whom he vilifies repeatedly.

Savary also criticized the Turks, accusing them of giving little care to the Egyptian people and blaming their tyranny for the Arabs' loss of "that good faith and uprightness" that "characterizes" them. Volney also displayed a palpable hatred of and animosity toward them.[112] According to Volney, the Turks "destroy everything and repair nothing;" furthermore, the "spirit of the Turkish government is to ruin the labors of past ages, and destroy the hopes of future ages, because the barbarity of ignorant despotism never considers tomorrow."[113] Volney disliked the Mamelukes as well:

> Strangers to each other, they are not bound by those natural ties which unite the rest of mankind. Without parents, without children, the past has done nothing for them, and they do nothing for the future. Ignorant and superstitious from education, they become ferocious from the murders they commit, perfidious from frequent cabals, seditious from tumults and base, deceitful, and corrupted by every species of debauchery.[114]

Volney viewed the Egyptians as backward, barbaric, and miserable, but he attributed these qualities entirely to the avaricious Mamelukes and Turks and their despotic government, not to flaws belonging to the Egyptians' race or religion. Volney suggested that, regardless of the location or the people involved, similar results would spring from similar conditions.[115] He concluded that "[w]herever there is no security of

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[112] Savary, *Letters on Egypt*, 2: 215.
[113] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: 22.
[114] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: 117.
[115] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: 123-124.

property there can be no industry to procure it, and the arts must remain in their infancy. Wherever knowledge has no object, men will do nothing to acquire it, and their minds will continue in a state of barbarism." The Egyptian people "deserve pity, not contempt."[116] If the Arabs and Copts were ignorant and culturally destitute, as Volney observed, then it was not their fault. Inherent racial deficiencies did not cause vice among the native Egyptians, deplorable social conditions did.

Baron Dominique Vivant Denon accompanied Napoleon to Egypt as a member of the Commission of Arts and Sciences, and he wrote a memoir of his experiences in Egypt. Denon became the first of the expedition's savants to travel to Upper Egypt, spending six months campaigning in pursuit of Murad Bey with Brigadier Belliard's 21st Regiment under the command of General Louis Charles Desaix.[117] Under difficult conditions and often in great haste, Denon sketched the many ancient ruins the army passed and wrote in his journal. In 1799 when Napoleon left Egypt to return to France, Denon accompanied him. Denon's memoir *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt*, published in 1802 and quickly running into several editions,[118] became the first published account of the Egyptian campaign. Although Denon arrived in Egypt as part of the entourage that accompanied a conquering army, his writing is dominated by his infectious excitement about and enthusiasm for the Egypt's ancient ruins, its wildlife and physical landscape. The colonial implications of the military's role in Egypt make no

[116] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: 119.
[117] Beaucour, *Discovery of Egypt*, 102.
[118] Peter A. Clayton, *The Rediscovery of Ancient Egypt* (Hampshire, England: Thomas and Hudson, 1982), 18.

appearance in Denon's work. In tone, language, and style, Denon's *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt* closely resembles the writings of Savary and Volney, indicating continuity between early nineteenth-century travel literature and its predecessors.

Denon focused mostly on describing in detail the impressive ruins he visited. Egypt's animals, plants, and climate also received Denon's analysis, and he provided limited descriptions of and commentary about the Egyptian people. Denon noted the differences among the various Arabs, not breaking them into different races but categorizing them by lifestyle: the shepherds, the Bedouin, and the cultivators [farmers].[119] In agreement with Savary and Volney, Denon attributed the Egyptians' characters to external political and social conditions. To explain the lack of industry and activity that he perceives, as well as the "sullen, [. . .] avaricious, [and] improvident" nature of the Arab farmer, Denon wrote, "It is, however, to a despotism which always commands, and never rewards, that we must look for the source of permanent cause of this stagnation of industry."[120] The "despotism" to which Denon referred was the Mamelukes' government.

Denon praised the Bedouin and called them "friends of toleration." Commenting upon an incident when a Bedouin chief offered the last of his food to his French prisoner of war, Denon wrote, "Is it possible to hate such a nation, however ferocious it might be? The sobriety of the Bedouin, when contrasted with the artificial wants we have created, gives them an evident advantage over us, and I do not know how such men can be easily

[119] Vivant Denon, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt*, 3 vols. (London: T.N. Longman and O. Reese, 1803; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1973), 1: 209 (page references are to reprint edition).
[120] Denon, *Travels in Egypt*, 1: 142-143; 277.

subjugated, or brought over by persuasion."[121] Three elements of this statement stand out: first, the Bedouin here are contrasted with the artificiality of French civilization, a common theme in voyage accounts that praised the Noble Savage of New France; second, Denon refers to the Bedouin as a "nation" – a political entity – and not a race; third, because it is nomadic, the Bedouin nation has an advantage over the French because it is not bound by "artificial wants," which is a very Rousseauean observation consistent with French perceptions of the Amerindians' simple way of life.

The Arabs were not equated exactly with the Noble Savage of New France, but Savary, Volney, and Denon applied the archetype to Arab virtues. The striking continuity of the descriptive language between the voyage accounts of New France and the works of Savary, Volney, and Denon demonstrate that the Noble Savage provided the primary template for viewing the Other. The Arabs shared few readily apparent similarities with the Amerindians, yet Savary, Volney, and Denon borrowed heavily from descriptions of the Amerindian when they wrote about the Arabs. Several common themes emerge: physical health, strength, and beauty; generosity; hospitality; honesty; mutual respect among men; and an evolved sense of justice and fair play. The voyage accounts from New France provide the common thread linking these perceptions and attitudes. The Amerindians, as Noble Savages, dominated French discourse about the Other and clearly influenced the ways in which late eighteenth century travelers perceived the Arabs.

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[121] Denon, *Travels in Egypt*, 1:148-149.

The language style, as well as the content, of the earlier voyage accounts also influenced French perceptions of the Arabs. Filled with detailed observations and careful descriptions, the voyage accounts represented their writers' intentions to categorize their experiences abroad. By imitating the style of the scientific discourse of the Scientific Revolution and the Age of Reason, the periods in which the voyage account originated, these writers intended to express objective truth and avoid excessive emotion and subjective commentary. Volney, in fact, claimed that the "impartial love of the truth"[122] motivated his approach to his Egyptian subjects. Although Volney, Savary, and Denon might not have presented an impartial truth, they made a committed attempt to do so. In the early nineteenth century, this changed as the authors of voyage accounts strove not for scientific objectivity and detached description but for experience and emotion. Subsequent to the Egyptian campaign, the voyage account genre underwent a significant change.

Coincident with but unrelated directly to the Egyptian campaign, the movement toward voyage account as a work of literature rather than a form of scientific treatise began with François-René de Chateaubriand. In 1811, Chateaubriand published his *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*, thus creating the "literary" voyage and elevating the voyage account to a literary genre.[123] Chateaubriand and his imitators, such as Alphonse de Lamartine, Gérard de Nerval, and Gustave Flaubert, desired to bring a "literary value"

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[122] Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt*, 1: vi.
[123] J.C. Berchet, as Valérie Berty paraphrased in *Litérature et Voyage: un essai de typologie narrative des récits de voyage français aux XIX^e siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001), 14.

to their personal reflections and responses to their travels.[124] The romantic and exotic Orient promised experiences replete with opportunities for personal discovery and literary inspiration, and in the nineteenth century, writers began to view travel as a means to obtain material for their works; the journey provided access not just to distant lands but also to new experiences and sensations about which these authors could write.[125] Previously, travel created incidental writers out of a diversity of people: lawyers, priests, and even adventure-seeking aristocrats. Because the voyage account was intended not as a piece of literature or a personal revelation but as a journal of observations and details, any traveler could write one successfully.

The new breed of nineteenth century voyage account writers became a more elite group; they sought to use artful and descriptive language to convey emotion and experience and not arid cataloguing of ruins and animals. Thus, the subjects about which these authors wrote became sensationalized and romanticized. It was this literary shift that contributed to the dissemination and popularization of the imaginative and exoticized Orient[126] much as the earlier voyage accounts had spread the romantic idea of the Noble Savage. By the time France invaded Algeria in 1830, the Orient of the Romantic writers had become the dominant model of the East and the Arabs.

The Egyptian campaign did produce a variation on the voyage account, the *Description de l'Égypte*. Published between 1809 and 1823, the *Description de l'Égypte* contains the compiled work of many of the scientists and artists who accompanied

[124] Berty, *Litérature et Voyage,* 23.
[125] Berty, *Litérature et Voyage,* 81.
[126] See Edward Said, *Orientalism*.

Napoleon and his army to Egypt. Twenty-three volumes in total, the Description included four folio volumes on Egypt's antiquities and two volumes each on its modern state and natural history.[127] Although the *Description* did not provide personal memoirs of the campaign in Egypt, it resembles voyage accounts in its attempt to catalogue, describe, and analyze data and observations. The *Description*, however, was completely unique in its size and scope; it remains a remarkable work. Many of the drawings it contains depict ruins which no longer exist; consequently, the *Description* supplies our only record of them, thus remaining an important resource even for modern scholars.[128] The *Description*, produced by some of the most brilliant minds of nineteenth century France, thus represented the era's height of scholarship on foreign lands.[129] The French reading public had an authoritative source of information about Egypt; a source written by scientists and intellectuals instead of mere travelers. The voyage account was being supplanted on the one hand by literary journeys in the format of *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem* and on the other by exhaustive "scientific" studies like the *Description de l'Égypte*. Because they were conducted and produced by scientists and experts, such studies ostensibly were more objective and reliable than voyage accounts.

Said traced the birth of modern Egyptology to the *Description de l'Égypte*, referring to it as an "agent of domination."[130] Perhaps by "domination" Said intended to point out that after the Egyptian expedition and the resulting *Description de l'Égypte*, the

[127] Reid, *Whose Pharaohs?*, 34.
[128] Beaucour, *Discovery of Egypt*, 196.
[129] Beaucour, *Discovery of Egypt*, 67.
[130] Said, *Orientalism*, 87.

French would turn increasingly to commissions of scientific and scholarly experts to examine, evaluate, and write about colonized lands and peoples; the studies these commissions produced were a "combination of science and reconnaissance."[131] The Egyptian campaign's Commission of Arts and Sciences inspired the later creation of the Scientific Commission for the Exploration of Algeria (1840-42), established by the French government after its invasion of Algeria for the purpose of "explor[ing] and expos[ing] Algeria's terrain.[132] Significantly, more than just the land, these commissions and their publications analyzed and described indigenous people: the Other.

This reflects also a wider cultural shift that began in the early decades of the nineteenth century: the emergence of "scientific" social and political theories, such as positivism, and specialized fields of "social science" such as ethnology, anthropology, linguistics, and – significantly – racial theories. The Noble Savage of the voyage account grew, figuratively, from a living example of a stage in the ethical or social development of humanity into an example of a different race that was intrinsically and biologically different. Scholars sought scientific reasons and formulated theories to explain the differences among races and, ultimately, facilitated the justification of French imperialism. If some races were scientifically "proven" to be inferior then French colonization and rule of those races seemed appropriate and just.

In Algeria, the convergence of these intellectual trends with French national imperial goals helped to forge the racial stereotypes attributed to the indigenous Arabs

[131] Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 104.
[132] Patricia Lorcin, "Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Algeria's Latin Past," *French Historical Studies* 25 (2002): 295-329.

and Kabyles. In turn, the stereotypes contributed to the unfortunate policies implemented in Algeria and the resulting hostility between the French colonizers and the native Algerians.[133] During Napoleon's occupation of Egypt, French relations with native Egyptians were not marred to the same extent by racial stereotypes. The Noble Savage of New France and the Egyptians shared a common lineage in the voyage accounts, and French perceptions of the Other contained therein were generally benevolent even if they were condescending. Nonetheless, the Amerindians and the Arabs were viewed less as different races that remained biologically removed from Frenchmen than as human societies in different stages of development. More than mere imperialism, France's shifting perceptions of the Other might be traced to the replacement of the voyage account of previous centuries with the "literary voyages" of the Romantics and with the new "scientific" works produced by Commissions of experts. Paradigms of the Other established by the subsequent emergence of racial, ethnic, and linguistic theories resulted, unfortunately, not in greater understanding but in divisive racism.

[133] See Patricia Lorcin's *Imperial Identities*.

CHAPTER FOUR

If Rousseau had known about the Kabyles, sir, he would not have uttered such nonsense about the Caribs and other Indians of America: he would have sought his models in the Atlas; there he would have found men subject to a sort of social police and nonetheless almost as free as the isolated individual who enjoys his savage independence in the heart of the woods.[134]

--Alexis de Tocqueville

In 1801, a British and Ottoman coalition succeeded in driving the French out of Egypt. Napoleon had already returned to France in 1799, slipping out in secrecy with only a handful of companions. As far as Napoleon was concerned the Egyptian campaign had been a success; regardless of what happened to the land and the French army after his departure, the Egyptian campaign had secured Napoleon's ascendancy. Although he had hoped to establish a colony from which he could launch his plans to attack and defeat the British in the East, Napoleon recognized an opportunity awaiting him in France. Never one to let opportunity pass by unexploited, Napoleon hastened back to France to "save" the Directory by assuming control of the state and to regain the Italian territories he had won and that France, without him, was losing. Thus the French

[134] Alexis de Tocqueville, in *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, ed. and trans. Jennifer Pitts (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 6.

troops of the Army of the Orient, in July 1799, found themselves stuck in Egypt Napoleon-less, miserable, and facing an immanent attack by Ottoman and British forces.

Prior to leaving Egypt, Napoleon had failed to inform General Jean Baptiste Kléber, the man to whom he entrusted control of the French Army of the Orient, that he was sailing to France. Tricked into believing that he was meeting Napoleon to discuss military tactics, General Kléber arrived at the appointed meeting spot to find waiting for him a dispatch from Napoleon. With fury and frustration, General Kléber thus learned of his commander's travel plans and his own new responsibilities. Almost immediately, General Kléber began negotiating with Britain's Sir Sidney Smith for an honorable surrender and evacuation of Egypt. Unfortunately, circumstances worked against this, and French troops held out in Egypt for two more years.

One significant result of Napoleon's campaign in Egypt is the effect it had on France's developing imperial ambitions. The invasion of Egypt paved the way for the conquest of Algeria, because the ultimate loss of Egypt made the establishment of a North African colony more imperative to those in France who wanted to protect and expand France's mercantile interests in the Mediterranean. Algeria presented an attractive alternative.[135]

[135] Perhaps if France had been successful in holding onto Egypt, Algeria might have avoided France's imperialist attentions and been spared a full-scale military invasion. Egypt could have provided France with the commercial and military bases it desired. Furthermore, Egypt would have continued to provide a considerable and on-going military challenge. During its brief occupation, French troops never managed to achieve complete control of the country, and the army had to quell two major rebellions and many small localized insurrections. Additionally, the Mameluke beys who had controlled Egypt prior to Napoleon's arrival had continued to elude defeat or capture and had created continuous trouble for the French. The manpower and resources required for a secure and successful colony in Egypt could have left France with little to spare for a second difficult invasion and colonization effort in North Africa.

On July 4, 1830, Turkish troops defending Algiers succumbed to French bombardment and abandoned the fort, blowing up what remained of it. The next day, French troops occupied the city. Despite the promise of the commanding officer, the Count de Bourmont, that the city's inhabitants and the sanctity their property would be respected, before the day was over French soldiers had rampaged throughout the streets, looting, robbing, and assaulting the populace.[136] From the outset, betrayal and violence characterized relations between the French and the Algerians.

Although the reasons behind France's invasion of Algeria are many and complex, the 1830 conquest of Algiers resulted in part from a series of escalating events that began in 1827. The ruler of Algiers, the Ottoman administrator Hussein Dey, insulted the French consul, Pierre Deva, by striking him with a fly swatter during an argument. The argument concerned the large debt some French merchants owed the Algerian state. The two merchants claimed to be unable to repay the debt to the Dey until the French government paid them. The debts, however, had been incurred under Napoleon's reign, and the Regency government of Charles X felt unobliged to repay the debts of its predecessor. The merchants, therefore, remained unpaid and so did Hussein Dey. Tension grew between the French and Algerian governments, culminating in the "fly swatter" incident that supplied the ostensible excuse for France's invasion of Algiers.

This incident served as a convenient justification for an invasion that owed itself to several additional underlying causes. Egypt and its valuable Mediterranean ports had been lost to the British, but Algeria's ports potentially could provide compensation.

[136] John Ruedy, *Modern Algeria* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 49-50.

Furthermore, France claimed altruistic motivations for the invasion of Algeria. The pestilential Barbary pirates that nested in North African ports long had caused considerable trouble not just for France but for all of Europe's Mediterranean mercantile interests. In attacking Algeria, France could hope to strike a mortal blow against the pirates, thus freeing the Mediterranean from their tyranny. Not content to free just trade ships from tyranny, France claimed also that it wanted to free the Algerian people from the tyranny of the Turks.[137] The Ottoman abuses in Algeria, it seemed, mirrored those that Egypt had suffered.

Above all, though, internal French politics provided the most compelling motivation for the invasion of Algeria. The popularity of Charles X had declined precipitously. An impressive overseas victory might reverse this by exciting the French populace and galvanizing support for Charles X. In 1827, the Minister of War had written that military intervention in Algeria might usefully distract the people from domestic political trouble, thus benefiting the regime in the next election.[138] The capture of Algiers, then, resulted from a multiplicity of factors and did not reflect a conscientious and organized attempt to build a French empire.[139]

The victory in Algeria, although greeted with enthusiasm by the French people, could not save the regime of Charles X. The Revolution of 1830 ended the Restoration

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[137] Lahouari Addi, "Colonial Mythologies: Algeria in the French Imagination," in *Franco-Arab Encounters, Studies in Memory of David C. Gordon*, ed. L. Carl Brown and Matthew S. Gordon (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1996), 98.

[138] Charles-Robert Ageron, *Modern Algeria*: *A History from 1830 to the Present*, trans. and ed. Michael Brett (France: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964; American translation reprint, Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc. 1991), 5 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

[139] Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: A History of French Overseas Expansion* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 93-94.

and initiated the July Monarchy of Louis-Philippe. The July Monarchy considered Algeria an "onerous legacy of the Restoration,"[140] and was concerned about the expenses involved with occupation as well as the wisdom of leaving troops overseas thus rendering France more vulnerable to attack from other European powers. Additionally, the liberal economists associated with the new regime did not support colonial endeavors, believing colonies to be more baneful than beneficial to the economic health of the nation.[141] The conquest of Algeria, not universally supported, became a source of conflict, debate, and confusion.

In defeating and deporting the ruling Ottomans and their administrators, the French completely destroyed the social, political, and administrative infrastructure – as well as all of its documents and records – that had functioned effectively since the sixteenth century when Ottoman vassals gained control of Algiers. The power vacuum that resulted allowed the emergence of strong local leaders, such as Abd al-Qadar, and disrupted the balance of power that had helped the Ottomans maintain control over the indigenous tribes. More significantly, French infringement on indigenous farming and pasturelands created considerable hardship for and resentment among the native Algerians. Within days of the news of the defeat of Algiers, land speculators and opportunists from France rushed to Algeria, snapping up land and property. Problems resulting from these frequently illegal land purchases resulted in years of confusion for and conflict among the indigenous peoples, the European settlers, the military, and the

[140] Ageron, *Modern Algeria*, 9.
[141] Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 51.

local administration. This immediately created a different situation in Algeria than the French had experienced in Egypt, because French settlers had not arrived in Egypt following Napoleon's victories.

As a result of the confusion and conflict during these initial years of French involvement policies on Algeria developed less from political decisions dictated by Paris than through the actions of "over-enthusiastic or self-interested men on the spot."[142] Continually shifting, especially during the first decade of occupation, French intentions for and goals in Algeria differed among the various groups involved: the French government, the military, and the settlers (*colons*). French public opinion remained splintered. The French military, lacking adequate troops and matériel for a complete conquest as well as clear directives and orders, struggled to achieve a minimum level of security. The majority of the military believed that working with and building upon local power structures would be the most effective way to secure France's territory in Algeria; however, these power structures mostly had been destroyed or disrupted in the aftermath of the invasion. Still hoping to stabilize their presence in the country, French military leaders waged war against and signed treaties with local rulers, often acting independently and without the approval of or authorization from the French authorities.

The French government, divided about how to proceed, equivocated while events in Algeria continued to run their course. Paris sent a parliamentary commission in 1833 to Algeria to investigate the situation. The commission reported on the many failures of

[142] Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur, ed., in *Promoting the Colonial Idea: Propaganda and Visions of Empire in France* (New York: Palgrave: 2002), 2.

the first three years of French occupation, including the abysmal treatment of the native people. Nonetheless, the commission reluctantly recommended maintaining the Algerian territories, citing public opinion and national prestige as reasons, and suggested economic and political reforms.[143] The Chamber of Deputies could not agree even to accept or reject these proposals. Finally, in 1834 the War Minister took the initiative and drafted a Royal Ordinance for Louis-Philippe to sign, creating in Algeria a military colony: "les possessions françaises dans le Nord de l'Afrique." Responsibility for administering the colony belonged to the Ministry of War. In Algeria, an appointed Governor-General with oversight of both civil and military affairs would represent the Ministry of War's authority.[144] This unusual situation gave the military considerable power that the distant French government had little practical ability to curtail or monitor.

In 1835, the French government decided to follow a policy of restricted occupation, limiting French settlement to the coastal cities of Algiers, Oran, and Bône and their surrounding areas. The remainder of the territory would be left in the hands of indigenous leaders who would become French vassals.[145] This plan did not prove easy to implement, however, and on-going hostilities with the indigenous Arabs, in particular those tribes led by the effective and charismatic Abd al-Qadar, prevented the achievement of a satisfactory peace in the western region of Oran. In the east, Ahmad Bey, the ruler of the Constantine and its environs, refused to recognize French authority and would not co-operate. Many tribes throughout the territory continued to resist

[143] Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 53.
[144] Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 54.
[145] Ageron, *Modern Algeria*, 14.

domination either by indigenous leaders or by the French and attacked and raided both Algerians and French at any opportunity, thus contributing to the disorder and chaos.

Two years later, France still claimed to desire only limited French settlement and co-operation and co-rule with native peoples. The Minister of War summarized French government policy in a May 1837 letter to the Governor General:

> The goal that the government has in view is not the absolute domination, nor, by consequence, the immediate conquest of the whole of the territory of the old Regency [of Algiers]. The desperate and ruinous war which would have to be conducted in order to achieve this would impose on France sacrifices out of all proportion to the advantages that success could procure for her. The principal object which she is to have in mind in her possessions in the north of Africa is her maritime establishment, the security and the extension of her trade, the growth of her influence in the Mediterranean and among the Muslim populations which inhabit the littoral. War is an obstacle to all these results. The government accepts it only as a necessity, the end of which it desires and hopes to hasten.[146]

By the end of 1837, though, French policies had started to shift and crystallize.

In October 1837, the French army defeated Ahmad Bey of Constantine and occupied the city, marking the beginning of the end of France's restricted occupation. Until 1839, the French presence had remained limited mostly to the coastal regions; thus the French had the most contact – and conflict -- with the Arab Algerians who lived in the same areas. European civilians were still relatively few and numbered no more than 25,000 of whom roughly 11,000 were French; however, these figures were soon to

[146] As quoted by Raphael Danziger in *Abd al-Qadar and the Algerians* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1977) 137.

change.[147] In 1841, colonization became official French policy, and during the 1840s, the European population in Algeria jumped from 26,987 to 125,963. European land ownership also increased dramatically, from 20,000 hectares in 1841 to 2,818,000 in 1854.[148]

As colonization expanded, settlers began to push further into the interior of the country. This increased the tensions between the French and the Berbers, although war between the two dated back to 1831. In addition to expanded colonization, a second change in policy carried greater significance: by the 1840s, French policy began to view the subjugation of Kabylia as necessary to ensure French domination of Algeria. Arguments in favor of a complete conquest identified the "strategic, monetary, and commercial" benefits France would receive.[149]

Toward the achievement of complete conquest, in February 1841 the French government appointed General Thomas-Robert Bugeaud as Governor-General in Algeria. Although General Bugeaud had been successful in campaigns against Abd al-Qadar, it was not until he became Governor-General that he had the ability to implement the military reforms he believed crucial for France's success in Algeria. Bugeaud's military reforms produced considerable result; his troops became an effective yet brutal tool in France's colonization of Algeria.

The indigenous people suffered correspondingly. Relations between the French and the Algerians had not started positively and failed to improve. Included in the report

[147] Danzinger, *Abd al-Qadar*, 223.
[148] Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 69.
[149] Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 26.

that the 1833 Commission sent to Paris was a sobering evaluation of France's effect on the Algerians:

> We have sent to their deaths on simple suspicion and without trial people whose guilt was always doubtful and despoiled their heirs. We massacred people carrying [our] safe conducts, slaughtered on suspicion entire populations subsequently found to be innocent; we have put on trial men considered saints by their country, men revered because they had enough courage to expose themselves to our fury so that they could intervene on behalf of their unfortunate compatriots; judges were found to condemn them and civilized men to execute them. We have thrown in to prison chiefs of tribes for offering hospitality to our deserters; we have rewarded treason in the name of negotiation, and termed diplomatic action odious acts of entrapment.[150]

General Bugeaud adopted the use of the *razzia*, or raid, which was the Algerians' preferred form of conflict both against each other and against the French. Now, the French methodically took hostages, burned villages, and destroyed crops and farmland in order to subdue the populace. Even civilians who resisted French authority suffered death at their hands. In 1845, Colonel Amable Pélissier trapped and burned alive many members of the bedouin Oulad Riah tribe, including women, children, and the elderly, in the caves at El Kantara. The French public responded negatively to the brutality, but Bugeaud believed that such measures were necessary in order to accomplish the subjugation of Algeria as quickly as possible, thus sparing more lives in the long run.[151]

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[150] *Procès verbaux et rapports de la Commission nommée par le Roi, le 7 juillet 1833, pour aller en Afrique tous les faits propres à éclairer le Gouvernement sur l'état du pays et sur les measures que réclame son avenir* (Paris: 1842), vol. 1, 333-34, as quoted in Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 50.

[151] Anthony Thrall Sullivan, *Thomas-Robert Bugeaud: France and Algeria, 1784-1849: Politics, Power, and the Good Society* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1983), 127-131.

The Egyptian campaign and the conquest of Algeria differ vastly, and this contributed to the changing French perceptions of the Arabs. When French troops arrived in Egypt, influenced by ideas of the Noble Savage, the Arabs did not clearly fit the archetype because many apparent differences existed. The Amerindians of New France inhabited a relatively small geographic area amidst expansive forests and unspoiled, if harsh, natural conditions. The Amerindians' isolation and their cultural and racial "purity" captured the imaginations of French travelers and, later, gave rise to the image of the Noble Savage, stimulating speculation about the development of human society from its "primitive" state.

In contrast, the Arabs of Egypt descended from an ancient advanced civilization in a rich land that had served as a cultural and economic crossroads; they possessed a written language; their ancestors had constructed megalithic structures and created art of great beauty. Egypt's inhabitants were neither racially pure nor culturally isolated. Despite these obvious differences, the persistent application of language used to describe the Amerindians, particularly their virtues as Noble Savages, to the Arabs in Egypt reflects the influence of the Noble Savage archetype. The French brought this archetype with them to Egypt and used it as a template to describe the Arabs. In Egypt, the Arabs were the group that most closely resembled the Noble Savage; even if they did not fit the image exactly, they were the virtuous and simple peasants in contrast to the corrupt Turks.

Savary and Volney had attributed the Arabs' perceived backwardness and occasional vice to the oppressive living conditions of the Turks' tyranny. In this, they imitated Rousseau in looking to sociopolitical causes for behavior. Rousseau's natural man remained good until he became corrupted by civilization; vice resulted from civilization's corruptions. Race, for Rousseau as well as for Savary, Volney, and Denon, played no part in moral character. The "good" Egyptian Arabs were victims of the "bad" Turks. This dichotomous view foreshadowed the later differentiation between the Arabs and Kabyles in Algeria. In Algeria, however, the French turned the Arabs into the villains because the Kabyles were assigned the Noble Savage role. The additional pressures of the colonial mission as well as the development of racial theories further developed this division; a continuation of the division between Egyptian and Turk.

For the French, Algeria's Kabyles presented an intriguing puzzle: an ethnic group previously unknown who possessed a distinct culture and, in many cases, physical appearance. In addition to the Arabs, the Berbers were Algeria's second most dominant ethnic group; of these, the Kabyles comprised the largest subgroup. Inhabitants of Algeria's mountainous hinterland (Kabylia), the Kabyles lived in relative isolation. Sedentary, largely self-sufficient, and protected by the ruggedness of the surrounding terrain, the Kabyles constructed stone homes, engaged in agriculture, and followed their own customary law, the *qanun*, instead of Islamic law. Also, the Kabyle governed

themselves by an elected council of elders, the *djeema*.[152] As the French sought ways to understand the Kabyles, they turned readily to the pervasive Noble Savage imagery. The Kabyles appeared a perfect fit. In 1837, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that if Rousseau had known about the Kabyles, he would have found his Noble Savage.[153]

Because of the Kabyles' apparent similarity to the Noble Savage, gradually a distinction developed between the Arabs and the Kabyles. In the early years of the conquest of Algeria, the French used the terms "Arab," "Berber," and "Kabyle" vaguely, defining the groups by their nomadic or sedentary lifestyles or region of habitation.[154] Over time, however, these distinctions hardened and took on racial overtones. The French increasingly viewed the Arabs as inferior to the Kabyles who became the virtuous Noble Savage, racially pure and culturally superior.

Edouard Lapène contributed significantly to the propagation of this idea. A French officer during the conquest of Algeria who later served in Bougie, Lapène wrote a book about the Kabyles, *Vingt-Six Mois à Bougie* that became the primary source of reference for all subsequent books on the Kabyles. Lapène thus played a critical role in the development of French perceptions of the Kabyles.[155] For earlier sources, Lapène himself relied heavily upon Tacitus' *Germania* as well as on Sallust's *Jurgurthine*

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[152] Patricia Lorcin in "The Soldier Scholars of Colonial Algeria. Arabs, Kabyles and Islam: Military Images of France in Algeria," in *Franco-Arab Encounters: Studies in Memory of David C. Gordon*, ed. L. Carl Brown and Matthew S. Gordon. (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1996), 138-146.
[153] Tocqueville, *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, 6.
[154] Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 23.
[155] Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 303.

War.[156] The *Germania* had influenced the creation of the Noble Savage archetype, but Lapène used Tacitus' work to explain the existence of a distinct race. Lapène drew careful analogies between the Germanic tribes and the Kabyles, pointing out alleged similarities and suggested that the Kabyles were descendants of the Vandals who had conquered North Africa in the 5th century A.D.,[157] thus establishing a possible explanation for the Kabyles' distinct racial identity. Both the use of *The Germania* and the Noble Savage were old tools for understanding the Other, but nineteenth century thought now began to turn the Other into a distinct race, not just the product of a different civilization.

When the French arrived in Egypt in 1798, the Noble Savage went with them. Although the French discussed the Egyptian Arabs in terms of the Noble Savage, the match remained imprecise. By 1801, the British had expelled the French from Egypt, thus concluding France's colonial mission there. Further elaboration of the Noble Savage in the Egyptian context also came to an end. In Algeria, the existence of the Kabyles caused the French to search for ways to explain their presence and to assimilate them into French worldview. To do so, the French used the familiar figure of the Noble Savage. The striking similarity between the stereotype of the Noble Savage and the Kabyles strengthened the connection. Each image appeared to reinforce and validate the other. By the 1840s, imperial goals and the colonial mission, as well as the growing popularity

[156] Sallust was a Roman historian and governor of Numidia (North Africa) who lived in the first century B.C.E. Sallust's *Jurgurthine War* provides his account of the second century B.C.E. war between Rome and the Numidians, led by Jurgurtha, that occurred in North Africa.
[157] Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 22.

of racial theories, contributed to the development of the Kabyle Myth, but the Kabyle Myth was built primarily upon the framework of the Noble Savage archetype. Without the persuasive power of this image, colonization and racism alone could not have propagated the Kabyle Myth.

CONCLUSION

Napoleon and his troops arrived in Egypt steeped in the imagery of the Noble Savage of the voyage accounts as well as the Noble Savage of French intellectuals. When French troops arrived in Algeria in1830, they did so with an altered understanding both of the Noble Savage and of the Arabs. The East had become the domain of the romantic travel literature of Chateaubriand. The marvels of Egypt had been detailed and painstakingly recreated in the color plates of the *Description de l'Égypte*. The Arab was not the Noble Savage, but he was both more exotic – through the new travel literature – and more familiar – through the experience of the French in Egypt and the memoirs they produced.

Algeria, a seemingly vacant and largely uncultivated land with no ancient monuments except the ones left by the Romans, appeared accessible and available for French colonization. The French had encountered little meaningful resistance from the Arabs and the Turks in Egypt and so they expected a similar situation in Algeria; however, Algeria presented a much greater challenge. The difficulties the French experienced in conquering and colonizing Algeria contributed to their generally negative relations with the indigenous Algerians. In Egypt as in the early years of the Algerian conquest, the French perceptions of the Amerindians and the Noble Savage played a formative role in the ways in which the French perceived the Arabs and the Kabyles.

Patricia Lorcin's book *Imperial Identities* traces the development of the "Kabyle Myth" in Algeria and the growing divergence between French perceptions of the Arabs and French perceptions of the Kabyles. Lorcin ties in the concurrent development of racial theories as well as positivism and the role of the Saint-Simonians, who believed in a hierarchy of civilizations, in the colonization of Algeria. In the introduction to her book, Lorcin carefully explained that she desired to portray a nuanced development of attitudes toward races in a colony – Algeria -- and she succeeds admirably. Although Lorcin did not deny that racism was usually supplied as an "*ex post facto* justification" for nineteenth-century colonialism, she sought to provide a closer analysis of racial stereotyping. Lorcin carefully contained her statement about racism to "nineteenth-century" colonialism, and in doing this Lorcin implicitly excludes Napoleon's Egyptian expedition. Edward Said, however, traced the West's racist Orientalism to Napoleon's invasion of Egypt.

Said offered a valuable critique of Western approaches to the East, even if Said himself revealed a similarly prejudiced and myopic view of East-West relations. Other scholars have skillfully pointed out Said's errors. Patricia Lorcin offers an excellent analysis of the divergence of French views on the Arabs on the one hand and the Kabyles on the other. Neither Said nor Lorcin intended to provide a comprehensive history of French perceptions of the Other, be he Arab or Kabyle, so it is not fair to criticize their work for failing to achieve a goal they never sought. Nonetheless, to understand properly the context of French perceptions of the Arab, it is necessary to consider the long history

of the Noble Savage and the ways in which he developed in French consciousness. This is important because in colonial discourse, the model of the Noble Savage played a central role in French perceptions of the Algerian Arabs and Kabyles and strongly influenced French relations with these groups.

If Said had placed the Egyptian expedition in its proper historical context by considering the motivations and mindsets of the expeditions' participants, then the nineteenth-century genre of Orientalism he describes clearly would not apply. Aside from the political and commercial factors motivating the Egyptian campaign, the participants viewed the Arabs through the lens of the Noble Savage. In Algeria, the development of the Kabyle myth did owe itself to the colonial needs of the French at the time as well as the development of racial theories in France, but it also developed from the entrenched image the French held of the Noble Savage. The perception of the Kabyles as the "good" Noble Savage, with their egalitarian society, respect for women, and isolated self-sufficient villages carried so much resonance for the French soldiers, such as Lapène and intellectuals such as Tocqueville, because the Kabyles so clearly fulfilled the familiar stereotype.

France's colonization of Algeria clearly played into the development of the Kabyle myth, as Patricia Lorcin demonstrates. In the process, the Arabs became demonized as the "bad" Other. The myth of the Kabyle developed concurrently with the myth of the Orient that Chateaubriand and others described and that later artists such as Jean-Léon Gérôme painted. However, French perceptions of the Arabs and Kabyles in

Algeria did not develop necessarily out of colonialism. During the French occupation of Egypt, the French understanding of the Arab as Other remained nuanced and, often, positive. The French looked to the Arabs hoping, in part, to find the Noble Savage. The Arabs of Egypt and later, Algeria, proved an imperfect fit, but the Kabyles of Algeria appeared to be the Noble Savage the French had expected to find. Colonialism contributed to the need for creating a division between the Arabs and the Kabyles, for a complex set of reasons. But in the long-term context of French perceptions of the Other, Algeria fulfilled the promise of New France: the Kabyles were similar to the Amerindians, the original Noble Savages. Even if the French had not desired to colonize Algeria, given the familiarity of the Noble Savage archetype and nineteenth-century racial thought and literary trends, it is likely that the French would have awarded the Kabyles the mantle of the Noble Savage, thus pushing the Arabs down the ladder of racial hierarchies.

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