

**Extreme Ethnography: French Exploration
and the Conquest of North Africa**

By Edmund Burke III

I. Explorers, Ethnographers and French Imperialism

On June 1883 a young French ex-lieutenant set off on an improbable journey. Disguised as a poor itinerant Moravian rabbi, Joseph Aleman, and wearing ragged clothes, for the next nine months he accompanied a Moroccan rabbi Mordechai Abi-Serour, on an itinerary throughout Morocco and over the rugged trails of the High Atlas Mountains. Everywhere he went he took measurements of the terrain, fixing the exact longitude and latitude of his route, point by point, until he had compiled the raw materials for a detailed map of Morocco. During the next year, he would cover 12,000 kilometers of mountainous terrain, most of it previously unknown to Europeans. The lieutenant's name was Charles de Foucauld. His book, *Reconnaissance au Maroc*, published in 1884, provided the first detailed account of the Atlas Mountains and the interior of Morocco in any language.¹ It was an instant sensation in French colonial circles, winning its author a gold medal from the French Geographical Society in Paris. A quarter of a century later, French military officers were still referring to it as they undertook the conquest of Morocco. More importantly, Foucauld's exploits registered in the imagination of a generation of French young men. Explorers were major cult figures in this period, perhaps on the scale of astronauts in the 1970s, and Foucauld was one of the biggest

stars. Yet, at the height of his fame he quit the army and withdrew from public life to become a contemplative monk. But more on him anon.

While I find Foucauld's courage and ascetic practices in the pursuit of ethnological truth fascinating for what they suggest about French *fin de siècle* political culture and notions of masculinity, his life initially seemed to be a splendid aberration. However, while researching my just completed book, *The Ethnographic State: France and the Invention of Moroccan Islam*, I kept finding his imitators among the next generation of French explorers of Morocco.² Subjecting themselves to enormous privations and at the risk of their lives, individuals like Edmond Doutté, Louis Gentil, Auguste Mouliéras, and René de Segonzac traveled in disguise throughout Morocco. Like Foucauld they took regular measurements where ever they went. Like him too, they sought to compile an ethnographic record of the Moroccans they encountered along the way. All for the greater honor and glory of France. The more deeply I read in the literature on the ethnography of Morocco, the more I found myself struck by what I can only describe as the strangeness of their mindsets. What connects their antipathy and paranoia about Morocco and Moroccans, I began to wonder, and the legacy of French colonial social science? What can a consideration of their narratives teach us about the perils and pitfalls of studying the other? Thus it was that, somewhat against my instincts, I found myself embarked on the trail of research and reflection that led to this essay.

But first, let's set the stage a bit. By 1900 the interior of Morocco was largely unknown to Europeans, a kind of Tibet on the doorstep of Europe. Even France, the best

positioned among its European imperialist rivals, (including Britain, Spain, Germany and Italy), lacked basic information about the land and people of Morocco. Widely reputed for the ferocity of its population and its mountainous topography, Morocco's population was estimated at 5 million people, more than 40% of whom were Berber-speaking. Moroccan cities were inhabited by Arabic-speaking artisans, merchants and officials, along with a small but important Arabic-speaking Jewish minority. The boy sultan, Abd al-Aziz, and his government, the *makhzan*, resided alternately at Fez and Marrakech, the two capitals. Fez, the more familiar of the two cities, was several week's journey into the interior from Tangier. It was renowned as a center of learning (to Muslims) and of xenophobia (to Europeans). Marrakech, a large, mostly Berber city, was even less accessible being located near the High Atlas Mountains hundreds of miles to the south. It was under the control of the so-called "Lords of the Atlas," quasi-feudal chiefs who guarded the major passes over the Atlas Mountains for the makhzan. Despite a flirtation with an Ottoman-style military reform program under sultan Hassan I (1873-1894), the ramshackle Moroccan state was barely able to collect taxes in the plains. Most of the countryside escaped its control. Yet somehow Morocco remained independent.³

On the eve of the opening of the Moroccan Question in 1900, Morocco remained a mystery to Europeans, its territory largely unexplored, its population largely unknown. Although resident French diplomats and military advisors had compiled much useful knowledge about the country, their access was limited and basic ethnographic studies were lacking. This being the heyday of scientific imperialism, a concerted effort to acquire information about Morocco was required or France would stumble from one

crisis to another for lack of accurate intelligence. Unfortunately, the Third Republic government lacked a coherent diplomatic strategy for winning Morocco from its European rivals. There were also major splits between Algerian settler interests (who held the balance of power in the Assembly) and higher officials in Paris (especially the Quai d'Orsay, for whom splendid little wars promised disaster). A further complicating factor was the fact that the Ecole d'Alger (part of the future University of Algiers) was the chief source of scholarly expertise on Morocco. Its political links to the Algerian colonial lobby alarmed French diplomats, who saw Algerian scholars as potential troublemakers. It was urgent that a viable alternative be found rapidly.

Fortunately one was soon discovered. In 1902 Alfred Le Chatelier, a military intellectual with wide experience in France's Islamic colonies and no ties to the Algerian lobby, was appointed to a chair at the Collège de France. The grandiose title of the chair ("Sociology and Sociography of Islam") was intended to draw attention away from its actual program. Le Chatelier possessed considerable political clout in higher circles in Paris, as a result of which he established the Mission scientifique du Maroc at Tangier in 1903. Its chief publication, *Archives marocaines*, provided reliable ethnographic information on Moroccan society along with translations of well selected Moroccan texts, especially those relating to the legal and institutional organization of the kingdom. Such was the intellectual credibility of the *Archives marocaines*, that it quickly became the major source of information on Moroccan history, cultural and society for the Tangier diplomatic corps. The Quai d'Orsay was especially pleased that the MSM refrained from conducting scientific study missions into the Moroccan interior. These they regarded with

alarm because they feared the likelihood of their provoking sudden crises, which might jeopardize French policy.

The main organizer of study missions was the Comité de l'Afrique Française, the largest colonial lobby. Its monthly journal, the *Bulletin du Comité de l'Afrique Française*, published reports of study missions it had organized, alongside leaked official documents and reports from all over French colonial Africa. In the French policy wars over Morocco, the Comité initially took the side of the Algerians, pressing the case for the piecemeal conquest of Morocco from the Algerian frontier. Neither their support for what was called the "tribes policy" nor their enthusiastic support for a series of Moroccan study missions did much to endear them to the Quai d'Orsay.

Between 1900 and 1907 more than two dozen French study missions involving French Algerian scholars and supported by the Comité circulated upon the trails of southern Morocco and the Atlas Mountains. Most of what we know about pre-colonial southern Morocco derives from their accounts. In all, including more than a dozen books and as many as 50 published articles, not to speak of numbers of unpublished confidential reports and studies were produced. Their leader was Edmond Doutté, an ethnographer at the Ecole d'Alger, who led five known expeditions in southern Morocco between 1900 and 1906. Their reports appeared in the pages of the *Bulletin*, and its official supplement, *Renseignements Coloniaux*. Collectively the books, articles and reports generated by these individuals constituted an important part of the French ethnography of pre-colonial Morocco.⁴

II. Ethnography as Personal Practice

While I have spent more time than I care to divulge in thinking about the early ethnographers of Morocco, mostly I did so without paying much attention to their comportment and personal behavior while “in the field.” I was interested in them as part of the generation that created the Moroccan colonial archive—that repository of writings and other records of Moroccan society in the pre-colonial period. Over the course of my career I’ve written numerous articles on what we might loosely call French representations of Morocco. I did so at first to show that they were orientalists (this was before the appearance of Edward Said’s book of the same name) and that their viewpoints were inalterably corrupted by the fact of French colonialism. Later I realized that while it’s always fun to find that one’s predecessors were racists, in fact it’s no great feat to discover that colonial sociologists were colonialist. At about this time I became interested in the institutional structures they created, how their research articulated with French metropolitan *science*, and how despite its all too evident flaws, their contribution to our knowledge of North African (not just Moroccan) society was consequential, provided one took some elementary historian’s precautions. So wrapped up was I in locating these ethnographers on their respective French institutional and political game-boards, I never noticed the lengths to which they were willing to go in order to conduct field work in Morocco.

Let's return to Charles de Foucauld, whose *Reconnaissance au Maroc* provides an unparalleled study of the land and people of the Atlas Mountains. The fruit of nine months travel in the interior of Morocco its publication provided tangible evidence of the success of this sort of ethnographic tourism. That an individual born into the French aristocracy would subject himself to enormous privations is one thing. That he would travel as a poor rabbi is another, especially if we consider the virulent anti-semitism of the French aristocracy of the period. Then there is the historical context: all this occurred just prior to the upsurge of prolonged anti-Semitic riots in colonial Algeria that was the start of political anti-semitism in France. (I return to this topic below).⁵ Until I began to pay attention to the behavior of the French explorers of southern Morocco between 1900-1907, I had thought Foucauld's choice of disguise, while perhaps unusual, was just individual. Anyone who reads the records is aware that French proto-ethnographers of the pre-colonial period regularly employed disguises when traveling in the Moroccan countryside. What made me sit bolt-upright was when I started to notice the details of their travel narratives, and realized the extremes of their disguises and their behavior. The more I thought about it, the more I found it strange.

Consider, for example, the 1904 Segonzac expedition (one of several French expeditions in southern Morocco in the period 1900-1907) about which much is known because it ended in quasi-fiasco. Edward Marie René Marquis de Segonzac was a former cavalry officer who led five expeditions to Morocco in the period under study. His background, extreme asceticism and zeal for exploration all make him the logical inheritor of the Foucauld mantle. For his travels in the Sus (1899) from Mogador and Azadir to Tiznit and Taroudant, he disguised himself as Ahmad bin Mejad, a

Tripolitanian merchant, traveling in the company of Hajj Sadiq al-Miliani, an elderly Algerian who had escaped from Guyana (Now there's a life history you'd love to have).⁶ Eventually the account of his various expeditions were collected in his *Voyages au Maroc (1899-1901)*⁷. It is however *Au Coeur de l'Atlas, 1904-1907*, his best known work, which interests us here.⁸ Segonzac traveled over the High Atlas to the Anti-Atlas Mountains in the company of two Algerian Muslims, Abd al Aziz Zenagui and Said Boulifa. Zenagui was an Arabic interpreter and professor at the Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes in Paris, while Boulifa taught Berber at both the Ecole des Lettres at Alger and the Ecole Normale at Bouzaréah.

Segonzac's expedition was in fact just one of three interconnected missions that explored southern Morocco in 1904. Two other French explorers pursued intersecting routes across the western and southern parts of the High Atlas Mountains. They were Louis Gentil, a Professor of Geology at the University of Paris and René de Flotte de Roquevaire, head of geographic services at the Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie. Gentil, disguised as a beggar, and de Flotte (also in disguise) followed criss-crossing itineraries in the High Atlas Mountains from Mogador (present day Essaouira) to Demnat and Safi. All three Frenchmen employed a well developed methodology based upon the state of the art of African explorers of the period. They kept careful notes on the topography, took regular measurements on various instruments (which included a sextant, several chronometers, barometers, thermometers and three cameras) and took samples of the vegetation and mineral resources.

Why did they feel it necessary to travel in disguise? They did so for several reasons. First, because of the worsening Moroccan political situation, it was believed to be dangerous for French travelers to circulate openly. Second, and more to the point, the Moroccan government required European travelers in the Moroccan interior to obtain an official authorization, lacking which they were liable to arrest. In practice such permissions were never given. Thus it was that in 1906 Segonzac decided to disguise himself as the follower of a poor sharif associated with Mawlay al-Hasan of the Awlad Bou-Sba, a cousin of the Saharan scholar and sufi leader Ma al-Aynayn. He dressed as a Rifian, with a knee length jellaba, or *hendira*, a shaved head and bushy beard. To stay in character he walked the whole itinerary barefoot in the company of a Moroccan sharif (whose follower he claimed to be) and an Algerian muleteer. Constantly in fear of being discovered and ready to fight his way out of trouble at every instant, Segonzac was a study in contrasts. Secure in his belief in the idea of progress and the foreordained role of France as the bearer of civilization to colonial peoples, his account is peppered with racist asides. Personally resourceful and courageous, he was a dedicated agent of French imperialism. In this way his mentality resembled that of his close friend and confederate Emile Mauchamps, whose risky behavior helped provoke his own death in Marrakech in 1907. Jonathan Katz's *Murder in Marrakech* provides the definitive treatment of this curious figure.⁹

In preparation for his expedition, Segonzac allowed his beard to bush and took the precaution of getting his head shaved in the Moroccan fashion. (He quotes his Moroccan barber to the effect that no one could tell him from a Moroccan). Yet the photos he

includes in this lavishly illustrated book make it hard to see him as anything other than a somewhat self-conscious Frenchman. No sooner on the trail than Moroccans began to speculate about his identity and purposes. Walking the mountain trails bare-foot wearing a *hendira*, a Rifian style cut-off jellaba, while a feat of impressive mortification, would also have immediately attracted attention, Rifians not being numerous in southern Morocco. Since Segonzac spoke no Berber (as a supposed Rifian, that language would have been the wrong dialect for the High Atlas in any event) and but little Arabic (his translator Zenagui has disparaging things to say about his mastery of the tongue), he was linguistically exposed. Moreover his choice of mounts betrayed the group. While Segonzac was on foot (indeed bare foot!) and claimed to be but a poor faqir, his two Muslim Algerian companions (in a nice reversal of normal colonial Algerian roles) rode newly outfitted mules. Since mules were the preferred riding animal of the Moroccan elite, and their saddles and harnesses were brand new, they made quite unlikely choices for a bunch of poor wandering dervishes. Lastly, Segonzac's party was armed to the teeth with the latest Mausers (loaned, he tells with much irony, by the German consul in Essawira). Such an arsenal would have attracted covetous glances even as it reinforced people's impressions that this was no ordinary group of travelers. Imagine the astonishment of Moroccan observers watching Segonzac covertly taking readings from the various instruments he carried hidden under his *hendira*. In retrospect it is amazing he wasn't denounced on the first day. It is as if he took Moroccans for fools. In retrospect the thought that Segonzac and his two French Algerian interpreters could pass unobserved in the Moroccan countryside seems ludicrous. All the more so in a highly

charged political context in which Europeans traveling without makhzan escort and government authorization were immediately tipped for spies.

The experience of Louis Gentil, who traveled a different but intersecting itinerary to Segonzac's in the same period confirms the general picture. He too traveled disguised as a poor faqir, but carried with him a theodolite, multiple compasses, several types of barometers, chronometers, thermometers and an array of other instruments. Like Segonzac, Gentil was an experienced explorer, having previously participated in a study mission in sub-Saharan Africa in 1899, and at least one other Algerian expedition. Not for him the extreme asceticism of Segonzac however. He took pains to bring along a good camp bed, though he wore Moroccan bellgha-s (slippers) instead of boots. At first he and his Algerian translator/assistant rode mules and traveled well armed. By his second trip he and his party abandoned their mules since they made them stand out too much and switched to the more ubiquitous donkeys. In his final expedition Gentil opted to lower his profile still further. This time Gentil elected to walk with a trusted Algerian Muslim companion, carrying his stuff in a backpack, presenting himself as a poor beggar and living on the offerings of the faithful. Everywhere he went, his party attracted quizzical glances, if not down-right hostility. The local inhabitants, he tells us, manifested a "very marked animosity to the *roumis* [Europeans] who have come to spy upon the Bled es Siba."¹⁰

The case of Edmond Doutté, who led four Moroccan research expeditions in the period, is roughly similar. Doutté too traveled in disguise—he claimed to be the disciple

of a minor Moroccan sufi shaykh—and was accompanied by an Algerian interpreter/assistant (sometimes, indeed, by a much larger entourage). Ascetic practices ill became him. Like the others he was encumbered with impedimenta of various sorts, constantly on edge, and for good reason. He too encountered hostility along the trail, and was threatened with arrest or worse on a number of occasions. Few Moroccans appear to have been fooled by his disguises. Although his acute powers of observation make his ethnographic insights of continual interest, one's admiration for him is tempered by his continual racist asides. Islam for him was “a leaden mantle, weighing down upon the people.” Superstition was everywhere, on the one hand an occasion for dazzling ethnographic description (it was the subject of his expertise, after all), on the other for his displays of contempt.

Was all this secrecy needed? A glance at the travel narrative of Abel Brives, still another French geologist and Moroccan explorer of the period, makes us wonder. Brives undertook five separate missions in the Moroccan South between 1901 and 1907 traveling into areas hitherto regarded as inaccessible to Europeans. His assistant/translator was Abd al-Aziz Zenagui, whom we've previously encountered employed in the same capacity with de Segonzac. So far, Brives conforms to the pattern. Until we learn that he made no attempt at disguising himself. Indeed Brives wore European clothing and was accompanied by his wife, also so attired. Everywhere he went, he proclaimed (in Arabic) his French and Algerian status. His wife attracted great interest, since Moroccan women, never having seen a European woman before, were naturally curious about her. Even though she spoke Arabic poorly, she was able to make

herself understood. Everywhere along his route Moroccans approached the Brives couple in a friendly fashion, many to request French protégé status. Since he did not have to hide from the natives, he was able to take readings from his various instruments whenever he wished. He traveled short distances, taking the time necessary to take geological samples and make the necessary scientific observations. Once Moroccans learned what interested him, they began bringing him fossils and interesting rock samples. To French readers he asserted “Le costume européen est plutot une sauvegarde.”

It was when I got to the Brives narrative that I realized that the heroic explorer narratives à la Segonzac were an expression of the mentality of their authors. There were other ways for Europeans and Moroccans to interact, even in the period of the Moroccan crisis. The proof of this is that Doutté brought his own wife along on his final expedition in 1906. Which prompts the obvious question: all these extreme ascetic practices, all these elaborate efforts at disguise, what were they about then? There are a number of ways to approach this question. The final section of this paper explores a few of them.

III. Colonial Ethnography in its Contexts

The Ecole d'Alger scholars were redoubtable researchers with well developed methodologies for studying North African societies. They had an ambitious scholarly agenda. And they were dedicated patriots in a moment of French patriotic fervor. Their eighteen study missions promised to add greatly to France's knowledge about Morocco,

and at least implicitly, to facilitate its peaceful conquest. Unfortunately things did not work out as they had hoped. Not only did they fail to meet their intellectual goals--Doutté and his colleagues had originally proposed to write a half dozen books on the major regions and cities of Morocco, but only produced one—their peregrinations failed to yield significant insights into Moroccan culture and society. French policy (“peaceful penetration”) had been predicated upon its superior understanding of North African Muslim societies. Its announced purpose was to enable France to win friends through the adoption of appropriate policies while isolating potential opponents. Instead, the study missions systematically provoked Moroccan anger and suspicion wherever they passed, while adding to the gulf of mutual incomprehension that divided the two peoples. Rather than facilitating the “peaceful penetration” of Morocco (in the phrase of General Lyautey), French research expeditions were instead a continual provocation. How could something that billed itself as an example of scientific imperialism go so wrong?

A one word answer comes unbidden to the lips: orientalism! But the onion of orientalism is not so easily peeled, and the diagnosis of “orientalism” is more of a symptomatic reading than a convincing explanation. So what I’d like to do in the time remaining is to turn the tables on my French ethnographers. For it seems to me that their behavior gives them stronger claims on being “the other,” than the Moroccans they encountered. If we set out to study the strange manners and customs of the French explorer/ethnographers, what questions might occur to us? Here, I must be somewhat telegraphic.

Let's start with their extreme asceticism and the role-reversing disguises. These practices can be observed also among French explorers of the Sahara. So they are not unique to Morocco. We've already seen how the need to adopt extreme bodily practices and disguises derived from their fear of Moroccan fanaticism. But the Brives case prompts us to wonder whether we've got it backward. Maybe it was the French who were fanatic. In the crescendo of patriotic feeling and paranoia that was the Morocco Question, explorers who put their lives on the line to spread the French civilizing mission were heroes of France and the Republic. The contrast with Charles de Foucauld is revealing. While he also traveled in disguise to avoid becoming the object of the hostility of Moroccans, he displayed little overt prejudice toward Moroccans in his book. Foucauld had no doubt as to the reasons for Moroccan hostility:

Five-sixths of Morocco is entirely closed to the Christians; they cannot enter except by ruse and at the peril of their lives. This intolerance is not caused by 'religious fanaticism'; it derives rather from another feeling common to all natives: that a European traveling in their country can only be an emissary sent to reconnoiter; he comes to study the terrain in view of an invasion; *he is a spy* [original italics].¹¹

Foucauld understood that Moroccan reactions were political and not the manifestation of allegedly racial or primordial feelings. Foucauld's comments lead me to interrogate not just the colonial situation (as would be consistent with a diagnosis of orientalism) but also the political culture of Third Republic France. For it was *fin de siècle* French society as a

whole and not just its colonial spaces that was mad. French society in the 1900-1912 period was stirred up not just by colonial passions but all manner of political enthusiasms.

Let's consider some. First there was the struggle between the monarchists and the supporters of the legitimacy challenged Third Republic. For the Right, the Third Republic was "La Gueze," the whore, a sinkhole of corruption. The Third Republic was held to be (and in fact was) extremely corrupt. It was also unstable. Governments rose and fell with regularity, sometimes two and three in the same year. The royalist right was appalled. By the 1890s some of its activists were joining extra-parliamentary gangs such as Action française and engaging with street fights with the police and workers. On the Left, extra-parliamentary organizations of workers (unions were illegal throughout this period) were also increasingly intervening in the public square.

Then there's the fact that the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian war, was a period of super-heated patriotism. There were periodic panics about the presence of alleged German spies. Foreigners were especially suspect. These tensions underlay but did not entirely overlap with the Dreyfus affair and political anti-Semitism which also came to a head in the 1890s

Nor was this all: the *fin de siècle* period also coincided with a crisis in the relations of church and state. France of course had long been divided over this issue. In 1902 it boiled over in spectacular fashion with the coming to power of the government of

Emile Combs. Troops were sent into the churches to impose secularist legislation upon the French Church in an episode known as the “stripping of the altars.” This paroxysm of secularist spitefulness was uncharted territory at the time, but militant laicism was a badge of the parliamentary Left and the Radical Party.

Finally the period was one of worker militancy with violent strikes increasingly common, especially in the coal mining areas in northern France. It is at this point that Clemenceau acquired the nickname “Clemenceau, briseur de greves” because he sent French troops to shoot striking miners. Only after World War I, when he was deemed to incarnate French resistance to the Germans did he acquire his other nickname, “Père la Victoire.” Workers however never forgot or forgave his earlier actions.¹²

These same splits manifested themselves in French Algeria, if sometimes in still more toxic ways. This was because, even more so than in the Metropole, everything in French Algeria was racialized and politicized to an extreme. Thus for example French political anti-semitism was first field-tested in colonial Algeria before being transferred to the metropole. Both its leaders Edouard Drumont and Max Regis, were French Algerians, and Drumont’s anti-semitic newspaper, *La Libre Parole* was first published in Algeria. Algerian settler society was also heavily identified with the radicaux de gauche (a political formation to the left of the Radical Party). As a result, many French Algerians were militantly secularist.¹³ This was notably true of professors at the Ecole d’Alger (the source of many of the explorers).

Then there were the periodic anti-Islamic panics, which manifested themselves as a generalized fear of pan-Islamic conspiracies. Specifically this focused on the Sanusiyya, a Sufi brotherhood that was perceived as the leading opponent of French Saharan policy.¹⁴ (The evidence for this fear was at best inconclusive). By a sort of mental contamination, French Algerians began to suspect other sufi brotherhoods of harboring subversive intentions. It was with this mental baggage that our explorers debarked in Morocco. Militantly secularist, fiercely devoted to the spread of French-style science and progress (the mission civilisatrice), they were a-boil with fears and phantasms of all sorts. Ardent patriots, their decision to explore the Sahara and especially Morocco was above all a patriotic one. By mapping previously unknown territories for France, they were contributing to the expansion of the empire, and even more to the spread of progress. But the Sahara conquest was also about defeating the Sanusiyya.¹⁵ Morocco was inevitably colonized by the same paranoid mentality.

The politics of their cultural attitudes can be interpellated from still another angle. Islamophobia is a kind of displaced anti-semitism: directed against a fanatical Islamic conspiracy in which deep moral corruption and religious paranoia are deeply intermixed. Harboring this sentiment allowed Algerian settlers to plausibly deny being racist. Individuals like Doutté saw themselves as writing from a position on the breaking wave of progress.¹⁶ His interest in the traditional Islam of the marabouts, saint cults and popular beliefs allowed him to scientize his feelings of profound dis-ease about Muslims, and about the traditional Catholicism of his own society. In the colonial cultural politics of the era, the study of traditional Islam authorized him and those like him to mentally

rehearse the up-rooting of Catholic superstitious practices in the colonial space when they were reluctant to avow doing in the metropole.

Doutté's choice of subject (traditional Islam) has still other resonances, if we think about it a moment. I have suggested that our explorers were goaded into extreme ascetic practices and comportments by the thought that they were acting in the nation's service. But other things were at stake, other plays were being performed. By tramping in the mountain fastnesses of Morocco they were also staking a claim for a vanishing model of masculinity.¹⁷ By the early twentieth century the agonistic hero was already obsolete in France. For those who had not yet recognized it, the lesson was cruelly enforced in the trenches of the Marne. In some ways I see our explorers obsessed with masculine anxiety in the face of the machine age and the industrial world. The explorer hero was already a brand whose expiration date was set, even if not generally known. The French colonial novel was to exploit this terrain to the bottom in the inter-war period. Books like *Beau Geste* and still more the Saharan novels of Joseph Peyré (*L'Escadron blanc*) testify to a masculine world in which there are tough choices for a man, but that one can still find meaning in making them.¹⁸ Hergé's Tintin cartoons, like *The Crab With the Golden Claws* and St-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* also occupy the same terrain.¹⁹ In this respect we can see the connections between Foucauld's asceticism and French orientalist Louis Massignon's fascination with al-Hallaj, a tenth century C.E. Muslim mystic and ascetic, or the similar attitudes on display in T.E. Lawrence's *Seven Fallen Pillars*.²⁰ Colonialism is indeed another country.

¹ Charles de Foucauld, *Reconnaissance au Maroc, 1883-1884, Journal de Route*. (Paris: Challamel. 1888) 2nd ed. Paris: Société d'Éditions géographiques, 1939.

² Edmund Burke III, *The Ethnographic State: France and the Invention of Moroccan Islam* (Under submission).

³ On this period Morocco of Moroccan history see my *Prelude to Protectorate in Morocco: Precolonial Protest and Resistance, 1860-1912* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

⁴ For more on French ethnographic explorations in Morocco, see note 2.

⁵ Charles-Robert Ageron, *Les Algériens musulmans et la France (1871-1919)* 2 vols. (Paris: P.U.F., 1968) II, 583-608. Also Geneviève Dermenjian, *La crise anti-juive oranaise (1895-1905), l'antisémitisme dans l'Algérie coloniale*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 1986) and Allouche-Benayoun et Doris Bensimon, *les Juifs d'Algérie. Mémoires et identités plurielles* (Paris, Stavit/Cerf, 1989).

⁶ Edouard Marie René Marquis de Segonzac, *Excursion au Sous avec quelques considerations preliminaires sur la question marocaine* (Paris: Challamel, 1901).

⁷ *Voyages au Maroc, 1899-1901* (Paris: A. Colin, 1903).

⁸ *Au Coeur de l'Atlas: Mission au Maroc, 1904-1905* (Paris: Emile Larose, 1910).

⁹ Jonathan Katz, *Murder in Marrakech: Émile Mauchamp and the French Colonial Adventure* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006). Also Ellen J. Amster, *Science, Islam and the Colonial Encounter in Morocco, 1877-1956* (Austin TX: University of Texas Press, 2013), ch. 3.

¹⁰ Louis Gentil, *Dans le Bled es Siba: Explorations au Maroc* (Paris: Masson, 1906).

¹¹ Foucauld, *Reconnaissance*, preface xv-xvi.

¹² Alfred Cobban, *A History of Modern France: France of the Republics 1871-1962*, 3 vols. (London: Penguin, 1968) III, Also Jacques Julliard, *Clemenceau, briseur de grèves. L'affaire Draveil-Villeneuve-Saint-Georges (1908)* (Paris: Julliard, 1965), 538-540.

¹³ Charles-Robert Ageron, *Les Algériens musulmans et la France (1871-1919)* 2 vols. (Paris: PUF, 1968), II, ch. 22.

¹⁴ Jean-Louis Triault, *La Légende noire de la Sanusiyyah: Une confrérie musulmane saharienne sous le regard français (1840-1930)* 2 vols. (Paris: Editions de la maison des sciences de l'homme, 1995).

¹⁵ André Servier, *Le peril d'avenir* (Constantine: M. Boet, 1913).

¹⁶ George R. Trumbull IV *An Empire of Facts Colonial Power, Cultural Knowledge, and Islam in Colonial Algeria, 1870-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹⁷ Benjamin Claude Brower, *A Desert Named Peace The Violence of France's Empire in the Algerian Sahara, 1844-1902* (New York: Columbia, 2009), esp. Chapter 10

“Romanticism and the Saharan Sublime.” More generally Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) and Christopher E. Forth, *The Dreyfus Affair and the Crisis of French Manhood* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

¹⁸ Percival Christopher Wren, *Beau Geste* (New York, Grosset & Dunlap, 1926) and Joseph Peyré, *L'Escadron blanc* (Paris: Éditions des portiques, 1930).

¹⁹ George Prosper Remi (pseudo. Hergé), *The Crab With the Golden Claws* (Boston: Little Brown, 1974).

²⁰ Thomas Edward Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1927) and Louis Massignon, *La Passion d'al Hallâj* (Paris: Guenther, 1922).