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Naomi J. Andrews

Santa Clara University, nandrews@scu.edu

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**“The Universal Alliance of All Peoples”:
Romantic Socialists, the Human Family, and the Defense
of Empire during the July Monarchy, 1830–1848**

Naomi J. Andrews

Abstract *This article documents the procolonial rhetoric among romantic socialists in France during the July Monarchy (1830–48), demonstrating its pervasiveness. It argues that these years must be highlighted as key to the transition from eighteenth-century universalist ideas of humanity toward taxonomies of national, racial, and sexual difference that underpinned the rationale of empire in the second half of the nineteenth century. It explores the views on colonialism espoused by socialists such as Etienne Cabet, Pierre Leroux, Constantin Pecqueur, and Jean Reynaud; situates them in the broad socialist consensus on empire; and demonstrates the relationship between these men’s socialism and their colonialism. Further, it contextualizes their advocacy for colonialism in relation to contemporary debates about the abolition of slavery and free trade. Finally, it demonstrates the coexistence of universalist and particularist language in romantic socialist discourse on colonial expansion and its importance to the developing logic of the mission civilisatrice.*

Colonies are the offspring of nations. Through colonies nations multiply and perpetuate themselves and, becoming truly productive, give birth to regular families; reciprocal ties of affection bind one to another from lands that, without this kinship of populations, would remain strangers and perhaps enemies; and by progress toward the universal alliance of all peoples, political societies are established in the heart of which war is a crime and peace a duty.

Jean Reynaud, 1837

Jean Reynaud, the author of the 1837 entry “Colonies” in the *Encyclopédie nouvelle* (the nineteenth-century socialist “addendum” to the masterwork of Diderot and d’Alembert), presented a mandate for French colonial expansion in exceptionally idealistic and universalist terms. “Here is the colonial order,” he tells his audience, “such as reason might conceive it, such as our children will doubtless institute it, but not as the crude past has revealed it.”¹ In describing the colonial

Naomi J. Andrews is assistant professor of history at Santa Clara University. Her most recent book is *Socialism’s Muse: Gender in the Intellectual Landscape of French Romantic Socialism* (2006).

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¹ Jean Reynaud, “Colonies,” in *Encyclopédie nouvelle*, ed. Pierre Leroux and Jean Reynaud, vol. 3 (1837; repr. Geneva, 1991), 681–86.

project in this way, Reynaud both valorized the abstract concept of colonization and condemned previous colonial orders for their inhumanity and brutality. Reynaud's juxtaposition of a humanitarian agenda with an unequivocal endorsement of colonial expansion is evidence of an intellectual transition under way in his day that reshaped the logic of empire in the era of the abolition of slavery and that redefined the way that diversity within the human community was understood and delineated. The rhetorical negotiation of this transition, in this instance by romantic socialists, affords us insight into the forces impinging on the universalist ideals of the Enlightenment at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The postrevolutionary history of France marks a profound shift away from Enlightenment aspirations—however grandiose and incomplete in their implementation—of the eighteenth century.² Framed by a series of imperial, national, and conceptual transitions, the romantic period was characterized by shifts in the discourses of race and nation, shifts informed by the necessity to reinvent empire in the era of the abolition of slavery.³ During these decades, social theorists in Europe developed increasingly polarized definitions of human populations based on perceived biological and ethnic differences, marking a move away from the environmentalism of prerevolutionary thinkers.⁴

² The shortcomings of French universalism are central to the historiography of modern France and are particularly carefully explored in regard to republican political institutions in Joan W. Scott, *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man* (Cambridge, MA, 1996); Scott, *Parité! Sexual Equality and the Crisis of French Universalism* (Chicago, 2005); and Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton, NJ, 2007). Internal contradictions exist in both the "ideal" and the "real" forms of universalism, as Margaret A. Majumdar notes: "The contradiction between the particular and the universal is there from the outset of the revolutionary period, when the legitimacy of the political state is derived from a universalist concept of human rights and natural justice, but incarnated in the sovereignty of the particular nation" ("Exceptionalism and Universalism: The Uneasy Alliance in the French-Speaking World," in *The French Exception*, ed. Emmanuel Godin and Tony Chafer [New York, 2005], 17). For a discussion of French universalism as it pertains to slavery and empire in the revolutionary era, see Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall, *The Abbé Grégoire and the French Revolution: The Making of Modern Universalism* (Berkeley, CA, 2005).

³ This was a process initiated in the British Empire somewhat earlier; see Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006). For the impact of abolition on race thinking, see Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867* (Chicago, 2002); Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott, *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2000); and Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore, MD, 1991).

⁴ Progressive models of human development originated in Enlightenment thought, of course, but took on hierarchical permanence in the nineteenth century. See Martin S. Staum, *Labeling People: French Scholars on Society, Race, and Empire, 1815–1848* (Montreal, 2003); Claude Blanckaert, "On the Origins of French Ethnology," in *Bones, Bodies, Behavior: Essays on Biological Anthropology*, ed. George Stocking Jr. (Madison, WI, 1988), 18–55. On socialist involvement, see Loïc Rignol and Philippe Régnier, "Races et politique dans l'histoire de France chez Victor Courtet de l'Isle (1813–1867): Enjeux de savoir et luttes de pouvoir aux XIXe siècle," and Sandrine Lemaire, "Gustave d'Eichthal, ou les ambiguïtés d'une ethnologie saint-simonienne," in *Etudes saint-simoniennes*, ed. Philippe Régnier (Lyon, 2002), 127–52, 153–76.

For scholars of this transition, the exigencies of democratization, fed by nationalism, hobbled the universalist ambitions of the prerevolutionary decades.⁵ Sorting humanity according to biological criteria of difference and along progressive indices, these theories came to legitimate a global hierarchy of inequity unrivaled in prior or subsequent eras.⁶ Where Enlightenment critics had seen parallels between imperialism and slavery, by the era of the Restoration and the July Monarchy these two issues had become disengaged.⁷

Like many of their contemporaries, romantic socialists in these years were both antislavery and pro-empire, advocating the colonization not only of Algeria but of Madagascar and Guyana as well.⁸ If a common thread runs through their colonialism, it is their preoccupation with metropolitan social problems and the potential of the colonies to remedy them.⁹ Moreover, their stance on empire exemplifies the coexistence of multiple ways of defining humanity during this transitional period, as they were at once universalist and particularist, internationalist and nationalist. Thus although aspects of socialist philosophy were articulated in universalist language, often through the metaphor of the family, the movement also exemplified the conceptual move away from all-inclusive notions of humanity and toward the hierarchical taxonomies that became hegemonic later in the nineteenth century. Drawing on both Enlightenment and Christian themes, romantic socialists articulated a view of empire that both redeemed the crimes of slavery and envisioned solutions to the increasingly urgent problems of modernizing, industrial European society and, in particular, of the working classes. During these years, then, even the most “utopian” and “universal” thinkers of the nineteenth century, the pre-Marxian romantic socialists, participated in the project of biological differentiation and contributed to constructing a logic of difference

⁵ Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton, NJ, 2005).

⁶ These theories reach their apogee throughout Europe after 1850. See Neil MacMaster, *Racism in Europe, 1870–2000* (New York, 2001), 13.

⁷ For more on this disconnect, see Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton, NJ, 2003), and Pitts, *Turn to Empire*, which act as “bookends” to this transition.

⁸ See Desiré Laverdant, *Colonisation de Madagascar* (Paris, 1844); and Jules Lechevalier, *Notes sur la fondation d'une nouvelle colonie dans la Guyane Française* (Paris, 1844). On Lechevalier's “associationist” scheme for Guyana, see Lawrence Jennings, “French Slave Liberation and Socialism: Projects for ‘Association’ in Guadeloupe, 1845–48,” *Slavery and Abolition* 17, no. 2 (1996): 93–111; Jack Haywood, “From Utopian Socialism, via Abolitionism to the Colonisation of French Guiana: Jules Lechevalier's West Indian Fiasco, 1833–1844,” in *De la traite à l'esclavage: Actes du Colloque international sur la traite des noirs, Nantes, 1985*, ed. Serge Daget, vol. 2 (Nantes, 1988), 603–26; and Olivier Chaïbo, *Jules Lechevalier, pionnier de l'économie sociale (1806–1862)* (Paris, 2009).

⁹ Although this argument bears a relationship to the social imperialism model proposed by Hans-Ulrich Wehler (*The German Empire, 1871–1918*, trans. Kim Traynor [New York, 1985]) and much debated by historians of imperialism, this connection is attenuated by the lack of state power to undergird socialist proposals for empire.

that had long-reaching consequences, in both imperial and humanitarian terms.¹⁰

The problematic relationship of early socialism and its philosophers to the expansion of French colonial power in the early nineteenth century provokes intriguing questions: How did these thinkers believe that colonialism served the universal well-being of the human family? In what terms did they understand it to sanction violent military conquest? In what follows I investigate the rhetorical strategies and underlying assumptions of romantic socialists with regard to France's colonial project. My investigation situates their views within the contemporaneous shift away from disembodied, abstract notions of humanity toward increasingly deterministic specificity, and it demonstrates how the overlapping of these discourses enabled the justification of colonization. Romantic socialists promoted France's colonial endeavor based on a vision of the human family that was simultaneously humanitarian in its scope and exclusive in its logic. To hold in tension these antithetical conceptions of humanity, romantic socialists employed rhetorical strategies that elided colonization's inherent transgression of human solidarity while reinforcing French claims to a global historical role in the pursuit of that solidarity.¹¹ Inspired by their humanitarian concern for the plight of the working classes of France and by the potential of colonial settlement to contribute to its amelioration, romantic socialists nevertheless constructed a vision of empire that to varying degrees discounted its brutality and humanitarian consequences. This seeming contradiction and its rhetorical resolution were ultimately conducive to an expansive imperial agenda and fed into the development of the redemptive content of the *mission civilisatrice* that predominated in post-1870 French imperial discourse.¹²

¹⁰ Staum, *Labeling People*, chaps. 5–6. For romantic socialist views on sexual difference, see Naomi J. Andrews, *Socialism's Muse: Gender in the Intellectual Landscape of French Romantic Socialism* (Lanham, MD, 2006); and Susan Grogan, *French Socialism and Sexual Difference* (New York, 1992). Although not treated in this essay, the conjunction of racial and sexual determinism is a central theme in many socialist works of this era and is the focus of the larger work of which this article is part.

¹¹ Cheryl B. Welch's work on Tocqueville is particularly informative for considerations of the internal contradictions of this rhetoric ("Colonial Violence and the Rhetoric of Evasion: Tocqueville on Algeria," *Political Theory* 31 [2003]: 235–64).

¹² Alice L. Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights: A Contradiction in Terms? The Case of France and West Africa, 1895–1914," *American Historical Review* 103 (1998): 419–42; Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930* (Stanford, CA, 1997); Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard, and Françoise Vergès, *La république coloniale: Essai sur une utopie* (Paris, 2003).

A Nineteenth-Century Universalism: The Human Family in Socialist Discourse

The July Monarchy (1830–48) was framed both by postrevolutionary social recovery and by the forces of industrialization and urbanization.¹³ The latter processes spurred dramatic demographic changes, democratization, and the emergence of organized worker and women's movements, all of which fostered the development of a socialist analysis of society. Just as important, though less often featured centrally in the *intellectual* history of the era, these years also encompassed the conquest of Algiers in 1830 and the growth thereafter of the “second” French empire amid widespread speculation over the virtues of free trade, free labor, and the persistence of slavery in the “old” colonies.¹⁴ These events and debates situated transnational questions at the heart of French reconstruction in the aftermath of two generations of societal fragmentation. Indeed, they are inextricably linked in romantic socialists' promotion of empire, as their writings sought to resolve the social problems of the early industrial period through the promotion of settler colonialism.¹⁵

Romantic socialism resulted from these dramatic and long-lasting developments; in Paul Bénichou's words, the “speculation” of this era was “destined to account for the *bouleversements* of modern France and to derive from them a formula for the future.”¹⁶ The philosophers of romantic socialism thus sought to remedy the disorder and division of their age, particularly through the rehabilitation of organic social cohesion in French—and, at least on a theoretical level, human—

¹³ With regard to the reconstitution of order in the “postrevolutionary” era, see Jan Goldstein, *The Post-revolutionary Self: Politics and Psyche in France, 1750–1850* (Cambridge, MA, 2005); and Denise Z. Davidson, *France after Revolution: Urban Life, Gender, and the New Social Order* (Cambridge, MA, 2007).

¹⁴ With the important exception of the scholarship of Philippe Régner and other members of the Société des Etudes Saint-Simoniennes, the historiography of romantic socialism has focused on its domestic and intra-European influences, paying very little attention to the imperial context in which it flourished. See Régner, ed., *Etudes saint-simoniennes* (Lyon, 2002); Régner, *Les Saint-Simoniens en Egypte* (Cairo, 1989); Régner, “Du côté de chez Saint-Simon: Question raciale, question sociale et question religieuse,” *Romantisme* 130, no. 4 (2005): 23–37; and Michel Levallois and Sarga Moussa, *L'orientalisme des Saint-Simoniens* (Paris, 2006). A recent issue of *Mil neuf cent*, “Pensée coloniale 1900,” makes a similar point about the need to write the intellectual history of colonial thinking. See Olivier Cosson and Yaël Dagan, “Quelle pensée coloniale? Introduction,” *Mil neuf cent*, no. 27 (2009): 5–11.

¹⁵ Recent historiography of later nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonialism has investigated the genocidal potential of all forms of settler colonialism. Although it is not the argument of this essay, the rhetorical erasure of indigenous populations documented here evidently potentiates the “logic of extermination,” as Patrick Wolfe phrases it. See the essays in A. Dirk Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (New York, 2008), esp. John Docker, “Are Settler-Colonies Inherently Genocidal? Re-reading Lemkin,” 81–101, and Wolfe, “Structure and Event: Settler Colonialism, Time, and the Question of Genocide,” 102–32 (quotation on 102).

¹⁶ Paul Bénichou, *Le temps des prophètes* (Paris, 1977), 8.

society. As Constantin Pecqueur put it, social economy “is the science whose object is the better organization not only of one society but of all of humanity; it is the art of association and of universal solidarity.”¹⁷ Informed by the early capitalist cultural and economic environment in which it developed, socialism was by definition hostile to competitive, and what were deemed atomizing, social practices. Responding to the social fragmentation they attributed to unrestrained free trade and a burgeoning culture of self-interest, thinkers writing in this vein emphasized equality and organic unity rather than individual rights.¹⁸

In countering the ascendant economic and political liberalism of their day, romantic socialists put humanity at the heart of their agenda, emphasizing the balance between the needs and prerogatives of the individual and those of society as a whole.¹⁹ Romantic socialist vocabulary was predicated on rebuilding the ties of social coherence that had been lost in the upheaval of prior generations. In Pierre Leroux’s diagnosis of the situation, “humanity is a generic or universal being” that is offered in his influential writings as the antidote to “man understood as absolutely distinct from all his fellows.”²⁰ In socialist rhetoric, the concept of humanity emphasizes the interconnection of human life. In the world of the 1830s and 1840s, socialists’ emphasis on the collective

¹⁷ Constantin Pecqueur, *Théorie nouvelle d'économie sociale et politique, ou études sur l'organisation des sociétés* (Paris, 1842), 10.

¹⁸ The main thinkers considered here, Jean Reynaud, Pierre Leroux, Constantin Pecqueur, and Etienne Cabet, were part of the socialist Left that championed workers, critiqued the conventions of private property, and considered the “économie politique anglaise” (in Leroux’s language) antithetical to the interests of humanity. Never a cohesive movement but a collection of *écoles*, prophets, and their followers, pre-Marxian socialism has been called republican, democratic, utopian, romantic, and fraternal. In the past generation, the denominator *romantic* has come to replace *utopian* to reflect more accurately the tenor of the phenomenon. For a useful overview of the socialist groups, see Jonathan Beecher, *Victor Considerant and the Rise and Fall of French Romantic Socialism* (Berkeley, CA, 2000), 145–66. Andrea Lanza’s recent thesis argues for the term *socialisme fraternel* as a further revision (*La recomposition de l'unité sociale: Etude des tensions démocratiques chez les socialistes fraternelles (1839–1847)* [Paris, 2006]). The terminology of the era was more fluid than it is today. Leroux popularized, and possibly coined, the term *socialisme* in his 1834 *Revue encyclopédique* article, “De l’individualisme et du socialisme,” although at the time he intended it to describe the repressive aspects of the movement, especially Saint-Simonianism, from which he broke in 1831 and against whose doctrine his own was thereafter defined. By 1850 he had come to embrace the term, stating that it referred “in a general fashion, to religious democracy” (*Oeuvres*, vol. 1 [Paris, 1825–50], 161). Similarly, Cabet’s Icarian “communism” was distinguished at the time from neo-Babouvist communism. Christopher Johnson describes Cabet as “a prominent utopian socialist” in *Utopian Communism in France: Cabet and the Icarians, 1839–1851* (Ithaca, NY, 1974), 14. See also François Fourn, *Etienne Cabet, 1788–1856: Une propagande républicaine* (Villeneuve-d’Ascq, 1996).

¹⁹ There was considerable debate among socialists concerning the extent to which the individual’s identity and rights should be equated with and/or subsumed in those of the society at large; this debate manifested itself most fractiously in the split in the Saint-Simonian ranks in 1831. For the role of gender in defining individualism, see Naomi J. Andrews, “Utopian Androgyny: Romantic Socialists Confront Individualism in July Monarchy France,” *French Historical Studies* 26 (2003): 437–57; and Andrews, “La Mère Humanité’: Femininity in the Romantic Socialism of Pierre Leroux and the Abbé A.-L. Constant,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 63 (2002): 697–716.

²⁰ Pierre Leroux, *De l’humanité* (1840; repr. Paris, 1985), 191, 105.

life of humanity and their hostility to divisive social and economic practices expressed their opposition to the core tenets of liberalism.²¹

Socialists' focus on community made them value economic and legal equality over individual and property liberty. As Leroux argued, the fundamental equality of humanity trumps all other forms of affiliation or expressions of identity; he concluded that "equality is . . . prior and superior to all of our nationalities, our constitutions, and our institutions."²² In contrast to liberalism's notion of rights understood as prerogatives, rights, to the extent that socialists used such language, derive from our ties to the collective of humanity; thus it is "man's . . . need, which gives him rights over his fellows and over the universe."²³ For socialists steeped in the religious revival of the Romantic era, this kind of universal "right"—perhaps *claim* is a better term—was an answer to the *égoïsme* that the exercise of divisive rights makes manifest.²⁴ By contrast to liberal notions of autonomy, socialist claims to human equality were founded in the recognition of the reality and value of human interdependence, of humanity as a vast network of *semblables* tied together by necessity and love.²⁵ Socialist theories were aimed, as a consequence, at constructing a society that would regenerate solidarity within the atomized population of postrevolutionary France, a process that would restore cohesion to the human family.

In describing the shape and future of this "universal association" of all people, the metaphor of the family was indispensable to romantic socialists. Louis Blanc argued that "profound solidarity dominates the constitution of the family, the intimate solidarity of all interests. Socialism is nothing other than this solidarity extended to all the members of the human family."²⁶ By contrast to liberal ideals of individual rights,

²¹ Pamela Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France* (New York, 1995); H. A. C. Collingham, *The July Monarchy: A Political History of France, 1830–1848* (London, 1988).

²² Pierre Leroux, *De l'égalité* (Boussac, 1848), 16.

²³ Leroux, *De l'humanité*, 157.

²⁴ The *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, 6th ed. (1835), defines *égoïsme* as the "vice of a man who relates everything to himself" (*Dictionnaire d'autrefois*, artfl-project.uchicago.edu/node/17 [accessed Nov. 23, 2009]). Used in socialist texts to describe the competitive social and economic practices of the era, the term designated the antithesis of altruism, a key concept for the humanitarians, and thus meant something quite different from what Stendhal's idiosyncratic usage suggests. See W. J. Hemmings, *Stendhal: A Study of His Novels* (Oxford, 1964), 89. Leroux used the term frequently, for instance, in his denunciation of eclecticism and in his description of humanity's fall from grace in *De l'humanité*, 69. It also appears in Saint-Simonian writings to argue for the common good. See Bénichou, *Le temps*, 348, 279; and Collingham, *July Monarchy*, 45.

²⁵ On autonomy, see Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York, 2007), 28–29. The *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, 6th ed. (1835), notes that *semblables* "usually means one or several men, in relation to other men. Humanity obliges us to have pity on those like us, on our fellows" (*Dictionnaire d'autrefois*, artfl-project.uchicago.edu/node/17 [accessed Nov. 23, 2009]).

²⁶ Louis Blanc, *Discours politiques (1847 à 1881)* (Paris, 1882), 37. Examples of the use of *famille* or *famille humaine* are too numerous to catalog; the language appears in Saint-Simonian and Fourierist writings as well as in works by the authors discussed in this essay.

the family is a corporate body, and as the model for social relations, it encompasses both the “universal” inclusion of all humanity and the differentiation of social roles, power, and authority that is inherent in the institution. As it was culturally constructed in nineteenth-century France, the model of the family can be interpreted as either inclusive of all or dehumanizing of some, and indeed, it operated both ways in romantic socialist discourse. For example, there was the frequent invocation of *semblables* as the building blocks of humanity, which rests on a fundamental similarity among fellows. Contemporary debates about the role of women in the family, the nature of the “familial” relationship of the biologically defined races, and the paternalism of abolitionist literature all testify to the resonance of the notion of the family.²⁷

In socialist uses of the familial model, hierarchy is both questioned by the insistence on human interconnection and reified in the metaphor chosen to represent that interconnection. Clearly a manifestation of socialist concern for the least powerful in their society, the familial model also worked to stabilize paternalist structures and inherent inequalities. The contradictory meaning of the family emerges in socialist rhetoric on colonization and civilization as well. As an example of their humanitarianism, the model of the family exemplifies the paradoxical nature of socialists’ views on equality, interdependence, and difference in the human community.

Colonialism and Humanitarianism in the Age of Abolition

Although support for the colonial agenda during the July Monarchy was not exclusive to romantic socialists, they differed from many of their contemporaries in that they were not primarily motivated by economic advantages, emphasizing colonization’s necessity for France and for humanity on different grounds. Thus we find arguments for colonialism as “social reform” for “overflow” wage laborers, as a plan for intra-European peace, and as a moral redemption for the “old” mode of the slave owning colonies; in essence, the colonies, rather than primarily acting as trading partners or outlets, operated in socialist notions as sites for the reconciliation of domestic social problems. Yet

²⁷ For racial polygenism versus monogenism, see Staum, *Labeling People*; and Blanckaert, “On the Origins of French Ethnology.” For an example of the familial discourse in relation to race, see Gustave d’Eichthal and Ishmaël Thomas Urbain, *Lettres sur la race noire et la race blanche* (Paris, 1839). On industrialization and the family, see Frances Gouda, *Poverty and Political Culture: The Rhetoric of Social Welfare in the Netherlands and France, 1815–1854* (Lanham, MD, 1995); and Rachel G. Fuchs, *Poor and Pregnant in Paris: Strategies for Survival in the Nineteenth Century* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1992). For the changing role of the family in notions of citizenship, see Jennifer Ngaire Heuer, *The Family and the Nation: Gender and Citizenship in Revolutionary France, 1789–1830* (Ithaca, NY, 2005).

although their imperialism was grounded in different political priorities and voiced in different terms than those of their contemporaries, romantic socialists were in good company as supporters of the French colonial enterprise.²⁸

The years following the French conquest of Algiers in 1830 saw a concerted discussion over whether and how France should construct a new empire.²⁹ Having reached the nadir of its global presence during the Napoleonic Wars, France was well positioned to rethink the scope, logic, and structure of a new empire, and British debates and models particularly influenced this reconsideration. The 1830s saw the ascendance of political economy and free trade ideology, a school of thought dominated by the British and represented in France by Jean-Baptiste Say and his followers.³⁰ As Jennifer Sessions demonstrates, the years after Napoléon's defeat and before the conquest of Algiers in 1830 saw the articulation of a model of "virtuous" empire based on settler colonialism, an explicit response to the moribund economics and moral bankruptcy of slave-owning colonies and the evident necessity of abolition. Political economists looked to antiquity for models of colonial development that would avoid the economic and moral perils of the *exclusif* and of dependency on slave labor.³¹ Envisioned as a panacea to the costs of imports from distant lands, Algeria immediately became the object of imperial strategizing after the conquest in June 1830.

There are a number of similarities between the broad liberal consensus on the importance and shape of empire and the views of the romantic socialists who were the liberals' contemporaries, interlocutors, and opponents. Both groups shared a commitment to antislavery, and the membership of the French antislavery movement attests to this cross-party consensus.³² Writers and politicians across the spec-

²⁸ Victor Schoelcher was also a humanitarian proponent of colonialism. See Anne Girollet, *Victor Schoelcher, abolitionniste et républicain: Approche juridique et politique de l'oeuvre d'un fondateur de la République* (Paris, 2000), 277–97.

²⁹ Jennifer E. Sessions, *By Sword and Plow: France and the Conquest of Algeria* (Ithaca, NY, forthcoming). Critics of the invasion and colonization of Algeria tended to make the case on economic, not moral or ethical, grounds. See Pitts, *Turn to Empire*; and Claire Salinas, "Colonies without Colonists: Colonial Emigration, Algeria, and Liberal Politics in France, 1848–1870" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2005).

³⁰ Say has traditionally been considered anti-imperial. For a reassessment, see Anna Plassart, "Un Impérialiste Libéral? Jean-Baptiste Say on Colonies and the Extra-European World," *French Historical Studies* 32 (2009): 223–50.

³¹ Plassart argues that at this time the term *colony* depended on the distinction between "inhabited and uninhabited lands," and arguments for colonial independence put forth by Say and others must be understood as referring to the European settler populations. Calling white minority rule as practiced in British India colonialism was incorrect in Say's view ("Un Impérialiste Libéral?," 241, 247). Sessions's argument supports Plassart's.

³² Lawrence C. Jennings, *French Anti-slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802–1848* (New York, 2000). Socialists were underrepresented in the elite antislavery organizations; their press organs, however, participated significantly in antislavery advocacy.

trum also saw the arable land of Algeria as a potential repository for the masses of urban poor who were increasingly considered a “social” problem during these years. Socialists such as Leroux and the worker editors of *L’atelier* were among the proponents of worker expatriation at the height of class tensions during the spring and summer of 1848.³³ Finally, socialists and liberals alike energetically argued for the continued presence of the French in Algeria throughout the July Monarchy and made parallel shifts away from support for military rule during the height of Robert-Thomas Bugeaud’s conquest in the 1840s.³⁴

Along with many of his contemporaries, the liberal Alexis de Tocqueville was an avid proponent of French imperialism. Although driven by a different conceptualization of the promise and problem of empire for France, Tocqueville shared with his socialist contemporaries an approach that elided the moral inconsistency that its pursuit implied. His measured consideration of the perils of democratization determined his support for the conquest of Algiers, and he pragmatically prioritized glory for France and its global reputation over Christian ideals of charity and universal humanity.³⁵ Nevertheless, Tocqueville’s clear-eyed approach had limits. Cheryl Welch argues that “his conflicting moral intuitions about Algeria dictate the structure of his discussion, leading him into modes of argument that evade or suppress consciousness of the conflict.”³⁶ His circumlocution avoided the moral challenge that the value of individual liberty presented to the increasingly violent imperial state.

These similarities notwithstanding, there were significant philosophical differences between these two pro-imperial camps. The fundamentals of socialist philosophy put its adherents explicitly at odds with economic liberalism, and implicitly with political liberalism. This opposition, and the commitments that underpinned it, pushed socialists to articulate their views on empire in more universal, holistic, and moralized terms than did their liberal contemporaries. These differences

³³ Salinas, “Colonies without Colonists,” 186.

³⁴ For details on the *razzias* and the *enfumades* that Bugeaud and his forces used to defeat indigenous Algerian resistance, see Charles-André Julien, *Histoire de l’Algérie contemporaine: La conquête et les débuts de la colonization (1827–1871)* (Paris, 1964); Christian Schefer, *La politique coloniale de la monarchie de juillet: L’Algérie et l’évolution de la colonisation française* (1928; repr. Paris, 1964); and Julia A. Clancy-Smith, *Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters (Algeria and Tunisia, 1800–1904)* (Berkeley, CA, 1997).

³⁵ Jennifer Pitts, “Empire and Democracy: Tocqueville and the Algerian Question,” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 8 (2000): 295–318; Pitts, “Liberalism, Democracy, and Empire: Tocqueville on Algeria,” and Cheryl B. Welch, “Creating Concitoyens: Tocqueville on the Legacy of Slavery,” in *Reading Tocqueville: From Oracle to Actor*, ed. Raf Geenens and Annelien De Dijn (Houndsmill, UK, 2007), 12–30, 31–51; Tzvetan Todorov, ed., *Alexis de Tocqueville: De la colonie en Algérie* (Brussels, 1988), 9–34.

³⁶ Welch, “Colonial Violence,” 236.

are evident in the limits of the community whose welfare and destiny they championed. Where Tocqueville and other liberals were focused on the destiny of France as a political entity, socialists articulated their love of *patrie* in Christian universalist language that posited France as the everyman nation, potentially encompassing all of humanity within its frontiers. Indeed, the Christian language so central to romantic socialism marks another important contrast to rights-based liberalism, as socialists preached a form of protoliberalism theology, depicting Christ as the proletarian savior of humanity. This is not to argue that no nationalist undertone tinged their imperialism; indeed, one might see here a far more grandiose version of it than was found in liberal camps of the day, articulated as it was through the deification of *le peuple* prevalent in republican and socialist discourses of the era.³⁷ Yet the terms in which it was articulated were far less precise, pragmatic, or specifically bounded in time and space, and in some instances it was not even specifically the French but the broad community of Christian nations that was the colonizing force.

The most important and practical difference between the liberals of the July Monarchy and romantic socialists was their attitude toward free trade. Whereas the pro-empire lobby was heavily influenced by British political economy with equal measures of hostility toward captive markets and captive labor, romantic socialists felt deep ambivalence about the implications of free trade for the subject classes, whether slaves or industrial laborers. Socialists of the romantic era worried about severing ties of dependence, arguing rather for associative modes of industrial labor and of slave emancipation during the July Monarchy.³⁸ For many of these early socialists, being anti-free trade was synonymous both with socialism and with being anti-British, and this sentiment informed their hostility to the Doctrinaire circles around François Guizot after July 1830.³⁹ Thus although both parties espoused some form of anti-British sentiment, it derived from different sources.⁴⁰ Because romantic socialists attached little importance to liberty—whether political or economic—the contradiction inherent in

³⁷ Frank Paul Bowman, *Le Christ des barricades, 1789–1848* (Paris, 1987). Tellingly, where political economists envisioned eventual independence for European settler colonies, romantic socialists posited perpetual connection to the metropole.

³⁸ On *association*, see William H. Sewell Jr., *Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848* (Cambridge, UK, 1980), 201–6; see n. 8 above for details on *association* and slave emancipation.

³⁹ As Jennings points out, anti-British sentiment was hardly unique to socialist circles (*French Anti-slavery*, 21); however, the particular hostility to free trade and to Guizot and his government is evident in the journals of the era. See, e.g., Cabet's *Le populaire de 1841*, discussed below; and Armand Cuvillier, *Un journal d'ouvriers: "L'atelier," 1840–1850* (Paris, 1954), 29.

⁴⁰ On Franco-British relations during this period, see Collingham, *July Monarchy*, 221–39, 318–27.

imperialist domination is to be found elsewhere in their philosophy, not in any betrayal of liberty as such.

The Rhetoric of Socialist Colonialism

Scholars familiar with the literature on colonialism in the early nineteenth century will likely know romantic socialism by its older, Marxist moniker, utopian socialism, and through the activities of members of the Saint-Simonian movement. Saint-Simonian adherents were key players in Algeria from the start, whether among the engineers and military men who effected the conquest, or among the scientists who helped survey and document France's "acquisition"; among the ethnologists and anthropologists who institutionalized the racial views so central to governing the empire, or among the settlers' and Algerians' "representatives" during the Second Republic and Empire.⁴¹

Less well explored, however, are the ways in which other romantic socialists of the day responded to, endorsed, and theorized the project of colonialism, and not only with regard to Algeria, although its conquest catalyzed their speculations. Retroactively lumped together by Marx, Engels, and their followers with the Saint-Simoniens, romantic socialists in fact had clearly articulated differences with the Saint-Simonian movement and other socialists of their era. Because many romantic socialists spent time in the Saint-Simonian ranks, they came to see in the Saint-Simonian construction of a deterministic social hierarchy a betrayal of the ideals of Christian equality and charity that they held dear. Moreover, they had grave concerns about the degree of freedom possible in a Saint-Simonian world.⁴²

By contrast to the paternalistic, technocratic, and *dirigiste* proclivities of the Saint-Simoniens, the views of other socialists of the era were focused on honoring Christian values of charity and community, priorities they saw profoundly compromised in postrevolutionary France. Although similar to the Saint-Simoniens in seeking a societal structure that would emphasize the organic unity of humanity and would be structured around meeting the needs of humanity as a whole, the

⁴¹ On the Saint-Simoniens in Algeria, see Osama W. Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity: Saint-Simoniens and the Civilizing Mission in Algeria* (Stanford, CA, 2010); Marcel Emerit, *Les Saint-Simoniens en Algérie* (Paris, 1941); and Patricia M. E. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Race in Colonial Algeria* (London, 1999).

⁴² On the Saint-Simonian movement, see Sébastien Charléty, *Histoire du Saint-Simonisme (1825–1864)*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1931); Robert Carlisle, *The Proffered Crown: Saint-Simonianism and the Doctrine of Hope* (Baltimore, MD, 1984); Frank Manuel, *The Prophets of Paris* (Cambridge, MA, 1962); and Antoine Pico, *Les Saint-Simoniens: Raison, imaginaire et utopie* (Paris, 2002), among many others. As Lorcin has observed, "The idea of building a new, non-feudal society, and the intrinsic paternalism of the Saint-Simonian doctrine, found definite echoes in military Algeria" (*Imperial Identities*, 110).

broader cohorts of romantic socialists were more democratic and egalitarian in their approach to reforming society and emphasized the social dimensions of equality. These “Unitarian” impulses are present in their proposals for alternative social organizations large and small, from intentional communities, such as the phalansteries promoted by the Fourierist *école sociétaire*, to mechanisms of worker independence such as *association*, promoted by Blanc and others, and mutual aid societies such as *l’union ouvrière* championed by Flora Tristan.⁴³ Rather than embrace the directed economy and social structure that the Saint-Simonians preached, other romantic socialists focused intently on the social, educational, and economic empowerment of the working classes through *association*. Where Saint-Simonianism’s authoritarian bent seemed a “natural” fit for the colonial project, other romantic socialists were far more egalitarian in their views. Yet, like the Saint-Simonians, romantic socialists were avid, ideological champions of the colonial enterprise.⁴⁴

Support for the colonial project abounds in the burgeoning socialist press of France’s metropolitan centers in the early 1830s. During this time, whether France would pursue its initial coastal conquests in Algeria was on the agenda both of the new government of Louis-Philippe and of these varied press organs whose freedom had been recently, if temporarily, enlarged.⁴⁵ Interest in Algeria and the discussion of the “colonies” appeared in the Fourierist *La phalange* and *Démocratie pacifique*, the various revues edited and published by Leroux and his circle, including the *La revue encyclopédique*, *La revue indépendante*, *La revue sociale*, Philippe Buchez’s journal *L’Européen*, and the Buchezien worker’s paper *L’atelier*, as well as the Icarian papers of Etienne Cabet discussed below.⁴⁶ In the widely read romantic liberal-turned-socialist journal *Le globe*, an increasing preoccupation with the situation in Alge-

⁴³ Associationist plans abounded during this period. In addition to Sewell, *Work and Revolution*, see Bernard Moss, *The Origins of the French Labor Movement, 1830–1914* (Berkeley, CA, 1976); and Jacques Rancière, *The Nights of Labor*, trans. John Drury (Philadelphia, 1989).

⁴⁴ Based on a survey of the socialist press of these years, all the prominent socialists, including Proudhon, Blanc, Leroux, Considerant, Fourier, Cabet, Pecqueur, and Lamennais, supported the colonial cause. Beyond the “first rank” many members of the Fourierist and Saint-Simonian movement were active proponents: Michel Chevalier, Désiré Laverdant, Jules Lechevalier, and Emile Barrault, among others. Flora Tristan wrote to Enfantin to praise his *Colonisation de l’Algérie* (Paris, 1843). See Jules L. Puech, *La vie et l’œuvre de Flora Tristan, 1803–1844* (Paris, 1925), 3. On the Fourierist presence in Algeria, see Bernard Desmars, “L’Union agricole d’Afrique: Projet phalanstérien, oeuvre philanthropique ou entreprise capitaliste?” and Michèle Madonna-Desbazeille, “L’Union agricole d’Afrique: Une communauté fouriériste à Saint-Denis du Sig, Algérie,” in *Cahiers Charles Fourier* 16 (2005): 39–50, 51–63.

⁴⁵ September 1835 saw renewed press restrictions in France in reaction to urban unrest. See Jeremy Popkin, *Press, Revolution, and Social Identities in France, 1830–1835* (Philadelphia, 2002).

⁴⁶ For an expansive but superficial review of the colonial attitudes of socialists, communists, and republicans during these years, see Thomas A. Cassilly, “The Anti-colonial Tradition in France: The Eighteenth Century to the Fifth Republic” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1975).

ria emerged in reports from correspondents and in a consistent drum-beat of procolonial editorials.⁴⁷

These journals show unanimity on the necessity of the maintenance of Algeria and its benefit for the French nation. Socialist writers throughout the Left energetically endorsed the “expedition.” Even the most pragmatic and overtly nationalist among them, however, largely disregarded any coercive element in the process and approached the status and treatment of the Algerians with assimilationist schemes, if indeed the Algerians appear in the “landscapes” at all. As Buchez saw it, colonization would entail the incorporation of Algeria in the *unité française* to be effected through education and assimilation of the people of the land. As he wrote in *L'Européen* in December 1831, “Algeria should not be an independent colony of France; she must be made part of the grand national unity, like Corsica.” This “assimilation of Algeria to France” was to be effected “through moral and rational education,” by which “we can eliminate these nuances [of moral and national diversity] and drive progressively toward French unity, which, being incessantly presented to the indigenous as a model, cannot fail to inspire in them the desire to join in it, and in the end to identify with it to the extent that they understand its value.”⁴⁸

Although a uniformity of vision, on any front, was hardly a feature of romantic socialism, there was clearly widespread consensus here, as among many liberals, on the value and necessity of the colonial enterprise recently embarked on. The various philosophical and journalistic assessments of the Algeria “question” yield insight into the strategies used by socialists of these years to manage the tension between their vast ambitions for a unified humanity and their privileging of Christian, and particularly French, society in the achievement of that unity. Socialists’ rhetoric employed a variety of what we might call strategies of denial in advocating France’s colonial expansion that seemingly preserved the integrity of their core, humanitarian beliefs while lending weight to the messianic role of France in the renewal of humanity.

⁴⁷ See, e.g., “Nouvelles d’Afrique, correspondance particulière du Globe,” *Le globe*, Jan. 29, 1831, 115. The editor Leroux was a member of liberal romantic circles around *Le globe* from 1824 to 1830 when, in the wake of the July Revolution, he migrated with the journal to the Saint-Simonian ranks. He lasted less than a year there, later becoming an influential socialist, though without a formal *école*. See David Owen Evans, *Social Romanticism in France, 1830–1848: With a Selective Critical Bibliography* (Oxford, 1951); Armelle Le Bras-Chopard, *De l’égalité dans la différence: Le socialisme de Pierre Leroux* (Paris, 1986); and Jérôme Peignot, *Pierre Leroux, inventeur du socialisme* (Paris, 1988).

⁴⁸ *L'Européen*, Dec. 31, 1831. On Buchez, see François-André Isambert, *Politique, religion et science de l’homme chez Philippe Buchez (1769–1865)* (Paris, 1967).

Pecqueur's Pacifist Colonialism

Pecqueur (1801–87), a socialist of the 1830s and 1840s, was, like many of his contemporaries, intellectually reared in the schools of Saint-Simonianism and Fourierism. After breaking with the *écoles* in sequence, he articulated his own views on social organization, which were more closely aligned with Leroux and Buchez than with the “founders” generation of Fourier and Saint-Simon.⁴⁹ In his two major works, *L'économie sociale* (1837) and *Théorie nouvelle d'économie sociale et politique* (1842), Pecqueur outlines his “social economy” as a direct answer to the prevalence of political economy during his day, noting that the economic sciences are “vain and sterile if they are not protected and fertilized by morals and insights that correspond to them like cause and effect.”⁵⁰ This moralization of political economy would be effected by regrounding it in Christian universalism: “Security is either for all on the earth or for none; that is God's law.”⁵¹ His moralistic idealism notwithstanding, Pecqueur was more pragmatic than many of his contemporaries, for example, seeing technology as the key to the amelioration of social inequities and emphasizing the importance of trade and material gain and the indispensable role of the state in alleviating social problems. Pecqueur's philosophy thus brought together the romantic emphasis on the unity of the human family with more realistic, though still exalted, expectations for the potential of international trade and cooperation, values evident in his proposals for colonial expansion.

Pecqueur argues for the economic and political utility of colonization from several perspectives. In *L'économie sociale* he describes the ubiquity of colonization throughout human history, using examples from both the European Christian and the Islamic worlds. Here, as elsewhere in romantic socialist writings, colonization is posited in morally sanctioned terms. Pecqueur's discussion is structured around an ideal of European settler colonialism that would naturally and inevitably result from population growth in Europe. These settler populations would make use, as the Americans and the Russians were doing even then, of the “virgin territories that surround them.”⁵² In discussing the possibility of a “separation” of the colonies from the metropole, which political economists regarded as the logical result of European settler colonization, Pecqueur acknowledges the inherent inequality of the two entities and considers the spurs to, and implications of, said separation: “If they separate themselves because of hatred born

⁴⁹ Gustave Marcy, *Constantin Pecqueur, fondateur du collectivisme d'état (1801–87)* (Paris, 1934).

⁵⁰ Pecqueur, *Théorie nouvelle*, x.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, ix.

⁵² Constantin Pecqueur, *L'économie sociale*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1839), 383–85.

of the metropole's injustice, this would be to make themselves open to capture by others."⁵³ This danger notwithstanding, it is progressive development in Europe that will ultimately stave off this separation and ensure the ongoing unity of the extended human family that is produced and reproduced through this form of colonization, as "the majority of the colonies would less and less want to separate, in proportion as the politics of the European nations, in general, become more wise, more humane, more enlightened."⁵⁴ Pecqueur's prediction of the continued connection between colonies and the mother country is echoed in other writings of the era, including those of Reynaud discussed below.

Many of the themes of both socialist and liberal colonial theory are in evidence in *L'économie sociale*, as Pecqueur discusses the growth of population, the need to cultivate the "virgin territories" of the earth, and the potential for market development that necessarily ensues from the establishment of settler colonies. He differs from the liberal political establishment, however, in his treatment of indigenous populations, of the power dynamics of the colony-metropole relationship, and in the broader moral tone in which the entire colonial enterprise is couched. While acknowledging that there might be cause for hatred "born of . . . injustice" on the part of the colonies against the metropole, Pecqueur elsewhere describes the process by which France was, at that very moment, pacifying Algeria thus: "France, settled on the Algerian coast, will introduce successively its civilization in Africa, following a system of invasion and colonization on the model of the British in India, *without the cruelty of methods*."⁵⁵ Furthermore, he notes the "providential" function of colonization and emigration (terms that appear here interchangeably) and observes that "any nation that . . . only sees itself in the role of producing and consuming material enjoyment, and not as having a goal that abroad is moral and civilizing will commit suicide and fall into decadence."⁵⁶ Thus Pecqueur, writing in the midst of Bugeaud's Algerian conquest, which he depicts as lacking the cruelty of the British takeover in India, sees France's mission in Algeria in beneficial, civilizing terms. This is possible because of how Pecqueur conceived of the colonial project and of European society itself.

Pecqueur uses Algeria as a stage on which his utopian plans for the salvation of a simultaneously universal and yet European humanity can be erected. This blank-slate function of the colonies plays out in

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 399–400. See Plassart, "‘Un Impérialiste Libéral?’,” for this issue.

⁵⁴ Pecqueur, *L'économie sociale*, 400.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 394; italics added.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 389.

two particular ways in his work. First, he suggests that Algeria offers a unique opportunity for the socialization of agriculture, as in attempting to establish a state-run system of socialized agriculture, “it will be infinitely preferable to situate it in new *conditions* whenever favorable circumstances present themselves.”⁵⁷ Second, and perhaps more intriguing, colonization is a means by which the European union of nations can work against brewing nationalist conflicts and toward a universal association, thereby combating the increasingly fractious relations among the nation-states of Europe in the early nineteenth century.

In the first instance, Pecqueur envisioned Algeria as the ideal site on which to establish an associationist model of landownership, a site that, having been “taken legitimate possession” of by France, offers a “fine occasion to apply [his theories] on a grand scale, and in all purity.” The proposal that follows is to maintain this “national property” undivided, unsold, and in the direct possession of the state.⁵⁸ The management of this “completely socialized” Algerian soil will be in the hands of government functionaries, rather than of the individual, “egoist” bourgeois who owns capital in metropolitan France.⁵⁹ In addition to putting into motion the “restitution, everywhere, of the state as the direct owner of the land, and to spread the mode of association and solidarity,” this form of colonial socialism would develop revenues that the state could use to underwrite the colonial project, “without causing the mother country to contribute.” The final, and certainly most utopian of the benefits of this plan, is found in Pecqueur’s assertion that “the idle [*les oisifs*], the exploiters, will be singularly rare in this new society, because over there this parasitic class of owners will disappear.”⁶⁰ Contrary to notions of personal incentive and its productive capability, particularly articulated by liberals of this era, Pecqueur’s state-owned colonial property will remedy class conflict and unequal wealth distribution through the elimination of private property. Absent from Pecqueur’s “virgin lands,” however, as is common in socialist literature, is the discussion of an indigenous population and any impact on it.⁶¹ To

⁵⁷ Pecqueur, *Théorie nouvelle*, 764.

⁵⁸ Ibid. In this passage Pecqueur sounds like John Stuart Mill in “On Colonies and Colonialism” (1848), in Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, ed. J. Laurence Laughlin (New York, 1891), 540–60.

⁵⁹ Marx and Engels were influenced by Pecqueur’s *Economie sociale*. See Maxime Leroy, *Les précurseurs français du socialisme* (Paris, 1948), 361.

⁶⁰ Pecqueur, *Théorie nouvelle*, 765.

⁶¹ The iconography of Algeria available for popular consumption during the July Monarchy emphasized empty vistas and unpeopled lands, thereby underwriting this perception in the broader French public. See Jennifer E. Sessions, “Making Colonial France: Culture, National Identity, and the Colonization of Algeria, 1830–1851” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2005), 89–115. Socialists also saw the American West as “virgin” territory. See Carl Guarneri, *The Utopian Alternative: Fourierism in Nineteenth-Century America* (Ithaca, NY, 1991); Victor Considerant, *Au Texas!*

the extent that conflict between colony and metropole is acknowledged here, it comes in the form of issues of trade and economic autonomy that might play out between European colonists and the imperial entities that have overseen their migration, the source of the “hatred born of the metropole’s injustice” cited above.

Pecqueur put forth yet another social function of colonization in the early 1840s, a time when the “pacification” of Algeria under Bugeaud was fully engaged. By this point, the pragmatic difficulties of conquest and colonization in Algeria were becoming increasingly apparent, yet an idealistic, in this case pacifist, tone remained central to Pecqueur’s discussions of colonialism. He was one of the earliest socialist proponents of internationalism, although he had an important precursor in Saint-Simon.⁶² Pecqueur advocated colonial expansion because of the counterweight it offered to warfare among European nations, a stance that we might see as sidestepping the most immediate example of warfare at that time. His *De la paix, de son principe, de sa réalisation* was the winner of an 1841 essay contest sponsored by the Société de la Morale Chrétienne in response to the nationalist outbursts occasioned by the return of Napoléon’s remains to the Invalides.⁶³ In elaborating his plan for international peace, Pecqueur rests part of his discussion on colonization, in which he sees “another indirect means of making peace.” He envisioned a system of international cooperation by which “the governments [would] join together for common colonial enterprises. . . . The participation of all the peoples in one colonization would admirably set the stage for the marriage of races, the fusion and accord of nationalities, and the unity of Europe and of the world.” In Algeria he found this dream already realized in the “union of colonists of all nations” into “un peuple européen.” The status of the Algerians themselves in this fused future humanity is left ambiguous, although we are told that “Europe collectively will serve as their mother country.”⁶⁴ Quite contrary to any inherent injustice in this international peacemaking strategy, Pecqueur notes the moral edification offered by this form of colonization:

(Paris, 1855); and Beecher, *Victor Considerant*. There were also numerous Icarian communities in the United States after 1848. See Robert V. Hine, *California’s Utopian Colonies* (San Marino, CA, 1983), 58–77; and Robert P. Sutton, *Les Icariens: The Utopian Dream in Europe and America* (Chicago, 1994).

⁶² Henry Rouvroy, duc du Saint-Simon, *De la réorganisation de la société européenne, ou de la nécessité et des moyens de rassembler les peuples de l’Europe en un seul corps politique en conservant à chacun son indépendance nationale* (Paris, 1814); Ahmed Zouaoui, *Socialisme et internationalisme: Constantin Pecqueur* (Geneva, 1964), 186.

⁶³ Sandi E. Cooper, *Patriotic Pacifism: Waging War on War in Europe, 1815–1914* (New York, 1991), 20.

⁶⁴ Constantin Pecqueur, *De la paix, de son principe, de sa réalisation: Ouvrage couronné en 1842, par la société de la morale chrétienne, précédé d’un extrait du rapport fait à cette société par M. Villenave* (Paris, 1842), 238–42.

The politics of future colonization will have none of the cruelty and narrow-mindedness of the views on colonization of previous centuries. The original inhabitants [*les naturels*] of colonized countries will be respected in their rights as men, in their customs, and in their beliefs; we will lead them by persuasion and by the evident benefits of a superior civilization. We will civilize them indirectly, but no less certainly.⁶⁵

Cabet's Civilizing *Peuple*

Pecqueur's colonial plans operated at the level of state strategy and the broad development of human societies, both in the past and in the hoped-for future. Remaining on the level of abstraction and system building, the personal costs of the imperial adventure then under way are little evident, whether for the Algerian peoples subjected to French rule or the French soldiers effecting the conquest. Cabet, the founder of the Icarian movement, one of the most popular socialist groups of this era, also advocated colonization but took a far more clear-eyed approach to the problem. Both in his novelistic *Voyage en Icarie* and in the journals that he published during the late 1830s and the 1840s, Cabet revealed an idealistic expectation of peaceful colonization, one in certain ways similar to Pecqueur's.⁶⁶ Yet where Pecqueur's actors are either France or all of Europe, for Cabet it is the *menu peuple* who will accomplish France's "civilizing and democratic mission" in Algeria.⁶⁷ The worker-soldiers appear in his journals of the 1830s and 1840s as simultaneously the vehicle of global enlightenment and the victims of the depredations of the much-despised government of Louis-Philippe and its laissez-faire economic policies. Through the centrality of workers to the project of colonization, the social reform agenda of socialist imperialism is foregrounded and its inherent brutality more clearly acknowledged.

Before discussing Cabet's political response to contemporary events in Algeria, however, it is worth examining the "utopia" of colonization that he presented in his immensely popular 1840 "travelogue," *Voyage en Icarie*. Cabet, like Pecqueur (and Reynaud, below), describes a process of cooperative colonization, in this case by the mythical Icarians, an expansion that finds its impetus in population increase, not in aggressive foreign policy.⁶⁸ In this pacific expansion, one driven by domestic need, colonization is defined as the Icarian incorporation of their "still uncivilized" black and bronze neighbors. The Icarians,

⁶⁵ Pecqueur, *L'économie sociale*, 397.

⁶⁶ Etienne Cabet, *Voyage en Icarie: Roman philosophique et social* (Paris, 1842), 273–75.

⁶⁷ Johnson, *Utopian Communism*, 89.

⁶⁸ Cabet, *Voyage en Icarie*, 301.

through cultural exchange and intermarriage, “please the natives . . . binding them to us.” By “overwhelming . . . with caresses these uncivilized folk, . . . this system, followed with patience and consistency, was so successful that the natives came to worship us almost as if we were benevolent gods, begging us to come and establish ourselves in their midst in order to shower them with more benefits.”⁶⁹ The poignant conclusion has the Frenchman visitor, Eugène, reddening with anger and shame, hiding his face in his hands. The cause of this profound emotional response is his recognition of the virtues of Icarian colonization and the contrast to its form among “we Europeans and Christians”:

We who vaunt our civilization, buy slaves, . . . we encourage thieves to steal men, women, and children; then we torture them to force them to work; and it is from their sweat and tears that we draw the sugar for our coffee! We exterminate savage or semicivilized peoples, to conquer their treasures! . . . we massacre, we pillage, and we burn, to hold onto a colony and to consolidate our power!⁷⁰

By juxtaposing two visions of empire—one morally unacceptable because of the violence and degradation, slavery most especially, that it entails, with a benign and pacific form of colonization through assimilation—Cabet in many ways set out the central dilemma of romantic socialist colonialism. He confronted this dilemma in real life in his writings on Algeria during the 1840s, a reality that renders all the more problematic his continued promotion of the project. The possibility of Icarian-style colonization is described in “Revue militaire” in the August 7, 1842, issue of *Le populaire de 1841*:

Fruits of clemency: Colonel Comman has attempted an act of generosity and of clemency, the success of which confirms what we have always said with regard to the means of colonization to use in Algeria. Having taken, in one of his expeditions, twenty-two women and a few men, he . . . returned them to their tribe under the escort of the men taken with them. This act of generosity bore fruit. Two days later . . . deputations of tribes came to offer their submission.⁷¹

Invoking the idyllic and peaceful colonization first proposed in *Voyage en Icarie*, Cabet clearly differentiates between the means and the ends of extraterritorial conquest.

Throughout the run of *Le populaire*, published from 1841 to 1851, Cabet laments the failure of the July Monarchy—cast in the journal’s pages as unpatriotic, even traitorous—to pursue colonization with suffi-

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 273.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 274.

⁷¹ *Le populaire de 1841*, Aug. 7, 1842.

cient single-mindedness or the humanitarian agenda elaborated above, wondering “how barbarous must the civilized seem to the people of Africa.”⁷² The barbarity on display in Algeria, from Cabet’s perspective, is perpetrated not only against the Algerian peoples but also against France’s own worker-soldiers. In discussing both the *razzia* against the Algerian tribes and the treatment of French soldiers, Cabet confronts violence directly, whereas Pecqueur’s advocacy of settler colonialism evades the core issue of the displacement of colonized peoples.

July 1845 saw the publication of the heinous events of June 20 at Dahra, in which the French military’s *enfumade* against the Ouled Riah tribe killed hundreds of civilians. There was a widespread, consistent outcry in the *presse indépendante* against the military’s tactics. Many longtime supporters of the Algeria campaign and of Bugeaud’s military order there now challenged his policies.⁷³ First mentioned briefly in the July issue of *Le populaire*, the military’s actions were immediately denounced as “colonization by violence, by force, and by conquest.”⁷⁴ In August 1845, as press furor over Dahra mounted, Cabet’s paper featured the issue of colonial violence on the front page, generously quoting the contemporary press, “uttering a cry of pain and indignation, protest[ing] in the name of France and of Humanity,” and including excerpts from a variety of left-leaning publications such as the Fourierist *Démocratie pacifique*, the republican *Le national*, and Alexandre Auguste Ledru-Rollin’s *La réforme*. Expressing horror at the treatment of the victimized Algerians, Cabet depicts them in bucolic terms, “few in number, peaceful,” and suffering in unimaginable ways. The conclusion of this article notes that “yes, a similar system threatens all, compromises all,” and reminds his readers that General Bugeaud was not only the “exécuteur du Dahra” but also that of the “rue Transnonain.”⁷⁵ Evoking the violence of the state against recently constituted organized labor, Cabet makes clear the potential grounds for a radical anticolo-

⁷² *Le populaire de 1841*, June 10, 1843.

⁷³ See Considerant’s response in *Démocratie pacifique*, discussed in Beecher, *Victor Considerant*, 82, 178–91. Socialists were not alone in this sentiment. See Jennifer E. Sessions, “‘Unfortunate Necessities’: Violence and Civilization in the Conquest of Algeria,” in *France and Its Spaces of War: Experience, Memory, Image*, ed. Patricia M. E. Lorcin and Daniel Brewer (New York, 2009), 29–44.

⁷⁴ *Le populaire de 1841*, July 13, 1845, 2.

⁷⁵ The violent repression of worker protest in Paris in 1834 in the Rue Transnonain was infamous in leftist circles and was immortalized by Honoré Daumier in his eponymous print. For Bugeaud’s role, see Antony Sullivan, *Thomas-Robert Bugeaud: France and Algeria, 1784–1849* (Hamden, CT, 1984), 12, 177; for a contemporary response, see Auguste Ledru-Rollin, *Mémoire sur les événements de la rue Transnonain, dans les journées des 13 et 14 avril 1834* (Paris, 1834). The similarities in military violence used by the state during these years against both Algerians and organized workers, along with the contemporaneous racialization of class, is explored in the larger work of which this article is part. On racial imagery applied to the working classes, see Louis Chevalier, *Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses* (Paris, 1958).

nial stance based on identification between the workers and the Algerians; however, the full realization of that possibility did not come to fruition in the days before 1848.

Evident empathy for the helpless members of the Ouled Riah notwithstanding, the larger context of this humanitarian protest conveys a somewhat more complicated picture of Cabet's views on colonialism. The front page of the August 16 issue features two stories under the headline "Partie politique." The first does not deal with the events at Dahra but is a story titled "Ignoble discipline en Algérie"; it extensively discusses the state of the French soldier and his treatment by the military command of the Army of Africa, in language that echoes Eugène's societal self-castigation in *Voyage en Icarie*: "We abduct the soldier from his home, from his family, from his industry, take his best years from him, his blood, and often his life; we speak to him of fatherland, duty, honor, even of glory: Look at how we treat him after so many revolutions that have had the goal of returning to man his dignity."⁷⁶

Thereafter Cabet inventories the methods used against soldiers in Algeria, including "le silo," a form of solitary confinement, and "la barre" and "la crapaudine," both of which include physical duress and exposure to the elements. The overall effect of this litany of colonial violence is to equate the treatment of soldiers with the *enfumades*: "And the executioner of Dahra and of the rue Transnonain [Bugeaud] proclaims these principles for the civil war as for the foreign war!"⁷⁷ Although he was highly critical of the conduct of the war and of the treatment of French soldiers in Algeria, Cabet's support for France's presence in Algeria remained consistent.⁷⁸ Furthermore, Cabet's championing of the Algerian victims of French oppression did not extend to the denunciation of the foot soldiers of the empire but rather abide by the class boundaries of the metropole.

Faced with the violence and barbarity of both situations, Cabet remained wedded to the aim of colonization, accusing the military leadership of incompetence and the government of treasonously aiding the British in their aim of "forcing us to abandon Algeria."⁷⁹ Indeed, because the long-term goal of colonization remains assumed, even though Cabet described the horrors of Dahra as morally indefensible, it is the sacrifice of the soldiers of France that confirms the menace that the military poses, rather than the brutality of the *enfumades*

⁷⁶ *Le populaire de 1841*, Aug. 16, 1845.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Le populaire de 1841*, Oct. 18, 1845.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* In Cabet's screeds against Guizot and his followers, the issue of British intrusion into France's Algerian enterprise is linked to their free trade and antipopulist policies. See, e.g., "Alger et les Bastilles," *Le populaire de 1841*, Apr. 2, 1842.

themselves. This stance is reconcilable in Cabet's worldview as a result of a central precept of his doctrine, prevalent more broadly in romantic socialist and republican circles of these years as well, in which *le peuple* are depicted in heroic, even deified, terms.⁸⁰ As noted earlier, Cabet saw the common man as the driving force in French politics, social life, and colonial success. This language dated back to the French Revolution but gained new energy from the romanticism of the 1830s and 1840s and from the Christian revival then under way, credited with encouraging broad public receptivity to socialism.⁸¹ In Cabet's and his contemporaries' views, the revolutionary and redemptive function of the French *peuple* was simultaneously nationalist and universalist. In the context of the colonization of Algeria, the "democratic and civilizing mission" of France was also that of all of humanity.

While of the socialists discussed here Cabet came closest to acknowledging and critiquing the humanitarian shortcomings of the colonial project, he remained an adherent nonetheless. It seems clear that the incipient nationalism and the still potent utopian ideal of colonization, laid out in *Voyage en Icarie*, inhibited the ultimate realization of the implications of equating the worker-soldier with the Algerian victims of the French regime. Castigating the French cabinet for the military's tactics in Algeria, Cabet offers the following assessment, in which the suffering of the French people remains at the center of his critique:

This system of extermination should make the French chamber blush, because it is an outrage to justice as much as to humanity, and because it carries with it horrible reprisals and calamities without end. It is no longer civilization that we carry, but barbarity that we bring! *And it is always the people who suffer from it the most; these are the unhappy soldiers who are offered up for massacre, after being used themselves as the instruments of massacre.*⁸²

Despite the vehemence of his condemnation of the military tactics used in Algeria, against both Algerians and French soldiers (and often repeated after the 1845 events at Dahra), Cabet remained able to opine, in March 1847, "What horrors could be avoided with a more generous system of colonization!"⁸³ In equating the abuse of the French troops

⁸⁰ The device was used by both republicans and socialists. See Michelet, *Le peuple*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1846). Socialist examples include Felicité Lamennais, *Paroles d'un croyant* (Paris, 1833); Alphonse Esquiros, *L'évangile du peuple* (Paris, 1840); and Abbé Alphonse-Louis Constant, *La Bible de la liberté* (Paris, 1841). Buchez and his followers also elaborated the idea of France as the "pays élu" (Bowman, *Le Christ des Barricades*, 196).

⁸¹ Leroy, *Précurseurs*, 271.

⁸² *Le populaire de 1841*, June 27, 1846; italics added. Cabet's editorial comments follow a report about a speech in the assembly in which Lamartine decried the atrocities in Algeria.

⁸³ *Le populaire de 1841*, Mar. 1847. *Le populaire* appeared on an irregular schedule during the 1840s, sometimes weekly and sometimes monthly.

in Algeria with the horrors of the conquest itself, Cabet relativized the objective violence of colonialism and implicitly valorized the project to depict it as the mission of the deified French nation.

Ancient but Not Roman: Greek Colonization and the Denial of the Colonized

Yet another function of colonization, in the eyes of romantic socialists, was to achieve moral redemption for prior colonial crimes, particularly that of slavery. A close reading of Reynaud's "Colonies" affords us perspective on the historical forces informing socialist colonialism during the July Monarchy.⁸⁴ The article describes an ideal type of colonial expansion, based on the Greeks of the pre-Homeric "Dark Ages" (the ninth and eighth centuries BCE), which stands as an exemplar of the promise of colonization for France and for the entirety of the *genre humain*. The model described by Reynaud makes evident not only the terms through which empire was reinvented during these years but also the rhetorical devices employed to reconfigure its impact and the costs of its implementation.

Reynaud is an exemplary representative of the romantic socialist community during this era, as is the *Encyclopédie nouvelle*.⁸⁵ He was well connected, having traversed the Saint-Simonian experience with many of his cohort, and was a longtime editor and publisher of socialist journals and encyclopedias. Reynaud worked closely with Leroux, and their views are conventionally seen as complementary until their break in 1840 over the issue of reincarnation.⁸⁶ The *Encyclopédie nouvelle*, published by Reynaud and Leroux from 1834 to 1840 and by Reynaud alone until 1846, was conceived as "an encyclopedia of democratic spirit," and the first issues were titled *Encyclopédie pittoresque à deux sous*. Contributors to the *Encyclopédie nouvelle* ranged widely, including the socialists Pauline Roland and Abel Transon, the natural scientists Armand d'Avezac and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, and literary and press figures like Edouard Charton, Théophile Thoré, and Ernest Legouvé, among others.⁸⁷ Despite the range of contributors, however, entries by Leroux and Reynaud dominated the pages of the *Encyclopédie nouvelle*.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ On Reynaud, see David Griffiths, *Jean Reynaud, Encyclopédiste de l'époque romantique* (Paris, 1965).

⁸⁵ Dean de la Motte and Jeannene M. Przyblyski, *Making the News: Modernity and the Mass Press in Nineteenth-Century France* (Amherst, MA, 1999).

⁸⁶ Griffiths, *Jean Reynaud*, 198; Lynn Sharp, "Metempsychosis and Social Reform: The Individual and the Collective in Romantic Socialism," *French Historical Studies* 27 (2004): 349–79.

⁸⁷ Griffiths, *Jean Reynaud*.

⁸⁸ For example, Leroux's *De l'égalité* (Paris, 1838) was originally published in the *Encyclopédie nouvelle* and thereafter as a stand-alone work.

Reynaud's use of the Greeks as his model for colonial expansion is historically significant both for what it says and for what it does *not* say about the colonization process and the realities it entailed.⁸⁹ Archaic Greek colonies, which spread around the Mediterranean to alleviate population pressures in mainland Greece, are an unusual model for imperialism in European history, whereas European powers frequently invoked Rome.⁹⁰ In the immediate context of July Monarchy France, as Patricia M. E. Lorcin has demonstrated, the predominant model was also Rome, by analogy to which contemporaries justified and ennobled France's mission across the Mediterranean.⁹¹ By contrast to the unabashedly military tone of invocations of Rome, Reynaud's use of the Greek model sounds a distinctly less aggressive note. According to Reynaud, the Greeks were the only people who truly understood "what colonies should be," and they had "given us in their small world, much better than did the Romans, a sketch of what the larger world will some day be."⁹² Like the Greeks, the humanitarian settler colonists of the modern age would remain bound within the larger family of humanity: "The same moral rules that apply to individual relations within the family apply as well to the relations of colonies with their metropolises." Emulating the Greeks, Reynaud envisioned a world in which "reciprocal ties of affection bind one to another from lands that, without this kinship of populations, would remain strangers and perhaps enemies."⁹³ This benign construction of Greek colonization proved a useful vehicle for the idealization of settler colonialism, but it was not rooted in the historical realities of archaic migrations.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ The "ancient" model of colonization was a frequent foil for "modern" forms, as discussed by Plassart, "Un Impérialiste Libéral?," and Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*. Greece and Rome are lumped together in most instances, by contrast to Reynaud's exclusively Greek model.

⁹⁰ Anthony Pagden, *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain, and France c. 1500–c. 1800* (New Haven, CT, 1995), 11–29.

⁹¹ Patricia M. E. Lorcin, "Rome and France in Africa: Recovering Colonial Algeria's Latin Past," *French Historical Studies* 25 (2002): 295–329.

⁹² Reynaud, "Colonies," 682.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Two salient aspects of the Greeks of the archaic age bear on the question of colonialism for romantic socialists. First, the romantic era was dominated by both the idealization of Greek culture and the contemporaneous Greek war of independence (1821–30) from Ottoman rule. The 1830 inauguration of Greek independence marked the rebirth of Greece as a nation and also the triumph of a colonized people over their imperial rulers. Western European identification with the Greeks was a powerful element in romanticism, as Europeans saw in Greek culture the origins of "everything that its educated élites now valued and enjoyed" (Roderick Beaton and David Ricks, *The Making of Modern Greece: Nationalism, Romanticism, and the Uses of the Past (1797–1896)* [Farnham, UK, 2009], 3). Second, the Greek mode of colonization, in which individual city-states would hive off new communities as a means of addressing population pressures, closely mirrors the settler colonization of the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth. See Carol Dougherty, *The Poetics of Colonization: From City to Text in Archaic Greece* (Oxford, 1993). Dougherty discusses the familial model of Greek colonization and its importance to the civic identity of the new colonies founded during the archaic age. She also notes, as does Reynaud, that little or no

Reynaud's article, like many of the entries in the *Encyclopédie nouvelle*, is a pastiche of original content and excerpts from established authorities on the topic at hand.⁹⁵ The article begins with an idyllic description of the colonies and their utility to France and asks rhetorically "who among us, . . . dreaming of the *patrie*, does not feel himself penetrated with satisfaction and hope?" Although the entry continues subsequently to denounce the dependence of these colonies on slave labor, the loss of these lands "miraculously brought under our rule" is inconceivable. Rather, Reynaud prods his reader, "should we not unite . . . all together and of common accord, to ponder the means of retaining and consolidating these blessed conquests, to develop all of the resources of their fertility, to draw from them all of the advantages that we have the right to expect from our industry, our commerce, our maritime power, for the growth of our population and its well being?"⁹⁶ Framed by reference to the Atlantic port cities of Bordeaux, Nantes, and Le Havre, and to the scientific and navigational discoveries of the fifteenth century, the colonies in the Americas are the evident object of this discourse, and the challenge is to maintain their viability in the face of the imminent, and morally righteous, end of African slavery in the colonies. The solution to the labor problem that emancipation poses is resolved here through the mechanism of settler colonialism: the value of the colonies "is not in doubt, and the interest that we have there is motive enough to encourage us to people them, to civilize them, and to make them prosperous."⁹⁷

Having thus asserted the value of the colonies to the French nation, Reynaud becomes expansive, describing a form of colonial settlement universal in scope and socialist in impulse: "Egoism is a deceitful terrain for nations as it is for men." Instead, glory must be sought not for individual nations but for humanity as a whole: "Glory is only the benediction of satisfied humanity." Thus Reynaud cautions his readers that, before considering the national interest, they should act on a higher plane, "identifying ourselves with the interests of humankind, certain to find there an inspiration that will not lead us astray." The French path will be dictated not by seeking glory but by serving the larger cause of humanity. The task assigned to humanity by Providence, Reynaud continues, is to "cover the earth with an endless and ever more perfect population," a task that will be fulfilled by the nations of the world through self-perfection and through the establishment of colo-

mention of preexisting populations appears in the mythology and literature left by contemporary Greeks.

⁹⁵ Abbé de Pradt, *Des colonies et de la révolution actuelle de l'Amérique* (Paris, 1817), in this case.

⁹⁶ Reynaud, "Colonies," 681.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

nies. It is at this point in the entry that Reynaud invokes the Greeks as the model colonizers, “so admirable in so many respects . . . and [they have] left us proper examples to enlighten us on the issue of the rights of nations [*gens*].”⁹⁸

Read in the context of the socialism of the day, this “history” of Greek colonization evokes the universal *humanité* that socialists advocated, in which “the life of men . . . is attached to an incessant communication with his fellows and with the universe. That which he calls his life does not belong to him entirely, and is not in him only; it is in him and outside of him, it lives undivided, in his fellows [*semblables*] and in the world that surrounds him.”⁹⁹ This humanity, in its imperial form, would eternally expand from its origin in a messianic France, bringing with it the salvation of the human race. Reynaud’s fellow traveler Victor Hugo wrote in 1841 something rather similar: “I believe that our new conquest is a great and fortunate thing. It is civilization on the march against barbarism. . . . We are the Greeks of the world; it is up to us to enlighten the world. Our mission is being fulfilled, I can only sing hosanna.”¹⁰⁰ Romantic socialists, as we have seen, worked against pragmatic nationalist discourses by arguing for transnational projects and connections to ameliorate world problems, as in the case of Pecqueur’s pacifist scheme. At the same time, they subscribed to a vision of France and in particular of the French people as emblematic of all of humanity, a theme evident here and in Cabet’s work as well.

Based on its resonance with both nationalist and humanitarian themes in romantic socialism, the Greek model of colonization exemplifies key components of the reconstruction of French imperialism: the productive and benign nature of settler colonialism; the universal humanity—whether Greek or French—of the colonizing entity; and the implicitly liberatory function of this colonial growth, emblemized in particular by the backdrop of the David and Goliath story of the Greek war of independence so recently concluded. Through all these mechanisms, moreover, the French-Greek humanity acts as a redemptive colonizing influence, not as a brutal invasion force, as in the Roman model.

The use of the Greeks as the benchmark for colonial expansion was heavily laden in terms of French national self-image and of the

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Leroux, *De l’humanité*, 129.

¹⁰⁰ Victor Hugo, *Choses vues, oeuvres inédites*, 6th ed. (Paris, 1887), 52. Hugo reports these words in conversation with Bugeaud, who expressed skepticism about the entire project despite being at the time governor-general of Algeria. Hugo’s concluding comment on the same page is most telling of the divide between the “idealists” and the “realists”: “You speak as a soldier, a man of action. I speak as a philosopher and a thinker.”

agenda of romantic socialism in its metropolitan context. It resonated with the colonial agenda that romantic socialists espoused in that it valorized the “providential” colonial enterprise, an enterprise that shielded from full realization the humanitarian costs of France’s presence in Algeria and its history in the plantation islands of the *vieux colonies*. Notably absent from the imperial landscape described in this text are any preexisting communities or indigenous populations that might be affected by the arrival of the *colons*. Furthermore, the only overt criticism of Greek colonization strategies that appears here comes in the form of the censure of Athens for its role in the Peloponnesian War centuries after the earlier expansion period, and the failure of the Greeks to colonize as nations, rather than as city-states. Perhaps most tellingly, given Reynaud’s critique of the slavery regime in its twilight, no mention is made of the Spartan helots or of the widespread slavery in the classical period in Greek history. We can thus see in Reynaud’s “Colonies” a rhetorical exclusion of the violence inherent in colonization, especially if we return to his assertion that “here is the colonial order, such as reason might envision it, such as our children will doubtless institute it, but not as the crude past has revealed it.” The “crude past,” however, lived on in 1837 in the ongoing practice of slavery in the French empire. By the 1830s the institution was clearly doomed; the question of the day was how to accommodate colonists’ property interests, mitigate economic damage to the metropole, and organize a working life for former slaves with a minimum of social disruption and suffering. There was good reason to seek a mode of colonization that could be conceptualized as “victimless,” and in the Greeks Reynaud found a rich, and timely, precedent.

According to Reynaud’s account, then, colonization in itself is not the problem; indeed, it holds the promise of inaugurating a cohesive, ever expanding *humanité*. It is the moral corruption of the “old” model that must be corrected, not the premise itself. In concluding, Reynaud goes one step further, making the redemptive promise of future colonialism explicit: “With Algeria alone, France, well and nobly governed, can pay to the human race that which France owes it for the colonies!” Perhaps not surprisingly, it is France’s place to fulfill the grand humanitarian agenda of colonial expansion: “Happy are the people elected by God who have been allowed to work under his hand for the perfecting of the world! We covet their lot, friends of the French name, and enter into the same career with the consciousness of the grandeur and the holiness of the role that France is called to fulfill.”¹⁰¹ Reynaud’s Greek

¹⁰¹ Reynaud, “Colonies,” 686.

model of colonization conjures a vision of human interdependence and community that characterized socialism in this era, one that would be free of the moral dilemmas with which procolonial Frenchmen found themselves faced during this critical transitional era.

Conclusion

It is principally through colonization and by the new face that colonization will wear from now on, that the regime born of the vulgarization of modern European economic modes will effectively combat the warlike tendency, or at least render warfare fertile, in some way humane, and directly profitable to the cause of universal civilization.

Constantin Pecqueur, 1839

The romantic socialists of the 1830s and 1840s lived through profound changes as France sought to rebuild its domestic stability and international prominence after the tumultuous decades of the Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Faced with a society leveled by revolution and decades of warfare, romantic socialists—along with many of their contemporaries—sought to reestablish order through new ways of understanding human nature and societal relationships. In their assessment of what was wrong in their society and how to make it right, socialists exemplified the transitional nature of their era by working within both universalist categories—drawn from Christianity and the Enlightenment—and the developing idiom of radical difference that would dominate later nineteenth-century social theories. In their advocacy of the universal cause of humanity, they rhetorically continued the tradition of humanitarianism traceable to the Enlightenment, but in a form reconfigured for an age imperiled by atomization and social dislocation. At the same time, however, socialists religiously glorified France and the people of the French nation, and although they were not as consistently nationalist as their liberal contemporaries, they nevertheless contributed to the development of nationalism as a redemptive discourse. By identifying the cause of the French nation with that of “universal civilization,” they made France the universal nation, and the health of the French nation, that of all humanity. Their simultaneous adherence to this blossoming nationalist discourse, as well as the increasingly hierarchical theories of racial and sexual difference evident elsewhere in their writings, imbued socialists’ universalist language with contradictory implications.

Perhaps the most problematic question for the historian is that of intent in these texts. While there seems to be little reason to doubt the humanitarian impulses of the domestic agenda espoused by romantic

socialists, the blind spots and ellipses in their depiction of the virtues and benefits of settler colonialism raise significant problems when juxtaposed with the lived realities of the Algerian conquest. What are we to make of the notable vigor with which socialists denounced injustice in their world—the horrors of slavery, the perils of industrial wage labor, and the plight of women in French society, among others—juxtaposed with their relative failure to grapple with the compromise to human solidarity that is implicit in the very notion of colonialism? Whether we see their motives as idealistic and driven primarily by their domestic agenda or as privileging European Christian humanity over all others—or both—the quality and extent of their humanitarianism is invariably called into question. In this regard, the overlapping modes of thought of the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth can be seen simultaneously working in romantic socialist writings, pushing them toward universal and inclusive notions of humanity while privileging European society and arguing for the inferiority of other cultures and races.

However we assess intent, romantic socialists' views on empire were profoundly shaped by the shifting colonial and domestic terrain on which their idealistic, indeed utopian, visions of empire were arrayed. Influenced by the moral inventory at the heart of the abolitionist wave of the time, they and most of their contemporaries had no doubt whatever of the ills of chattel slavery. Yet they were equally influenced by countervailing forces that worked toward the building of new kinds of social hierarchy in the age of democratization. In speaking in both “tongues”—universalist and particularist—socialists described and legitimated France's colonial endeavor in pacifist, humanitarian, and egalitarian terms that mitigated the violence of the process under way throughout the July Monarchy and beyond. In so doing, they contributed to a vocabulary that portrayed empire as ennobling and morally redemptive, transcending petty or individualistic ambitions or profit seeking of the most naked form. In many ways, this vocabulary remained central to French justifications for imperialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. French romantic socialists of the 1830s and 1840s, in negotiating this historical and discursive transition, helped develop and legitimize the *mission civilisatrice* while exemplifying the inherently problematic nature of the ideal in and of itself.