French Algeria in British Imperial Thought, 1830–70

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Abstract

This article explores the role played by French Algeria in British imperial thinking during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. It argues that British commentators developed a remarkably stable vision of contemporary French colonial enterprise as unprogressive, incapable, authoritarian and militaristic, as well as harmful to French domestic politics. The explanations they offered for the miscarriage of France's colonial project in Algeria cast light on mid-nineteenth-century British imperial thinking, throwing into relief the qualities and policies which were believed to make modern British imperial rule uniquely successful. The article contends that analysis of other European countries' colonial projects contributed importantly to a domestic political culture which defined itself in significant part through contrasts with the Continent.

Introduction

Recent writing on nineteenth-century British political thinking has increasingly insisted upon the importance of looking overseas. There is now an abundance of work which explores how conceptions of Europe on the one hand, and visions of British imperial enterprise on the other, influenced constructions of political and national identity, understandings of constitutionalism and state authority, and models of civilizational progress.[1] But surprisingly little has been said about how these two categories—Europe and empire—interacted.[2] Most strikingly, the existing literature pays virtually no attention to the ways in which the Victorians appraised the contemporary colonial endeavours of other European states.[3] The aim of this article is to show that historians of British politics and political thought should take these appraisals more seriously. Its argument is that a politics of European imperial comparison formed an integral part of a mid-nineteenth-century public political

culture which strongly emphasised contrasts with the Continent. This point is developed through a study of attitudes towards what was, to contemporaries, comfortably the most significant colonial experiment conducted by another European power in the middle decades of the nineteenth century: the enterprise of the French in Algeria.

British commentators agreed that French Algeria was a colonial experiment which had not worked. The bulk of what follows is devoted to sketching out, fairly schematically, the terms in which that experiment was thought to have failed, and the explanations offered for that failure, in the period between the invasion of 1830 and the fall of the Second Empire in 1870. In doing so, the article seeks to illuminate the reasons why mid-nineteenth-century commentators became interested in other European nations' colonial projects, to outline the ways in which those projects were discussed, and thereby to improve our understanding of the texture and scope of British imperial political thinking in this period. The discussion also touches more tangentially on broader issues about the intersections between politics and culture in definitions of national identity. As will be seen, the miscarriage of France's colonial project in Algeria was considered to be at least as much a question of national character as of political institutions or public policy.

There is nothing novel in the claim that nineteenth-century British conceptions of empire were shaped by sustained critical engagement with other imperial enterprises across time and space. The influence of the imperial examples presented by the USA, and more especially by ancient Greece and Rome, is the subject of a large and still-growing literature.[4] But as every student of the period knows, issues relating to the Continent were far more pervasive within British political debate than those connected with America or the ancient world. We might, as a consequence, expect historians to have explored how British commentators analysed other European imperial projects at least in the late nineteenth-century era of internationally competitive "high imperialism," when a number of European countries discovered or renewed a sense of imperial ambition: but no existing work on the period looks at these analyses extensively. Indeed, the little published work that does discuss British attitudes towards other contemporary imperial projects concentrates on the early decades of the nineteenth century, and most of it is primarily concerned with other

issues.[5] There is much to be done, then, before we fully understand the structures and significance of European imperial comparisons in nineteenth-century Britain, and the present article seeks only to make some partial and preliminary suggestions.

There are nevertheless good reasons for looking at the middle decades of the century in particular. During this period debate about the structures and futures of imperial rule intensified in all the major imperial states of Europe.[6] Controversy over these problems was acute in Britain, where governments made dramatic moves towards imperial free trade, settler self-government, and the reframing of constitutional arrangements in the non-settler dependencies, while also having to respond to a series of imperial crises. All this heightened Britain's self-consciousness as an imperial power; and with this new self-consciousness came an unprecedented level of reflection on the imperial projects of the Continental states. The overwhelming majority of this commentary was aggressively critical. Corruption in the Portuguese colonies, oppression in the Dutch, decline in the Spanish, and the "ruthless desolation" spread by Russia in Central Asia, were all widely canvassed.[7] There was a newfound interest in looking at other nations' colonial enterprises, in the words of one Member of Parliament, as "systems full of instruction; but for warning, not for example."[8]

During the period 1830–70, however, the contemporary European colonial system in which the British took the most interest was that of France. This was to be expected. Between the invasion of Algeria in 1830 and the "scramble for Africa" of the 1880s, France was the Continental power most aggressively committed to transoceanic expansion. France, moreover, was a constant presence in Victorian political argument, while French politics bordered on an obsession for most elite newspapers and periodicals. Yet none of the voluminous existing literature on mid-nineteenth-century British attitudes towards France discusses how reflections on French empire-building fitted with, or complicated, ideas about French politics and national character.[9] The only notable exception is a 25-year-old article by Joelle Redouane, which focuses on diplomatic and high political affairs.[10] Given recent historiographical trends, this is a surprising oversight. Historians are now well aware that empire represented a major source of diplomatic conflict between Britain and France long before the Fashoda incident, while the study of "comparative

colonialism" is now generating considerable interest.[11] Historians of French imperial political thought, furthermore, have in recent years become increasingly attentive to the significance of the British example in French debates about empire.[12]

Historians' silence on British views of French empire-building is perhaps explained, at least in part, by the paucity of scholarship (especially in English) on pre-1870 French colonial enterprise.[13] That none of the most celebrated Victorian thinkers on France said much about its colonial projects—and that none of the most prominent British theorists of empire said much about France—presumably helps account for why the theme has been overlooked by historians of imperial political thought.[14] This article, however, deals not with canonical intellectuals but with a wider sphere of elite political debate, as conducted in parliament and in books, newspapers, periodicals and pamphlets.[15] In these arenas, as will be seen, British commentators had an enormous amount to say about French colonial projects.[16]

France's projects of overseas expansion between 1830 and 1870 were geographically eclectic, taking in North and West Africa, the Pacific, and Indochina. This article, however, deals only with the most controversial colonial scheme pursued by the French (or indeed by any European power) in this period: the conquest and colonization of Algeria. There are several reasons for this focus. Mid-nineteenth-century commentators had little to say about the colonies the French had held before 1830, while most new French possessions, like Cochin China, were considered to be "outside the sphere of diplomacy."[17] Algeria was widely thought to be "the only French colony of note."[18] It presumably did not hurt that it was a country of which the British public already had some notion, thanks to Lord Exmouth's celebrated 1816 expedition against the Algerine pirates.[19] Furthermore, due to its relative proximity, Algeria was the only French colony of which any Britons gained much direct experience: by the 1860s the journey from London to Algiers took only seventy-two hours.[20] Britons travelled there to engage in commerce, to enlist in the French foreign legion, to investigate the county's natural history, geology, antiquities and epigraphy, to hunt lions, to lay telegraph lines and railways, to engage in missionary work, to recuperate health in a congenial climate (as the Radical politicians Richard Cobden and John Bright both did)[21] or simply to explore. Britons produced paintings, poems and stage plays about the country, alongside extended accounts of its military and

political history and social institutions. Prints of Algerian costumes, architecture, generals and battles were regularly published in generalist periodicals like the *Penny Magazine* and the *Illustrated London News*—the latter publication even sent a special artist to accompany the French emperor Napoleon III on one of his Algerian tours of the 1860s. For all these reasons, Algeria was the only French colony in which the British became seriously interested in this period. It is worth noting also that few British commentators had any notion of France pursuing a coherent colonial policy, stretching over the various French possessions, at this time. In the middle decades of the century European colonial projects tended to be discussed in a highly geographically specific fashion, with general claims about national habits being deduced from activities in particular colonies.

This article focuses on how British thinking about Algeria fitted within broader structures of British political thinking and argument, and as such the precise sources of particular arguments are less important than the fact that they were widely used and resonated in public debate. But it is nonetheless important to touch on the extent to which British ideas about French colonial enterprise were constructed in dialogue with French writers on the same topic. Most empirical information about Algeria in British accounts was unavoidably culled from French letters, reports, pamphlets and parliamentary debates. As a consequence many of the criticisms Frenchmen made of Algerian policy were echoed in British discourse. Some anonymous articles in British periodicals, indeed, were even written by French emigrés.[22] So the British image of Algeria was certainly not drawn up in isolation from debates the French were holding among themselves.

Very little British writing on French Algeria, however, sought to engage seriously and constructively with French arguments. Facts and analytical points were almost never attributed to their French sources, and the most subtle and sophisticated discussions of French Algeria published by Frenchmen for French audiences, most famously those of Alexis de Tocqueville, were barely mentioned. British commentators were nonetheless clearly aware of the intensity, and divisiveness, of French public debate about France's imperial projects.[23] They were also aware of growing French interest, from the late 1820s, in the condition and history of the British possessions, particularly those in India.[24] Many British writers believed that

hostile European observers were searching perpetually for signs of imperial selfishness and weakness in the British colonies, and this seems to have contributed to the defensive tone of much British imperial commentary.[25] This apparent hostility also led to exchanges between British and French newspapers. *The Times'* criticisms of Algerian policy, for instance, provoked heated responses from a number of Paris journals, while French papers crowing over Britain's imperial nemesis in the Indian Mutiny of 1857 were met with the argument that British India had, on the whole, been a more successful project than Algeria.[26] Some French newspapers further insisted that Britain's various colonial blunders ought to preclude it from criticising French practices.[27] All this, it might reasonably be supposed, helped to reinforce the combative, self-justifying cast of most arguments made by British commentators about French colonial projects.

There was remarkable consistency between 1830 and 1870 in the way the character of the French regime in Algeria was understood, despite dramatic shifts over the same period in the way the British thought about their own empire, despite a number of changes of regime in France, and despite various reforms in the way Algeria was governed. It is possible to identify some shifts in emphasis between the 1830s and 1840s, the era of the French conquest and of heightened British anxiety about the solidity and legitimacy of their own imperial system, and the 1850s and 1860s, when the British were considerably more complacent about the beneficence of their own imperial endeavours. But there were few explicit connections made between the heated debates about the future of the British Empire that took place over these decades, and assessments of the French regime in Algeria. This was presumably, at least in part, because the overwhelming majority of British commentators on French Algeria were apologists for British imperial rule, and so had no use for Algerian examples as a means of critiquing British practices.[28] This is not to claim that there were no dissentient voices at all. But on the grounds that the purpose of this article is simply to sketch the dominant lines of argument, the analysis that follows is thematic and spans the whole period. It is divided into three sections. The first discusses responses to the invasion of Algiers, and how its strategic implications were apprehended; the second and longest section examines how British observers understood and explained the failure of French colonial rule; and the final

section looks at the ways in which French rule in Algeria was (explicitly) employed to throw British colonial practices into relief.

Before this it is worth inserting a brief note on terminology. British commentators tended to use the terms "Algiers" and "Algeria" interchangeably, although the latter was preferred from the mid-1830s, presumably thanks to the fact that it was privileged from that point on by the French government. Here "Algeria" is used throughout, except when referring to the city of Algiers alone. Whether or not the country was formally a "colony" was a complicated issue, which reflected wider contemporary confusion about the scope of the term, not least among French writers, who had immense difficulty in trying to define what Algeria actually was. A number of British commentators deliberately refrained from calling Algeria a "colony," on the basis that it was in fact a military dependency. That it was constitutionally an integral part of France after 1848 further complicated the issue. The vast majority of British writers, however, simply ignored these problems of definition and freely described Algeria as a colony, and their usage is followed here.

French Algeria and Strategic Thought

What is most striking about the initial British response to the invasion of Algeria is how muted it was. The expedition took place in June and July of 1830, and was a subject of endless excited discussion in the French press and chambers. In Britain, however, it failed to get the political classes' blood flowing. Newspapers kept the public informed about the course of events, but offered very little analysis. The proceedings, as it was accurately remarked later, caused "little sensation."[29] What debate there was about the invasion carried little domestic political heat, being largely strategic in emphasis and relating primarily to the potential consequences for British interests in the Mediterranean. These priorities continued to dominate discussions of French Algeria's strategic significance over the rest of the 1830s and the 1840s

Those who opposed the conquest—a small minority—did so primarily on the basis that it threatened British maritime and colonial influence. Their argument ran that the French presence in Algeria would compromise Britain's dominant position in the Mediterranean, which was essential for a litany of commercial and political

reasons. Beyond this, a few voices claimed that Algeria might prove a stepping-stone to wider schemes of African conquest, or indeed to the supposed French target of Egypt.[30] Some worried about what the invasion meant for the future of the Ottoman Empire, and about whether it might disturb Anglo-French relations more generally.[31] But in so far as the annexation drew criticism, it was less for the act itself than for the diplomatic niceties that surrounded it. Even among supporters of the conquest there was considerable disquiet about the way that France had seemingly broken its undertakings not to settle what should be done with the country without consultation with the rest of Europe.[32]

This aside, however, the creation of French Algeria was accepted easily by most British political commentators. This was principally because it was *not* seen to pose any real danger to British strategic interests. Thanks to the possession of Malta, Gibraltar and the Ionian islands, Britain had secured pole position in the Mediterranean, which a French colony in North Africa with second-rate harbours was unlikely to challenge.[33] Most British observers argued from the outset that the Algerian enterprise had been conceived by the government of Charles X as a domestic political manoeuvre, a diversion of political energies, rather than as a coherent geopolitical strategy.[34] It was very generally assumed, moreover, that Algeria would be of little benefit to the French in the event of a European war. Not only would it tie down thousands of troops, but it would crumble quickly in the face of a British blockade.[35] So it was widely believed that France's possession of Algeria was "not injurious to the interests of England."[36] Indeed, many thought that it would work to Britain's advantage. France's turn towards colonization was treated in some quarters as a sign of its newfound commitment to European peace. For those not inclined to give France quite so much credit, its embroilment in African colonization and warfare was still considered likely to prevent it from inciting fresh Continental conflicts.[37]

While most reflections on the diplomatic consequences of the invasion were concerned primarily with France and the Mediterranean, some commentators put forward more positive and more far-reaching arguments. That the French position in Algiers might diminish the piracy for which the region was notorious was welcomed, as were France's promises to abolish Christian slavery and to suppress the tribute demanded by the regency from Christian powers.[38] Some noted that the anticipated

civilizing of the native population would be a boon to humanity and, perhaps even more importantly, to British trade.[39] *The Times*, for one, declared that it was "an illiberal policy… to prevent the civilization of a barbarous people… lest the new possessors of their country should experience an increase of power."[40] As such, it claimed, the English people felt "the liveliest pleasure" at the triumphs of the French.[41] Others even went so far as to suggest that the whole coast of Africa should be given up to France.[42]

There was, then, minimal anxiety about the French project in Algeria on political or strategic grounds, at least expressed in public. In the immediate aftermath of the invasion, indeed, given recent French criticisms of the British regime in India, there were various seemingly sincere expressions of interest in how France would go about a comparable colonial project.[43] Later Queen Victoria commented rather grandly that Algeria would be useful and necessary to France, as it had so few possessions.[44] This sense of condescension—premised on the idea that Britain was the first imperial power of the age, and that other nations were simply seeking to do what the British had already done—was characteristic of writing on Algeria throughout the period 1830-70. The consequence of this was that commentary on how French Algeria was ruled was not significantly coloured by any sense that it represented a geopolitical threat, and discussion of the Algerian regime was largely decoupled from reflection on the country's role in international politics.[45]

Explaining Failure: Politics and national character

The unifying thesis in British analysis of France's colonial project in Algeria was very simple: it was an abysmal failure.[46] This notion took hold in British discourse within a few years of the invasion, and remained dominant in 1870.[47] It attracted virtually no dissent.[48] The failure was understood to be grand in scale, and multi-faceted. Most obviously, Algeria was a massive drain on the military, financial and human resources of the French state, without being productive of any political or economic advantage. In 1857, according to one estimate, after an expenditure of £90 million, the country had a population of only 60,000 colonists, most of whom were not even French.[49] No hold had been gained on the region beyond the city of Algiers and a few points on the coast. No improvement had been made in the condition of the natives. Attempts to

promote agriculture had been a "signal failure."[50] And neither capital nor labour had received acceptable remuneration.[51] As one commentator summed up, "if the French are pleased with their conquest they must be in a state of extraordinary mental blindness and fatuity."[52]

The central objective of British commentary on French rule in Algeria, then, was to explain why the colony had failed so conspicuously. The climate and fertility of the province—the "granary of Rome," as was often remarked—could hardly have been to blame. Nor was colonial rule itself the problem. No British writer on Algeria treated it as a paradigmatic case of the inherent and invariable evils of imperial rule, presumably because most of them were (at least implicitly) supporters of the British Empire.[53] Neither was religion the issue. While Catholicism was frequently linked in French colonial discourse to a peculiar assimilative capacity, it nowhere appeared in British writing on Algeria. Some commentators did at points make arguments that were more "scientific" in character, gesturing towards the inherent difficulties of civilizing Africans, and towards the impact of malarial mortality.[54] But British commentators always privileged larger questions about principles of government over issues of detail to do with the management of "natives" and the structures of imperial administration.[55] They explained the failure of French Algeria fundamentally through arguments about politics and national character. The emphasis was laid in particular on arguments about the consequences of systemic violence, about the general failings of French policy, and about the general failings of the French people. In each case these arguments were connected with pre-existing stereotypes of the French.

Discussions of why French Algeria had failed invariably had much to say about the way the French had pursued the conquest of the country between 1830 and 1848. There was scattered sympathy for the fact that the French had been forced into wars with "intractable" natives, particularly among those who assumed that Algeria's Arabs would eventually die out.[56] But the dominant view was that the early French regime in Algeria was excessively and unconscionably violent, obsessed with military glory and the extension of territory, and indifferent to native welfare.[57] The system of *razzias*, characterised as one of "general exterminatory warfare," was "a national crime."[58] Reports circulated of women and children killed in cold blood, and of fearsome forms of military discipline, including crucifixion and confinement in pits of

earth.[59] The most startling single incident of French colonial violence took place in 1845, when it was reported that Colonel Aimable Pelissier had gassed somewhere between 500 and 800 Arabs in a complex of caves at Dahra.[60] The usually temperate *Illustrated London News* described this as "an act more befitting demons than men."[61] In British eyes, however, this was no isolated episode, but "only a conspicuous example of the system of terror on which the whole government of French Africa is carried on."[62]

All this was not only hopelessly immoral, but also bad policy. It meant that France's name was "held in detestation by the inhabitants," and that the natives therefore rejected rational measures of improvement offered "by an enemy which has shown itself alike regardless of the laws of nations, and the rights of individuals."[63] It served to "make the Colony a battle-field, and the limits of the camp the limits of safety," and "to arm against the colonist the indomitable passions of the native, whom he has wronged."[64] As long as French rule was based on force alone, British commentators agreed, "it is nothing… it must cease altogether."[65] The result of the regime of violence pursued in Algeria was that France was "a conqueror in a conquered country; not a mother-state in a colony."[66] Typical French militarism, in short, was no way to make a colony work.

Attacks on this "*régime du sabre*" and its later legacies were connected with broader indictments of the system of military government in the colony.[67] Despite several meaningful extensions of the province of civilian authority in the 1850s and 1860s, British observers throughout the period 1830–70 understood the Algerian regime to be fundamentally a military one.[68] As far as military regimes went, Algeria by the 1850s and 1860s was thought to represent a solid example of the type, with public works and administrative structures in a sound condition, and the conquered people intelligibly governed.[69] But military government, in the eyes of most British commentators, was invariably an error. It forestalled the commercial and civilizational progress of colonies, and did nothing to promote settled habits and morality in colonists or natives.[70] As one writer had it, "so long as the possession of Algeria is secured only by the presence of a large standing-army, it may remain in the *occupation* of the French, but it can never become, in the proper sense of the term, a colony to France."[71] French military rule in particular, moreover, was thought to be

particularly ineffective because of its obsession with show and pageantry. It relied on gaudy parades and grandiloquent proclamations that recalled the worst excesses of Napoleon I and his marshals. Money was wasted on triumphal arches and progresses instead of works of national utility.[72] Reports of corruption, peculation and brutality among the French officers who made up the country's local administration completed the sorry picture.[73] Contemporaries spoke proverbially, on this basis, of "the mistrust which Europe entertains of all that is Algerian."[74]

The inherent failings of systems of military government were exacerbated by the policies pursued at the imperial centre in Paris. Some of these were straightforward acts of mismanagement. Successive French administrations, it was argued, had been indecisive, pursued immature plans of action, and had been misled by erroneous views of the aims and means of colonization.[75] Governors-general were replaced with every fluctuation in the domestic political barometer, meaning the Algerian administration lacked the stability so essential to new colonies.[76] The fundamental problem with regard to France's general policy towards Algeria, however, was the French mania for centralization. Centralization was generally seen as the besetting sin of the French system of government: it inhibited the development of healthy political communities, and operated most mischievously at a distance. French colonization, it was argued, was invariably characterised by a "despotic and overbearing spirit," and Algeria had as a result been "oppressed by the nightmare of bureaucratic interference."[77] In Algeria, as at home, "the State claims the right of arranging and regulating all things."[78] Such excessive supervision begot incapacity and impatience among the inhabitants of the colony.[79] In this respect the policy of the French in Algeria was just "one of the most striking features in the history of the ruinous, reckless, and infatuated system, which has lately characterized more than one department in the Government of that great nation."[80]

The colony was doomed to fail, furthermore, because it was governed according to the French "national passion for symmetrical uniformity."[81] France's ultimate goal in Algeria, it was generally argued, was to establish a colony regulated by French laws and systems, and to integrate it politically with France. Policy, as a result, was seen to be aggressively procrustean, ignoring Arab social systems, tribal arrangements for law and property, ancient lines of chiefs and religious customs. This

involved showing "disregard for the peculiar opinions and usages of the native inhabitants," and destroying the nationality of native tribes.[82] In the eyes of British commentators, forcing minute and complicated European legislation on peoples unprepared for it was a recipe for disaster.[83] The idea that barbarism could rapidly be overcome by this "dingy and barren mimicry" of France was based on a failure to understand that considerable amounts of time were required to alter customs and opinions.[84] The French, then, obsessed with measuring everything by French standards, lacked "suppleness" in the management of conquered peoples.[85] Their government of Algeria would, as a result, never be capable of attaching the masses.[86]

Evidently, in the eyes of British commentators, the French were making a series of terminal errors in Algeria. But underlying all these more specific arguments was the conviction that the French were incapable as a nation of colonization. This was "a very generally received opinion."[87] It was by no means a new one. The transformation in the fortunes of Canada since its transfer to English hands had long been seen to demonstrate the respective capacities of the two nations for colonial enterprise.[88] It was, however, powerfully reinforced by the course of events in Algeria. Despite their keen ambition to possess foreign settlements, it was argued, the French had "never been successful in colonizing," lacking the "gift," and this came down to national character.[89] The French lacked both the inherent powers of self-government and the qualities of humility which were necessary to render colonization successful. They did not possess the "practice, industry, perseverance, and enterprise" which good colonists required, and were instead misled by "a nervous temperament, so enthusiastic, and yet so easily discouraged."[90] The inherent attachment of the Frenchman to his native soil tended to prevent him from remaining long enough in colonies to really develop them.[91] It was presumably these arguments one reviewer had in mind when he remarked upon a "physical inability to colonize."[92] The presence of the army and sustained government aid might succeed in extending the specks of European civilization in Algeria, but this was not colonization; it was "tilling with French taxes."[93]

All this begged the question of what Algeria did for France. British commentators had little trouble explaining why France had sought, and why it retained, the colony. They believed that it acted as a "safety-valve" for the French

state. This notion was understood in several ways. For some the "valve" was primarily political. Just as Charles X had designed the initial expedition as an electioneering manoeuvre, Napoleon III planned his visits to Algeria in the early 1860s as a means of distracting the French political classes from more pressing domestic issues.[94] For others the "valve" was about accommodating the aggressive propensities of the French, who required a little regular bloodletting to keep down their "feverish temperament."[95] Lord Melbourne, when Prime Minister, told the Queen that there was "something in" the notion that "the French must have a place to fight in, and go to, and that else they couldn't be kept quiet."[96] More generally, however, the "safety-valve" was understood as a way of getting rid of the dregs of the French population, primarily criminals: it was "a great issue to relieve the plethoric symptoms and bad humours of the mother-country, by draining it of its *mauvais sujets*."[97] In all these ways, then, it was possible to comprehend why France would seek to maintain "that perpetual Algerine safety-valve for high-pressure democracy at home."[98]

Ultimately, however, British commentators agreed that Algeria caused France more problems than it solved. This was less because it cost so much, than because of its damaging impact on French politics. Few pointed to Algeria as a contributory cause of the 1848 revolution or the political crisis of 1870. But it was nonetheless widely asserted that the way the colony compelled France to the perpetual exertion of military strength was not favourable to domestic tranquillity.[99] British commentators argued that Algeria had involved France "within the meshes of an enormous debt, it has paralysed its vitality, it has robbed it of its liberty of thought and speech, and it has prostrated it at the foot of the military force."[100] It had promoted the "Africanization" of France's domestic institutions, and the prevalence of the military element in home affairs.[101] British commentators did not offer any actual evidence for these claims beyond the financial point, but the argument that empire could corrupt domestic politics had been so ingrained in British political discourse at least since the era of the "nabobs" in the previous century that making these assertions presumably felt natural.[102] Fear was further expressed regarding the atrocities which might be committed in European warfare, or in the repression of public opinion at home, by "those reprobate troops, the condemned regiments from Algeria," who had been brought by habit to "a state of ferocity and licentiousness unknown to European

troops."[103] Absolutist officers winning their epaulettes in Africa were also believed to be speculating constantly on how they might return home and realise their unconstitutional views in French politics.[104]

For British observers, then, the attempted colonization of Algeria represented not only a gigantic waste of time and money, but also a threat to France's fragile domestic regime. The French were unable to colonize successfully, in short, because neither the tendencies of their politics nor the content of their national character gave them the capacity to do so. British explanations for the failure of French Algeria thus rested essentially on arguments about the nature of France and the French—and about the differences between France and Britain—which had been thoroughly developed in other contexts.

Explaining Success: Contrasts and comparisons

Running through all the criticisms outlined above was a strong implicit case that the right way to colonize was simply to do the opposite of what the French were doing in Algeria. Most of the commentators on French Algeria did not compare it directly with British imperial enterprise. But some did take the opportunity to specify what made British efforts at empire building so much more successful. National character, of course, was an essential element. Among the major differences between the French and English nations, it was claimed, "none is more remarkable than the different capacities of the two nations for colonization."[105] The British were "colonizers by instinct," possessing the "continued courage" and the "quiet energy and perseverance" which the French so conspicuously lacked.[106] Their attachment being to the laws and institutions of their native land, rather than to its soil, they could be transplanted geographically in a way the French resisted.[107] The character of the British imperial system, as well as the British national character, was also favourable to colonial success. The essence of its superiority—at least as understood from the early 1850s—was in the very limited role played by the government. In British colonisation "the energy of the people does everything, and we ask no more of our Government than to give us security and freedom for its exercise."[108] This "more lax and imperfect system" allowed colonies to grow naturally rather than forcing them, teaching them self-reliance, as against the French system in which everything was managed by the state.[109] This was true also of the process of expansion. England

"gradually glides into dominion" abroad thanks to the initiative of its private citizens, while in France all such endeavours had to be planned by the government.[110] All this helped to make British colonial enterprise financially viable in the way the French version was so signally not.[111]

When it came to more specific comparisons between French and British colonial practices, these were almost invariably between Algeria and British India. There were virtually no comparisons made between the French colony and Britain's own African possessions, nor with Britain's settler empire, despite the efforts of many French colonial propagandists to establish that Algeria was a "settler colony." Some argued that India represented an outlet for England's fiercer instincts in the same way that Algeria served France.[112] But the main issue was one of policy. Both France and Britain had to solve the problem of how "to govern a great Asiatic community without maintaining among them an irresistible European force," and it was argued "the procedure of the two nations in their respective dependencies forms an instructive commentary on their genius and character."[113] British rule in India was very generally claimed to have displayed more wisdom than that of the French in Algeria, in both military and civil administration.[114] The governor-general Sir Henry Hardinge believed that his moderation in the war over the Punjab in the 1840s would contrast advantageously in the eyes of the British public with France's "ferocious and not very honourable" struggle in Algeria.[115] Lord Palmerston, in an election speech of 1841, drew an extended comparison between the two regimes, claiming that while Algeria remained an armed camp, in India British officials could perambulate unmolested.[116] The reasons behind this distinction were not hard to find. The differences in the character of the respective native populations were acknowledged, but even so, Britain had shown at Aden that Arabs were not as intractable as the French sought to make out.[117] The question was not one of race, but of policy. Essentially, the British regime in India had succeeded where the French in Algeria had failed because it had never attempted a social revolution, but had aimed rather at protecting the important elements of native society, at preserving the chief elements of their individual jurisdictions and at protecting property and tenures.[118] The English liberally accepted existing laws; the French wanted one law for the whole human race.[119] Unlike the French, furthermore, the British had forborne from interfering with religious prejudices.[120] The other secret of Indian success was the honesty and good faith

Britain had shown towards the natives, something the French had clearly failed to demonstrate.[121] Perhaps surprisingly, these arguments were articulated with similar force both before and after the Indian Mutiny of 1857, despite the extensive debate generated by that crisis over the extent to which Britain had unwisely interfered with native customs, or been too tender in dealing with "native barbarities."

The most common rhetorical usage of Algeria in mainstream British political debate, however, was to highlight practices in the British Empire which were seen to fall short of the supposedly higher standards of British imperial rule. There was a double resonance here, in that "Algerine" had before 1830 been used as a shorthand for the crushing and despotic prescriptions of the Deys, but most usages were specifically connected to the French. Critics of military government in the Indian province of Sind, for instance, argued that it was "not for us to imitate the policy of the French in Algeria," and that the province should be brought under a civil government.[122] Draft constitutions for the settler colonies which appeared to reserve too much power to central authorities were damned by likening them to France's Algerian prescriptions.[123] South Africa was regularly described as "the Algeria of England" by advocates for colonial reform until the mid-1850s, in the sense that it represented an enormous drain on British money and British troops for little obvious gain.[124] British military conduct on the borders of the Cape colony was also attacked in certain quarters as being as bad as that of the French in North Africa.[125] More generally, radical politicians discussed how Algerian raids reacted against the parent state by dictating excessive expenditure, and used these examples to preach against British policy which they thought followed the same lines.[126]

All this criticism, however, went to reinforce the same fundamental point: that the policy and behaviour of the French in Algeria represented the diametric opposite of the way the British were expected to conduct themselves in an imperial context. At no point in this period was serious interest displayed in the possibility of learning positive lessons from French practices, aside from a few scattered references to army reform and the precedent of colonial representation in the mother country.[127] The purpose of direct comparisons between British and French imperial enterprise was to establish how distinct the nations' practices were, or at least ought to be.

Conclusion

Three main points can be taken away from this exploration of how mid-nineteenth-century British writers understood the French colonial project in Algeria. The first is, simply, the fact that British commentators sought to understand it in the first place. Looking at commentary on Algeria reminds us that the British understood the mid-nineteenth-century world as a domain of empires *plural*, which faced analogous problems and possibilities. British commentators had a wider field of vision when it came to modern imperial structures than is suggested in most of the existing literature on British imperial thinking. It is worth noting, in particular, that one of the most influential critiques of British imperialism, that authoritarian habits of rule learnt in the empire might be imported back to the mother country, was applied just as vigorously (and perhaps with more reason) to France.

The second point is that there was a remarkable level of agreement on the fact that French Algeria had failed as a colony, and on the reasons why it had failed. Drawing on established ideas about French politics and character, British writers constructed a broadly consistent image of a dysfunctional French colonial project. According to these representations the French regime in Algeria was unprogressive, incapable, authoritarian and militaristic. This view was not predetermined—there was, as we have seen, little jealousy at the prospect of a French colony in Algeria—but it fitted comfortably within, and contributed to, an elite political culture which defined itself in part through contrasts with France's political failings.[128] Contemporary imperial comparisons, then, contributed importantly to a normative sense of Britain's distinctness as a European state.

The third point is that British analysis of French Algeria helped to confirm both the relative success of British colonial enterprise, and the essential reasons for that success. Britain was a superior colonizer because of the character of its people, and because it relied on its people's inherent energies rather than on the power of the government. It was a superior governor of other races because it treated their institutions and sensibilities with respect, and behaved towards them in an honourable manner. The French had failed as a colonizing nation because they had emulated none of these approaches, over and above lacking the essential capacity to colonize

successfully. Here, then, arguments about national character and institutions were closely related. There was little in these arguments that was surprising, not least because most British commentators on Algeria were proponents of British imperial rule. But the French counterexample was still important, because it provided vital evidence that demonstrated the *relative* efficacy of British colonial policy. In this way, Algeria represented an extremely useful intellectual resource for students of British colonial enterprise.

Finally, it needs to be stressed again how provisional and partial the analysis presented above has been. There are a number of different directions in which it could be developed, of which two in particular are worth picking out. First, more work needs to be done on European exchanges of imperial information and ideas. This article has argued that even though British commentators took most of their information and some of their arguments from French sources, they were really concerned with making points that resonated in the domestic political sphere, not with pursuing debates against their counterparts across the channel. Nonetheless, it is clear that exchanges *were* taking place. It would be valuable to trace their influence in a more precise fashion. Secondly, there is much more to be said about how the British assessed other empires in the same period, not only European and transoceanic ones, but also those which were Asian and/or land-based. It is self-evident that we cannot understand how "exceptional" the Victorians considered the British Empire to be without examining how far they applied the same conceptual tools, and expectations, to other nineteenth-century empires. In order fully to understand what the concept of empire meant in nineteenth-century British political thinking, then, there is a need for considerably more research into British analysis of other contemporary imperial systems.

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Notes

[1] Jonathan Parry, *The Politics of Patriotism: English Liberalism, national identity, and Europe, 1830-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Peter Mandler, *The English National Character: The history of an idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Duncan Bell, "Empire and International Relations in Victorian Political Thought," *Historical Journal* 49 (2006): 281-98; idem, ed., *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and international relations in nineteenth-century political thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Peter Cain, *Hobson and Imperialism: Radicalism, New Liberalism, and finance, 1887-1938* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Gregory Claeys, *Imperial Sceptics: British critics of empire, 1850-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Karuna Mantena, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the ends of liberal imperialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A study in nineteenth-century British liberal thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[2] Cf., on an earlier period, Marie Peters, "Early Hanoverian Consciousness: Empire or Europe?," *English Historical Review* 72 (2007): 632-68.

[3] Unlike recent work on other modern empires: see e.g. Alexander Morrison, "Russian Rule in Turkestan and the Example of British India, c. 1860-1917," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 84 (2006): 666-707; Jordan Sand, "Subaltern Imperialists: The new historiography of the Japanese Empire," *Past and Present* 225 (2014): 273-88.

[4] Duncan Bell, "From Ancient to Modern in Victorian Imperial Thought," *Historical Journal* 49 (2006): 735-59; Mark Bradley, ed., *Classics and Imperialism in the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Sarah J. Butler, *Britain and its Empire in the Shadow of Rome: The reception of Rome in socio-political debate from the 1850s to the 1920s* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012); Krishan Kumar, "Greece and Rome in the British Empire: Contrasting role models," *Journal of British Studies* 51 (2012): 76-101; Christopher Hagerman, *Britain's Imperial Muse: The classics, imperialism, and the Indian Empire, 1784-1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[5] P.J. Marshall, "British Assessments of the Dutch in Asia in the Age of Raffles," *Itinerario* 12 (1988): 1-16; Gabriel Paquette, "The Intellectual Context of British Recognition of the South American Republics, c. 1800-1830," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 2 (2004): 75-95; idem, "The Image of Imperial Spain in British

Political Thought, 1750-1800," *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 81 (2004): 187-214; Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). See recently, on the experiences of travellers, Martin Farr and Xavier Guégan, eds., *The British Abroad since the Eighteenth Century, Volume 2: Experiencing imperialism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[6] Gabriel Paquette, "After Brazil: Portuguese debates on Empire, c. 1820-1850," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 11 (2010); Jennifer Pitts, "Liberalism and Empire in a Nineteenth-Century Algerian Mirror," *Modern Intellectual History* 6 (2009): 287-313; Anna Plassart, "'*Un Impérialiste Libéral*'? Jean-Baptiste Say on colonies and the extra-European world," *French Historical Studies* 32 (2009): 223-50; Marina Carter and Crispin Bates, eds., *Mutiny at the Margins: New perspectives on the Indian uprising of 1857, Volume III: Global perspectives* (Sage, 2013); Shaswati Mazumdar, ed., *Insurgent Sepoys: Europe views the revolt of 1857* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011); John M. MacKenzie, *European Empires and the People: Popular responses to imperialism in France, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Italy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).

[7] E.g. [W.D. Cooley], "Botelho on the Portuguese Colonies," *Edinburgh Review* 54 (1836): 411-28, esp. 423-4; [John Barrow], "Life and Public Services of Sir Stamford Raffles," *Quarterly Review* 42 (1830): 405-50, esp. 413-19; [Frederick Hardman], "Prescott's *Peru,*" *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 62 (1847): 1-20, esp. 20; [R.G. McDonnell], "Our Foreign Policy, and Home Prospects," *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 23 (1841): 235-52, quote at 237.

[8] John Colquhon, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Third Series* [hereafter *HPD3*], 81: 906, 19 June 1845.

[9] Sylvie Aprile and Fabrice Bensimon, eds, *La France et L'Angleterre au XIXe Siècle: Échanges, representations, comparaisons* (Paris: Créaphis, 2006); David Brown, "Palmerston and Anglo-French Relations, 1846-1865," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 17 (2006): 675-92; J.P. Parry, "The Impact of Napoleon III on British Politics, 1851-1880," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 11 (2001): 147-75; Bernard Porter, "'Bureau and Barrack': Early Victorian attitudes towards the continent," *Victorian Studies* 27 (1983-84): 407-33; Geoffrey Hicks, *Peace, War, and Party Politics: The Conservatives and Europe, 1846-1859* (Manchester: Manchester

University Press, 2007); Robert Saunders, *Democracy and the Vote in British Politics, 1848-1867* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), ch. 5.

[10] Joelle Redouane, "British Attitudes to the French Conquest of Algeria, 1830-71," *Maghreb Review* 15 (1990): 2-15. See also idem, "British Trade with Algeria in the Nineteenth Century: An ally against France?," *Maghreb Review* 13 (1988): 175-82.

[11] On comparative imperial history see recently Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, ed., *Liberal Imperialism in Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Jörn Leonhart and Ulrike von Hirschhausen, eds., *Comparing Empires: Encounters and transfers in the long nineteenth century* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011); S. Conrad and D. Sachsenmeier, eds., *Competing Visions of World Order: Global moments and movements, 1830s-1880s* (London, 2007).

[12] Kate Marsh, *Narratives of the French Empire: Fiction, nostalgia, and imperial rivalries, 1784 to the present* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2013); Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The rise of imperial liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), esp. 219-26; idem, "L'Empire Britannique: un Modèle pour L'Algérie Francaise: Nation et civilisation chez Tocqueville et J.S. Mill," in *L'Esclavage, la Colonisation, et après… Etats-Unis, France, Royaume-Uni*, ed. Stéphane Dufoix (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005): 55-81; Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur, *Promoting the Colonial Idea: Propaganda and visions of empire in France* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001); Berny Sèbe, *Heroic Imperialists in Africa: The promotion of British and French colonial heroes, 1870-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013). On the "politics of imperial comparison" more generally see Ann Laura Stoler (with Carole McGranahan), "Refiguring Imperial Terrains," in *Imperial Formations*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler, Carole McGranahan and Peter C. Perdue (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2007): 3-47, esp. 4-5, 13-15, and Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The politics of comparison in North American history and (post)colonial studies," *The Journal of American History* 88 (2001): 829-65.

[13] Though see recently David Todd, "A French Imperial Meridian, 1814-1870," *Past and Present* 210 (2011): 155-86. See also Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: A history of French overseas expansion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996); C.M. Andrew and A.S. Kanya-Forster, "Centre and Periphery in the Making of the Second French Colonial Empire," in *Theory and Practice in the History of European*

Expansion Overseas: Essays in honour of R.E. Robinson, ed. Andrew Porter and Robert Holland (London: Frank Cass, 1988): 9-35; Michael Heffernan, "France and the Wider World," in *Revolutionary France*, ed. Malcolm Crook (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002): 178-206. Of the much richer literature on the post-1870 period the classic is Winfried Baumgart, *Imperialism: The idea and reality of British and French colonial expansion, 1880-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

[14] Georgios Varouxakis, *Victorian Political Thought on France and the French* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Klaus E. Knorr, *British Colonial Theories, 1570-1870* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968); Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe, eds., *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London: Longman, 1972); Bart Schultz and Georgios Varouxakis, eds., *Utilitarianism and Empire* (Lanham; Oxford: Lexington, 2005); Bernard Semmel, *The Liberal Ideal and the Demons of Empire* (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

[15] Parliamentary debate about Algeria was relatively limited, however, in part because governments discouraged debates about proceedings in the French chambers: see Sir Robert Peel*, HPD3,* 61: 137, 7 March 1842.

[16] The present article leaves aside Irish nationalist views: see Matthew Kelly, "Languages of Radicalism, Race, and Religion in Irish Nationalism: The French affinity, 1848-1871," *Journal of British Studies* 49 (2010): 801-25, esp. 809.

[17] *Saturday Review*, 2 August 1862: 121.

[18] John Reynell Morell, *Algeria: The topography and history, political, social, and natural, of French Africa* (London: Nathaniel Cooke, 1854): vii.

[19] See also Ann Thomson, "Arguments for the Conquest of Algiers in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," *Maghreb Review* 14 (1989): 108-18.

[20] *Illustrated London News*, 6 April 1861: 320.

[21] See *Birmingham Daily Post*, 9 May 1861: 3, for a letter from Cobden praising Algeria's prospects.

[22] E.g. [André Vieusseux], "The French in Algiers," *Foreign Quarterly Review* 13 (1834): 74-106.

[23] E.g. *Athenaeum*, 3 January 1852: 15-16. On these debates see Jennifer Sessions, *By Sword and Plow: France and the conquest of Algeria* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Bertrand Taithe, "Evil, Liberalism and the Imperial Designs of the Catholic Church, 1867-1905," in *Evil, Barbarism and Empire: Britain and abroad, c.*

1830-2000, ed. Tom Crook et al. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011): 147-71, esp. 149-52.

[24] [John Barrow], "New Colony on Swan River," *Quarterly Review* 39 (1829): 315-44, esp. 344; "The English in India," *Bentley's Miscellany* 42 (1857): 331-46, esp. 331. For criticism see e.g. [A.V. Kirwan], "Ledru Rollin's *Decline of England*," *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 42 (1850): 74-85, esp. 79-80, 84; "Decline of France," *New Monthly Magazine* 89 (1850): 452-61, esp. 454. It was supposed that Napoleon III had studied Indian precedents when working out his proposals for the reform of Algerian government in the 1860s: *Saturday Review*, 6 May 1865: 527-8.

[25] E.g. [R.D. Mangles], "Government of British India," *Edinburgh Review* 53 (1831): 438-77, esp. 439-40; [W.R. Greg], "Our Colonial Empire, and our Colonial Policy," *North British Review* 19 (1853): 345-98, esp. 363-4; [G.C. Lewis], "Lord Grey's *Colonial Administration*," *Edinburgh Review* 98 (1853): 62-98, esp. 97-8.

[26] E.g. *Times*, 1 December 1837: 4; "British India and Algeria," *The Leader*, 5 Sept 1857: 856. See also Nicola Frith, "French Counter-Narratives-Nationalisme, Patriotism and Révolution," in Mazumdar, *Insurgent Sepoys*: 47-62.

[27] William S. Childe-Pemberton, *Life of Lord Norton (right hon. Sir Charles Adderley, K.C.M.G., M.P.), 1814-1905, Statesman & Philanthropist* (London: John Murray, 1909): 118.

[28] Though see below, "Explaining Success: Contrasts and comparisons".

[29] William Mackinnon, *HPD3*, 40: 1053, 13 February 1838.

[30] *The French in Africa* (London: James Ridgway and Sons, 1838): 4; Thomas Waghorn, *Egypt as it is in 1837* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1837): 23; "The Last Struggle of Abd El Kader," *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 37 (1848): 658-65, esp. 664.

[31] Lord Aberdeen, *HPD3*, 17: 902, 3 May 1833; G. Browning, *The Domestic and Financial Condition of Great Britain; Preceded by a brief sketch of her foreign policy; and of the statistics and politics of France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longman, 1834): 37-38.

[32] *Times*, 10 May 1833: 2.

[33] *The French in Africa* (London: James Ridgway and Sons, 1838): 3.

[34] E.g. *Times*, 15 May 1830: 4.

[35] [George Croly], "Algiers," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 47 (1840): 217.

[36] Lord Stanley, *HPD3*, 22: 341-42, 17 March 1834.

[37] William Mackinnon, *HPD3*, 76: 1224-5, 22 July 1844; [M.J. Quin], "The French in Africa," *Dublin Review* 4 (1838): 179-201, esp. 180-1; [H.L. Jones], "The French in Algeria," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 50 (1841): 183-99, esp. 184 and *passim*; "The French in Africa—Algeria," *British and Foreign Review* 18 (1844): 282-323, esp. 321-23 and *passim*.

[38] "An Englishman," *Thoughts on the Present Aspect of Foreign Affairs* (London: James Ridgway, 1831): 22.

[39] Philafris, *A letter to Henry Brougham, Esq. M.P. upon the Fall of Algiers, and the Civilization of Africa* (London: Bagster and Thoms, 1830); [James Browne], "French Expedition to Algiers. Colonization of Africa," *Foreign Quarterly Review* 9 (1832): 145-75, esp. 174.

[40] *Times*, 14 July 1830: 2.

[41] *Times*, 19 July 1830: 2. See also Claeys, *Imperial Sceptics*: 91.

[42] Sir Samuel Whalley, *HPD3*, 40: 1046, 13 February 1838. Cobden said something similar: Asa Briggs, *The Age of Improvement, 1783-1867* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1959), 390.

[43] *Times*, 14 July 1830: 2.

[44] *Queen Victoria's Journals*, 4 November 1843, Princess Beatrice's copies, vol. 16, 189.

[45] Nor had Britain ever held political authority in Algeria, unlike in Dutch East Asia, which helps to explain the vitriol unloaded against the latter colonial regime.

[46] Recent historians have not disagreed: see e.g. James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The settler revolution and the rise of the Anglo-world* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 502-4.

[47] E.g. [J.S. Mill], *Examiner*, 11 May 1834: 297-8; Lewis Wingfield, *Under the Palms in Algeria and Tunis* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1868. 2 vols), II: 288.

[48] Though for a slightly softer take see Laurence Trent Cave, *The French in Africa* (London: Charles J. Skeet, 1859).

[49] [Mabel Sharman Crawford], *Through Algeria* (London: Richard Bentley, 1863): 355.

[50] *Times*, 24 December 1850: 4.

[51] Edward Gibbon Wakefield, *A View of the Art of Colonization, with Present Reference to the British Empire; in letters between a statesman and a colonist* (London: John W. Parker, 1849), 81.

[52] [Jones], "The French in Algeria," 199.

[53] Though for a contemporary example of thoroughgoing anti-colonialism, even though it does not mention Algeria, William Howitt, *Colonization and Christianity: A popular history of the treatment of the natives by the Europeans in all their colonies* (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1838).

[54] E.g. [Browne], "French Expedition to Constantine, and French Schemes of Colonization": 235-36; "Algeria," *Penny Magazine* 9 (1840): 29; [Sharman Crawford], *Through Algeria*, 356-58.

[55] On the latter point see Linda Colley, "The Difficulties of Empire: Present, past, and future," *Historical Research* 79 (2006): 367-82, esp. 376-7.

[56] E.g. [W.A. Butler], "Algeria and Tunis in 1845," *Dublin University Magazine* 28 (1846): 285-98, esp. 286-88.

[57] E.g. John Colquhon, *HPD3*, 81: 906, 19 June 1845. For the realities see William Gallois, *A History of Violence in the Early Algerian Colony* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[58] *Times*, 13 January 1841: 4; *Times*, 1 December 1837: 4.

[59] *London Journal*, 16 August 1845: 390-1.

[60] For some French responses see William Gallois, "Dahra and the History of Violence in Early Colonial Algeria," in *The French Colonial Mind, Volume 2: Violence, military encounters, and colonialism*, ed. Martin Thomas (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 3-25.

[61] *Illustrated London News*, 18 October 1845: [241].

[62] *Times*, 15 July 1845: 4. See also *Punch*, 23 August 1845: 73.

[63] Perceval Barton Lord, *Algiers, With Notices of the Neighbouring States of Barbary* (London: Whittaker & co., 1835. 2 vols), II: 307-8. Also "Algeria," *Penny Magazine* 9 (1840): 29.

[64] John Colquhon, *HPD3*, 81: 906, 19 June 1845. For a satirical take see *Punch*, 14 September 1844: 109.

[65] *Times*, 25 February 1846: 5.

[66] *Times*, 13 October 1846: 4.

[67] *Examiner*, 24 Dec. 1864: pp. 819-20.

[68] For the continued purchase of this notion see e.g. Wingfield, *Under the Palms in Algeria and Tunis*, II: 280; *Times*, 18 October 1871: 7. The Algerian regime became officially civilian in 1870.

[69] *Times*, 25 March 1861: 8; ibid., 25 April 1865: 10-11.

[70] *Economist*, 5 February 1859: 143. Some however thought it was acceptable for Hindus and South Africans, at least temporarily: *Times*, 29 May 1840: 5.

[71] "The French in Africa—Algeria," 323.

[72] Morell, *Algeria*, 375.

[73] E.g. "The French in Algeria," *The Leader*, 5 September 1857: 854-55; *Times*, 13 October 1846: 4; *Saturday Review*, 15 July 1865: 67.

[74] *Examiner*, 24 December 1864: 820.

[75] "The French in Africa - Algeria": 320-1; Mrs. G. Albert Rogers, *A Winter in Algeria. 1863-4* (London: Sampson Low, Son, and Marston, 1865), 239.

[76] "Algeria," *Monthly Chronicle* 5 (1840): 153; "The French in Africa—Algeria," 321-2.

[77] "The Court of Louis XV. The Fall of the Jesuits," *English Review* 2 (1844): 88-131, quote at 127; Morell, *Algeria*, 375.

[78] Wingfield, *Under the Palms in Algeria and Tunis*, I: 166.

[79] Mrs. H. Lloyd Evans, *Last Winter in Algeria* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1868), 163.

[80] *Times*, 21 April 1841: 4.

[81] *Saturday Review*, 6 May 1865: 527.

[82] George Cornewall Lewis, *An Essay on the Government of Dependencies* (London: John Murray, 1841): 265; Charles Adderley, *HPD3*, 115: 1428, 10 April 1851.

[83] "Algeria and Tunis in 1845," 291.

[84] *Times*, 8 September 1846: 4.

[85] [Browne], "French Expedition to Constantine, and French Schemes of Colonization," 233.

[86] Wingfield, *Under the Palms in Algeria and Tunis*, II: 282.

[87] "Algeria—its Past, Present, and Future," *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 52 (1855): 223-31, quote at 225. This was true even among some Frenchmen: Pitts, *A Turn to Empire*, 223. See also Thomas Carlyle to Karl August Varnhagen von Ense,

19 December 1842, in *The Carlyle Letters Online*, ed. Brent E. Kinser (Duke University Press, 2007), accessed 9 January 2014, doi:10.1215/lt-18421219-TC-KAVE-01.

[88] [Browne], "French Expedition to Constantine, and French Schemes of Colonization," 234; *Economist*, 5 February 1859: 143.

[89] *The French in Africa* (London: James Ridgway and Sons, 1838), 3; "Algeria, Past and Present," *Foreign Quarterly Review* 37 (1846): 159-84, quote at 184.

[90] [Browne], "French Expedition to Constantine, and French Schemes of Colonization," 233; Lloyd Evans, *Last Winter in Algeria*, 166.

[91] *Athenaeum,* 7 December 1844: 1110.

[92] "The Court of Louis XV. The Fall of the Jesuits," 88. For a slightly more generous take see "The French in Algiers," *New Monthly Magazine* 120 (1860): 237-38; and for positive praise of French plans of colonization see John Dickinson, *A Letter to the Lord Stanley, M.P., &c., &c., &c., on the Policy of the Secretary of State for India* (London: P.S. King, 1863): 33-35.

[93] Geo. Wingrove Cooke, *Conquest and Colonisation in North Africa* (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1860), 84.

[94] *Saturday Review*, 6 May 1865: 528.

[95] [Frederick Hardman], "Algeria," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 60 (1846): 334-48, quote at 336.

[96] *Queen Victoria's Journals*, 18 September 1838, Lord Esher's typescripts, vol. 7, 192.

[97] Morell, *Algeria*, 349.

[98] "Algeria and Tunis in 1845," 286.

[99] [Jones], "The French in Algeria," 184.

[100] "French Policy in Africa," *The Critic*, 5 February 1859: 128. For a similar litany see *Times*, 24 April 1838: 4.

[101] *Morning Advertiser*, quoted in *Les Idées Napoléoniennes, no. VI. Machiavelism and Mystification* (London: W. H. Collingridge, 1865), 54.

[102] See Philip Lawson and Jim Phillips, "'Our Execrable Banditti': Perceptions of nabobs in mid-eighteenth century Britain," *Albion* 16 (1984): 225-41.

[103] Henry Drummond, *HPD3*, 130: 980-1, 20 February 1854; *Times*, 6 June 1840: 4.

[104] *Times*, 9 June 1847: 4.

[105] *Economist*, 11 October 1845: 966.

[106] *Times*, 4 September 1857, 6; *Economist*, 11 October 1845: 966.

[107] *Economist*, 5 May 1860: 480.

[108]Cooke, *Conquest and Colonisation in North Africa*, 46.

[109] *Times*, 7 September 1861: 6.

[110] *Economist*, 24 January 1863: 86.

[111] [Thomas Spring-Rice], "British and Continental Taxation," *Edinburgh Review* 91 (1850): 471-96, esp. 491.

[112] Richard Monckton Milnes, *The Events of 1848, Especially in their Relation to Great Britain. A Letter to the Marquis of Lansdowne* (London: John Ollivier, 1849), 58.

[113] *Economist*, 13 May 1865: 562; ibid., 5 May 1860: 480.

[114] Rev. Joseph Williams Blakesley, *Four Months in Algeria: With a visit to Carthage* (Cambridge: Macmillan and Co., 1859), 433-4; *Times*, 25 March 1861: 8. This was not universally agreed: see e.g. Francis Pulszky, *The Tricolor on the Atlas: Or, Algeria and the French conquest* (London: T. Nelson and sons, 1854), 401-2.

[115] Sir Henry Hardinge to Sir Robert Peel, 31 March 1846, in Charles Stuart Parker, ed., *Sir Robert Peel: From his private papers* (London: John Murray, 1899. 3 vols), III: 314.

[116] *Times*, 3 July 1845: 5; [T.C. Robertson], "Kaye's *History of the War in Afghanistan*," *Quarterly Review* 91 (1852): 11-36, esp. 32. See also Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 563.

[117] *Times*, 15 June 1846: 4.

[118] *Times*, 18 July 1846: 4; [Thomas Grimes], "Algeria," *Dublin Review* 13 (1842): 1-33, esp. 23-4; *Biographical Memoranda of Arthur, Duke of Wellington* (London: John Ollivier, 1853), 205.

[119] *Times*, 11 July 1865: 11; *Saturday Review*, 15 July 1865: 67.

[120] Sir Henry Hardinge, 1847, quoted in William J. Eastwick, *Speech of Captain Eastwick, at a Special Court of Proprietors, held at the East India House, on the 20th of January, 1858* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1858), 23.

[121] *Times*, 15 June 1846: 4.

[122] *Times*, 22 January 1845: 4.

[123] E.g. *Spectator*, 4 March 1848: 226 ; "What has the British Tax-payer to do with Colonial Wars or Constitutions?," *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* 44 (1851): 575-90, esp. 578.

[124] Most famously by William Molesworth, *HPD3*, 100: 823, 25 July 1848. See also Charles Adderley, ibid., 115: 1428, 10 April 1851.

[125] Thomas Campbell, *The Journal of a Residence in Algiers* (London: Henry Colburn, 1842. 2 vols), I: 203; W.G.R., letter in *Times*, 21 May 1852: 4.

[126] Richard Cobden, *How Wars are got up in India: The origin of the Burmese war* (London: William & Frederick G. Cash, 1853), 58; Miles Taylor, "'Imperium et Libertas?': Rethinking the radical critique of imperialism," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 19 (1991): 1-23, 9. According to the Radical *Westminster Review*, also, because no system existed in Algeria to redress colonial complaints, there was no way in which public opinion could be brought to bear upon the administration of the colony—just as Radicals urged against the British imperial system in the 1830s and the 1840s: [?Saxe Bannister/T. Perronet Thompson], "Algiers," *Westminster Review* 19 (1833): 231-42, esp. 235.

[127] On the army: Hydaspes, *The Truth about the Indian Army and its Officers, with Reference to the French Local Army of Algeria, from Personal Observation of Both* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., 1861); George Peacocke, *HPD3*, 159: 804-5, 21 June 1860. On representation: e.g. *Morning Post*, 4 June 1856: 4; "Imperialism," *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* (June 1856), 321-26, esp. 324; Joseph Howe, *A Letter to the Right Honourable C.B. Adderley, M.P., on the Relations of England with her Colonies* (London: Edward Stanford, 1863), 12, and on the wider debate see Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the future of world order, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[128] Parry, "Impact of Napoleon III."