



Writings on Empire and Slavery

By Alexis de de Tocqueville

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After completing his research for *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville turned to the French consolidation of its empire in North Africa, which he believed deserving of similar attention. Tocqueville began studying Algerian history and culture, making two trips to Algeria in 1841 and 1846. He quickly became one of France's foremost experts on the country and wrote essays, articles, official letters, and parliamentary reports on such diverse topics as France's military and administrative policies in North Africa, the people of the Maghrib, his own travels in Algeria, and the practice of Islam. Throughout, Tocqueville consistently defended the French imperial project, a position that stands in tension with his admiration for the benefits of democracy he witnessed in America.

Although Tocqueville never published a book-length study of French North Africa, his various writings on the subject provide as invaluable a portrait of French imperialism as *Democracy in America* does of the Early Republic period in American history. In *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, Jennifer Pitts has selected and translated nine of his most important dispatches on Algeria, which offer startling new insights into both Tocqueville's political thought and French liberalism's attitudes toward the political, military, and moral aspects of France's colonial expansion. The volume also includes six articles Tocqueville wrote during the same period calling for the emancipation of slaves in France's Caribbean colonies.

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Editorial Review

Review

A highly readable translation of Tocqueville's writings on colonization and slavery and a useful introduction of just the right length... Tocqueville's writings on colonialism, rather than revealing the limits of his liberalism, lead one to the core of it.

(Delba Winthrop *Society*)

By offering the first translation of these documents in a single volume, Pitts has provided a valuable service to the nineteenth-century specialist. The book should enhance readers' perspectives of both European liberalism and French colonialism.

(Jack B. Ridley *History: Reviews of New Books*)

As Jennifer Pitts points out in an informative and perceptive introduction to her edition and translation of Tocqueville's *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, his thinking remained in the mold of a nineteenth-century liberal, more sensitive to the fragility of free institutions in the French state than to the suffering of colonials.

(Klaus J. Hansen *Canadian Journal of History*)

Should be required reading for anyone interested in the history of colonialism, imperialism, liberalism and Algeria... *Writings on Empire and Slavery* features the clarity and depth that one expects from the author of *Democracy in America*.

(Michael Shurkin *Patterns of Prejudice*)

A highly useful collection.

(Daniel Lazare *The Nation*)

A very fine piece of historical sociology. It is surprising that Tocqueville's views on empire and slavery have not been translated before; they shed light on a rather different Tocqueville?always perceptive, but here very much the empire-builder with a chauvinism not untinged with a form of racism. Here we learn not only about this new side of Tocqueville but also about Algeria as a case study in European colonization. An excellent introduction to Tocqueville the man, sociologist, and civil servant and to the early history of French Algeria.

(Robert Forster, The Johns Hopkins University)

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: French

About the Author

Jennifer Pitts is an assistant professor of political science at Yale University.

Users Review

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Shawn Farr:

This book untitled Writings on Empire and Slavery to be one of several books this best seller in this year, this is because when you read this guide you can get a lot of benefit into it. You will easily to buy this specific book in the book retail store or you can order it by means of online. The publisher of this book sells the e-book too. It makes you quicker to read this book, since you can read this book in your Mobile phone. So there is no reason to you to past this book from your list.

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