LOUIS XAVIER EYMA

and

THE FRENCH IMAGE OF AMERICA

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.

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MARY SUZANNE SCHRIBER

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ABSTRACT

LOUIS XAVIER EYMA AND THE FRENCH IMAGE OF AMERICA

by Mary Suzanne Schriber

Louis Xavier Eyma (1816-1876), a minor novelist, poet, dramatist and journalist, published a prodigious number of American studies in the mid-nineteenth century. He treated American culture and customs in ten studies based on his travels in the United States; two novels and five tales; two American histories;and numerous journal articles. He also translated works of Emerson and Irving. This study introduces Eyma and his works, particularly those relevant to the United States, to students of literature and Franco-American literary relations.

Eyma treats those aspects of American life which fascinated French students of American affairs such as Alexis de Tocqueville and Michel Chevalier. His travelogues consider American politics, women, commercial and industrial genius, education, liberty, and equality. The institution of slavery, the American Indian, and democratic institutions and processes receive particular attention, as does the American businessman. His histories approach America through her representative men, and her geography and natural resources. His novels and tales dramatize the American spirit and character.

Mary Suzanne Schriber

Eyma probes the character of the American people and institutions in an effort to locate the spirit which animates them. Democratic institutions and the success of the American experiment reflect the energy, inventiveness, audacity, determination and faith of the American people. Two myths dominate Eyma's thought: that of the American Adam, and that of the "great man." America is the New Eden, the providential land of promise, the cradle of mankind's hopes and aspirations. Eyma admired the American nation, and reprimands her in a spirit of hope and expectation. Americans such as Washington and Jefferson embody the best of the American spirit, and reflect the amazing potential of democratic institutions. Because these myths, and consequently, high expectations, dominated Eyma's thought, the Civil War appeared especially threatening. The Indian was justly prevented from impeding the American mission, the triumph of mankind's aspirations; the Civil War must not destroy the American dream.

The values expressed in Eyma's general fiction influenced his judgment of the United States; personal and French standards bear in his comments. Stability, love, honor, labor, and the family create laudable individuals, and nations worthy of imitation. Such values must be expressed, however, in institutions tailored to the tradition and needs of individual nations.

Eyma's image of America reached a relatively wide French audience. His works were published in bound volumes,

and serialized in popular journals. Thus they were available to diverse segments of the French public. They participated in the mainstream of the French literary tradition, and answered a great curiosity for information on America. Second editions indicate both popularity and expanded circulation. The works were reviewed and praised by contemporary critics.

This study, then, examines Eyma's literary and historical studies of the United States and, based on these, estimates the French mid-nineteenth-century image of America. It utilizes Eyma's total literary canon to abstract values which influenced his perception of the American scene. By reference to secondary sources, it places Eyma in context as a literary figure and as a student of American literature and culture. It concludes that Eyma was a force in the formation, reinforcement, and perpetuation of the French image of America.

LOUIS XAVIER EYMA

and

THE FRENCH IMAGE OF AMERICA

By

Mary Suzanne Schriber

A THESIS

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"L'on connaîtrait mal le mouvement littéraire qui, sous le nom de Romantisme, a jeté un si vif éclat sur le second tiers de notre siècle, si l'on s'arrêtait seulement aux grands écrivains qui s'en détachent et dont la gloire est maintenant consacrée. Pour l'embrasser tout entier, en bien pénétrer le sens, la nature, il faut s'engager plus avant dans cette étude, devenir familier avec d'autres écrivains moins illustres, dont les noms mêmes sont aujourd-hui à peu près oubliés, mais qui, par leurs défauts, par l'exagération des principes d'une école dont ils s'étaient faits les adeptes, ne les mettent que mieux en relief, n'en rendent que plus saillant le caractère."

Eugène Asse. Les Petits Romantiques. Paris, 1896.

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INTRODUCTION

Louis Xavier Eyma (1816-1876) was a minor novelist, poet, and author of short fiction; a journalist, and writer of vaudeville and travelogues; a student of cultures and customs. He was also the author of some ten studies based on his travels in America and his life in New Orleans; two novels and five short stories set in the United States; two histories of the United States; forty journal articles treating America; and translations of Emerson and Irving. Yet Eyma's name is all but unknown among students of literature and Franco-American literary relations.

The sheer abundance of Eyma's American commentary suggests the value of a study of this man and his works. It indicates that Eyma's pronouncements reached a relatively large audience. In addition, however, the varied form his works assume--light travelogues, fictional dramatization, serious histories--suggests their potential appeal to varied tastes and interests. Moreover, Eyma's works were reviewed and praised by contemporary critics. And Eyma's correspondance indicates that he enjoyed influential friends, such as Alexis de Tocqueville and Michel Chevalier.

A close examination of the works themselves suggests the need for a study of Eyma. Approaching the works from a

literary point of view, one finds that style, form, and content are tailored, given their nineteenth-century context, to a large audience. That is to say, the style and form are neither avante-garde nor complex; they contain no elements to alienate the general reader. The content is in fact arrière-garde, reaching back to the eighteenth-century sentimental novel and advancing heroes and heroines to which the French were accustomed; heroes and heroines, events, actions, and sentiments which the average reader would approve and accept.

Approaching the works from an historical point of view, one finds that Eyma treats the same American facts and fancies as most French critics of American culture of the period. Eyma, like the others, catered to the curiosity of a French audience avid of information on America. He reinforced and expanded a pre-existing image of America; he did not force (with some exceptions) acceptance of unfamiliar and unwanted material.

Significantly, Eyma's pronouncements and the form they assume span two eras of Franco-American relations. They reach back to the reportings and generalizations of America in the early nineteenth century; they point forward to the embodiment of the American in definite types (a phenomenon which took definite root only after the Civil War) through casting him in specific fictional molds. Eyma, therefore, bridges two French conceptions and treatments of America, and simultaneously reinforces the familiar and accepted French image of America. His works summarize this image, telescope the bulk of

mid-nineteenth century opinion of the United States, and point toward the future French literary treatment of America.

Consideration of Eyma and the French image of America illuminates, too, the place and importance of minor literary figures in comparative literary study. Any given period of literary history contains outstanding avant-garde writers, highly gifted and creative individuals who break from tradition and create new forms and genres consonant with new concepts of life and literature. Genius is, however, the exception to the rule. The avant-garde writer is avant-garde for the very reason that he is in advance of, rather than characteristic of, his age. Such was Stendhal, for example, whose Le Rouge et le Noir was an atypical novel in the France of 1831. Most French novels of the period were not psycho-realistic but were, rather, a continuation of the novel tradition of the preceding century. Intellectuals read Stendhal, Balzac, the Goncourts and Flaubert; the general public read novels in the sentimental bourgeois tradition of the eighteenth century, or the romantic tradition of the early nineteenth century--simply because, if for no other reason, minor works are more plentiful, and therefore more available to the general public.

Moreover, the works of minor writers are, by their very nature, more acceptable to the "people at large." A minor writer is not avant-garde, but is arrière-garde; he utilizes forms and content which are standard and accepted literary stock. He is an imitator rather than an innovator. He does not develop and introduce new structural and/or ideological

elements (as does the literary genius) whose novelty risks the alienation of the general reader; rather, he trades in existing forms and ideas. Consequently, because he does not offend or threaten, he is read and appreciated by a wider audience than is the more gifted writer. The minor writer reinforces and perpetuates the literary and, often, the ideological status quo, and the status quo is acceptable and even comme il faut to the general population.

In Eyma's works, one finds the literary and ideological status quo of mid-nineteenth-century France. He is representative of his age, of the broad currents underlying French life and thought. In him is the national pulse. His work epitomizes the broadest currents in the French image of America. His literary technique is a modified reminiscence of the French literary tradition. He participates in the romantic tradition - heroes are often brooding, introspective, nostalgic, and excessively sensitive; in the sentimental tradition - heroines blush, faint, cry, and are more virtuous than virtue itself; in the tradition of gothic horror--bloody frays and ghastly scenes abound; in melodrama--extraordinary coincidences and interrelationships, black villains and snow-white heroes populate his works; and in the Neo-classical tradition--characters act on principles of honor, and express great intensity of passion and conviction.

Like his contemporaries, Eyma was intensely interested in the institutions and people of the United States. He realized the necessity to penetrate the surface of American

life in order to render sound and valid judgments of the democratic experiment and the people to whom the New Eden has been entrusted. Eyma attempted an impartial, objective evaluation of the American scene, and urged others to shed preconceptions and European standards when judging the United States. Again like his contemporaries, however, Eyma was unable to escape completely his own culture and values. Though he admired the American experiment and sympathized with the American people, European standards impinged, at times, upon his judgment.

The political, judicial, and educational institutions of the United States received Eyma's repeated attention and commentary. He stressed the sectional nature of America, and hence the inaccuracy of generalizations. The diversity of the American population and a fierce individuality create problems in law enforcement which in turn prompt the application of an arbitrary justice through vigilance committees. Through compulsory primary education, all citizens are educated in democratic rights and responsibilities. Hence the nation is strengthened and developed. The spirit of Americans, however, is the force which animates and fructifies the entire American experiment. Americans are ambitious, tenacious, courageous, inventive, and self-confident. The "go ahead and never mind" best characterizes the American temper which has brought order from chaos; created prodigies of mechanization and prosperity.

This same spirit, however, has encouraged certain excesses in the American people. Material goals have obscured values of a higher order; principle is sometimes sacrificed to fortune; liberty becomes license; equality and excessive individuality are confused. Hence the national character is weakened. And hence the development of arts and letters, antithetical to a mercantile spirit, has been retarded.

Such retardation is understandable, however, in terms of the American mission; the carving of a civilization from the wilderness, demanding the constant and total efforts of the population. The myth of the American Adam pervades Eyma's work. America is providentially destined to realize the hopes and aspirations of mankind. The American Indian, because an impediment to the advance of civilization and Christianity, has been justifiably ostracized. The institution of slavery, though essential to the southern economy, must not impede the American mission, and hence frustrate the hopes of mankind. Indeed, the American myth propels Eyma's thoughts and judgments. Because America was the New Eden, Eyma was concerned with both American successes and failures. He approaches American problems in a spirit of hope and expectation.

This study has three major objectives: the introduction of L. Xavier Eyma to students of Franco-American literary relations; an examination of his literary and historical studies of the United States; an estimation of the mid-nineteenth-century French image of America, based on Eyma's

works. In meeting these objectives, the study relies, to some extent, on Eyma's total literary canon in order to determine ideas and prejudices which may have influenced his perception of the American scene. It attempts, by reference to secondary sources, to place Eyma in context, both among French literary figures and French students of the United States, and thereby estimate his importance in the formation and perpetuation of the French image of America. Attention is given, also, to Eyma's translations of Emerson and Irving, and his judgments on American arts and letters.

The accomplishment of these objectives simultaneously illuminates certain aspects of international literary relations. Extra-literary factors provoking and influencing interest in a foreign literature and culture come to light. Personal and cultural elements determining a translator's selection of materials come into focus. And the rôle of social and cultural preconditions in the success of studies and fiction dealing with a foreign nation is illuminated.

CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHY

> Lequel de nos aimables intermédiaristes voudrait me renseigner sur cette famille (Eyma)? Est-elle d'origine française? En ce cas, je désirerais connaître armoires, etc. Je crois donc rappeler avoir rencontré le nom d'un écrivain français, X. Eyma. Ou bien est-ce un pseudonyme?[1]

This inquiry was sent to L'Intermédiare des chercheurs et curieux in 1896. The inquiry itself and the scant information given in three replies to it indicate that Eyma's name and its connection with French journalism and letters were but vaguely known as little as twenty years following his death. One reply gives Eyma's origin--Martinique; another reveals that "Eyma" was not a pseudonym but the name of "un littérateur assez connu"; and a third testifies that Eyma was a man of delicate feeling--and fallaciously adds that he died in Martinique.

The sketchiness of this information from 1896 is a forewarning of problems facing a biographer in 1966. Gustave Vapereau's Dictionnaire universel des contemporains[2] presents

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[1] L'Intermédiare des chercheurs et curieux, XXXIV (November 30, 1896), 214.

[2] Paris, 1880.

a sketch of Eyma; Barbey d'Aurevilly's Les Oeuvres et les hommes[3] takes note of him; E. L. Tinker's Les Ecrits de la langue française en Louisiane au XIXe siècle[4] gives considerable space to Eyma and his father; La Grande Encyclopédie and the Larousse du XIXe siècle (Volume III) sketch his life; and several death notices provide a minimum of information regarding the man and his activities. It is only in piecing together and consolidating these relatively brief notices that some outline of the life of Louis Xavier Eyma can be gathered. He is a figure largely forgotten in spite of his multitudinous contributions to French journalism, letters, and studies of America.

The Comte de Saint-Saud, avid geneologist, answered the inquiry quoted--eighteen years following its publication and thirty-eight years after Eyma's death. Saint-Saud reported that the Eyma family name still existed, in 1914, in Bergerac, where it had been known since the fifteenth century, and in Holland where a branch of the family emigrated in the eighteenth century; Xavier Eyma, who left but one daughter, belonged to a branch which settled in Martinique c. 1780.[5]

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[3]Paris, 1888.

[4]Paris, 1932.

[5]L'Intermédiare, LXX:66 (1914), 38. The Eyma name was not listed in the 1966 Paris phone directory, nor did a tracing of the daughter's married name, Lebourg, lead to any fruitful information. Saint-Saud reports that he spoke with Eyma's daughter in 1914, but found her largely ignorant of family geneology.

L. (Louis) Xavier Étienne Eyma was born on October 16, 1816, at Saint-Pierre, Martinique, to Louis Eyma and Marie Constance Largenton Eyma.[6] Though the age at which the young Eyma immigrated to France is unknown, it seems likely that he was educated in France; and it is certain that by 1835, at the age of nineteen, Eyma was living in Paris and associated with the Ministry of the Marine, where he held a position until 1846.[7] The nature of Eyma's work with the Ministry is unknown,[8] but during these years he made entry into the Parisian literary world with the publication, in 1840, of a novel, Le Médaillon,[9] followed by a combined poetry-novel volume, Emmanuel,[10] in 1841. In 1842 Eyma's

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[6]E.L. Tinker, in Les Ecrits de la langue française en Louisiane au XIXe siècle (Paris, 1932), states that the name of Eyma's mother was Victorine. Eyma's birth certificate, however, gives his mother's name as Marie Constance Largenton. Tinker also states that Eyma used the pseudonym of Adolph Ricard--and the catalogue of La Bibliothèque Nationale attributes a novel, Cascarinette, to Eyma under that pseudonym. I find no reason to believe, however, that this is a correct attribution. The cover pages of this novel list several titles, including Cascarinette, which were indeed the work of an Adolph Ricard--not Eyma--who was writing and publishing in and about 1847. Nor is there evidence in the style of Cascarinette to support the attribution of the work to Eyma. On no work of Eyma's did I find the use of this pseudonym.

[7]G. Vapereau, Dictionnaire universel des contemporains (Paris, 1880), p. 675.

[8]The archives of the Ministry of the Marine, in Paris, contain no record of Eyma save one letter written by him, dated January 16, 1841, asking for placement in the Division of History of the Ministry because "La nature de mes travaux et de mes études jusqu'à ce jour me font tenir particulièrement à être attaché à la section historique . . ."

[9]Paris: Chrétien, 1840.

[10]Paris: Rozier, 1841.

Introduction à une politique générale[11] was published, suggesting that at the age of twenty-six Eyma's opinions were at least modestly respected in certain circles. A nascent interest in American affairs is indicated by the appearance on May 24, 1845, in L'Illustration, of Eyma's review and translation of sections of Georges Catlin's Les Peaux Rouges.

In 1846 Eyma was commissioned by the Ministry of the Marine to travel to the Antilles. Between 1846 and 1847 he made his first visit to the United States, ostensibly to study the American system of education for the French Ministry of Public Instruction. Evidently Eyma remained in the United States from 1847 until 1848, for during that period correspondence from him to the director of L'Illustration appeared in that journal under the title of "Souvenirs d'un voyage aux Etats-Unis en 1847." In the first letter to the director, Eyma writes that he had made a tour of the archipelago of the Antilles and, arriving at Havana, departed for New Orleans, where his father had resided since 1837.[12]

Once again, exact dates cannot be ascertained, but the date of a vaudeville comedy written in collaboration with Amedée de Jallais, and published in Paris, suggests that Eyma returned to Paris from the United States no later than 1850.

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[11]Paris: Percepied, 1842.

[12]Tinker, p. 189. Eyma's father, Louis, was a noted New Orleans lawyer, and founded the public school system in the first municipality of New Orleans.

In 1851 and 1853 Eyma again collaborated in the writing and production of vaudeville comedies. By 1854 he had terminated his association with the Ministry of the Marine and was an editor of the Journal des actionnaires. It seems probable that Eyma married during this period, for his wife's maiden name, Marie Léantine Fontréaulx de Jallais, suggests that she was related to Eyma's 1850 vaudeville collaborator, Amedée de Jallais.

Eyma's prodigious publication of articles and books relative to the United States had begun by 1849. Between 1849 and 1855, fourteen journal articles discussing aspects of America appeared; in 1853 and 1854 three books relating to the United States appeared. In 1858 New World fever again struck Eyma, and from 1858-1859 he lived in New Orleans and edited the French section of the Abeille. He escaped the yellow fever which struck New Orleans in 1858 and travelled the length of the Mississippi by steamboat-- an experience which provided considerable material for his later studies of the United States. During this year of residence in New Orleans, Eyma had contact, according to E.L. Tinker,[13] with numerous distinguished people: Jude Martin; the historian Gayarré; the future president of Nicaragua, Walker; the son of Daniel Boone in Kentucky; Washington Irving in New York. According to his own account, Eyma had conversational contact with numerous Americans as he travelled.

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[13] Tinker, pp. 189-193.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War, Eyma returned to France and began to flood the country with studies of America--ten volumes, excluding second editions, plus translations of Emerson and Irving and a torrent of articles. "Nouveau-Monde! Nouveau-Monde...il (Eyma) se vantait d'être l'encyclopédie vivante des choses d'Amérique."[14] Such was largely extra-curricular activity, for shortly after his return to Paris he moved to Nice where he founded Le Journal de Nice. After three or four years he returned to Paris (c. 1866) and wrote for various newspapers including La Liberté, Le Courrier du Dimanche (wherein he published twelve articles explaining events of the Civil War), Figaro, and La Patrie, L'Epoque, and the Franco-English L'International.

On April 22, 1874, Eyma founded a newspaper, Le Nouvelliste, to replace L'Assemblée Nationale and to "rendre à la cause de l'ordre et au principe monarchique les mêmes services que son prédécesseur."[15] These were extremely difficult days for the French press: on April 22, 1871, during the state of siege, the suppressive laws of 1819 governing the press were re-enacted; the government could suspend the publication of newspapers without warning. On December 29, 1875, it was decreed that authors would be punished for attacks on constitutional law and governmental

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[14] Tinker, p. 192.

[15] L.X. Eyma, "Ce que nous voulons," Le Nouvelliste, No. 112 (April 22, 1874), p. 1.

powers.[16] Eyma was found guilty of some charge, and was forced to abandon the direction of Le Nouvelliste just two months (July 11, 1874) after its establishment. He explained in a farewell article that he had founded the paper at considerable pain and personal expense, and sacrifice on the part of his friends; and it was with profound emotion and sincere gratitude that he took leave of his collaborators. This article was Eyma's final contribution to the French press.[17]

On March 29, 1876, at the age of sixty, Eyma died of pneumonia in his home at 1, rue Louis Philippe, Neuilly-sur-Seine. He was buried from the Church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Neuilly, and interred in the old Neuilly cemetery.[18] Death notices give some small estimate of the man and his connections. The Revue du Monde Catholique praised Eyma for his loyalty to religion and morals, and noted that "une mort chrétienne a été la récompense de cette réserve."[19] The Figaro remarked the unexpectedness of Eyma's death, called it

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[16] See René Dumesnil, L'Epoque Réaliste et Naturaliste (Paris, 1945), ix.

[17] L.X. Eyma, "A Mes Lecteurs," Le Nouvelliste, No.192 (July 11, 1874), p. 1. Eyma here promised to explain, at some later date, the charges brought against him. He never did so.

[18] Records at the cemetery indicate that Eyma's tomb was in complete ruin by 1914, and removed.

[19] Anon., Revue de Monde Catholique, XXXXVI (April-June, 1876), 326.

"une bien douloureuse nouvelle," and praised Eyma as "un homme d'une amenité charmante, un confrère du commerce le plus sûr...Il n'avait que des amis et sa mort laisse parmi ses anciens collaborateurs de vifs et sincères regrets."[20] Figaro also listed those who attended Eyma's funeral. Notable among them were the MM. de Calonne, one a poet and dramatist, the other a publicist; Bertrand-Isidore Salles, pseudonym Isidore S. de Gosse, writer of scientific and literary works, head of the press and library division of the Ministry of the Interior, member of the Société des Gens des Lettres; Felix Tournachon Nadar, man of letters; Theodore-Frédéric Gaillardet, man of letters and dramatist, and founder in New York of the Courrier des Etats-Unis in which Eyma published; A. Grehan, the consul of Siam; and Calmann Lévy, with whom Eyma published several of his works. Such a gathering of mourners indicates that Eyma was acquainted with an active and influential segment of Parisian society.

Eyma was apparently a member of the "Société des Auteurs Dramatiques," for the Figaro laments the absence of a delegation from the Société at Eyma's funeral. According to the death certificate, and according to the Bulletin de la Société Historique et Archéologique du Périgord,[21] Eyma was

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[20] Anon., Figaro. Series 3, XC (March 30, 1876), 1.

[21] Anon., Bulletin de la Société Historique et Archeologique du Périgord. XLI (February 5, 1914), 104-105. However, in Lamathière's Panthéon de la Légion d'Honneur (XIXe siècle) there is no mention of Eyma.

also a member of the Legion of Honor. Eyma's death certificate indicates that he was a member of the "Société des Gens des Lettres." Admittance to and membership in such societies reinforce the probability that Eyma was widely known and that his work found a wide audience.

The sole source of information regarding Eyma's character, temperament and mentality are his works themselves. The nature of the man will emerge as a by-product of this study, but a few generalizations are in order here. Judging from his fiction and the values which are inherent in the heroes and heroines he created, Eyma's values and principles remained quite consistent throughout his life. The hero of the early Emmanuel, though of a more self-conscious, suffering, Romantic cast than his later brothers, is essentially the same as the heroes of Les Amoureux de la démoiselle, a post-mortem publication. Eyma's heroes often find duties and obligations to be at cross-purposes with their desires, but by means of hard work, loyalty, unselfishness and devotion they transcend themselves and find true happiness. The "hero," to Eyma, was the concretization of bourgeois values and morality--and given Eyma's conception of art, his heroes no doubt embodied the values which Eyma himself held.

Eyma's comments on artists in Ecrivains et artistes vivants, français et étrangers indicate that his conception of art was utilitarian. Art was for him functional, the handmaid of morals and character formation. Eyma's novels and contes are perfectly consonant with this conception of art.

Eyma's political principles remained constant throughout his life, and were perfectly consistent with the concept of "the good life" represented in his fictional creations. The twenty-six year old Eyma of the Introduction à une politique générale insists that stability in government and prosperity are interlocked; these are achieved only by reference to the institutions and traditions of individual, unique nations; constitutional monarchy is the best form of government for France, given her past and present; the people must be granted their rights, but are essentially incapable of understanding, and therefore directing, political science; governmental forms are right and effective only insofar as they meet the ends of security and material prosperity. The Eyma of the 1861 République américaine gives evidence of these same principles in his discussions of American democracy and of constitutional monarchy in Central America. Eyma's politics were conservative, just as were his heroes and heroines.

In politics as in individual lives, then, the essential values, from Eyma's point of view, were stability, morality, and prosperity--and these are encouraged and sustained by a solid, ordered, contextual functioning of Church, State, and Family. As Eyma wrote upon the closing of his Nouvelliste in 1874, just two years prior to his death, "je demeure ce que j'ai été, un conservateur, mettant les principes d'ordre social au-dessus de tout..."[22]

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[22] L.X. Eyma, "A Mes Lecteurs," Nouvelliste, No.192 (July 11, 1874), p. 1.

Eyma drew his own character sketch in 1842:

> ...un écrivain impartial, ne sachant pas ce que c'est que la haine, ni contre les personnes, ni contre les partis; très humble serviteur d'aucun parti et de personne; voulant, avant tout, la prospérité morale et matérielle, en un mot, la gloire de mon pays; prêt à receuiller d'ailleurs ce bien-être et cette gloire quelle que soit la main que les lui donne; m'efforçant aujourd'hui, comme je m'efforçerai toujours, de tirer de partout la vérité pour rappeler à elle les esprits égarés par un faux éclat de lumière; et enfin, trouvant une excuse pour la faiblesse de mes écrits dans cette maxime d'un philosophe, que: 'Comme les hommes ne se dégoûtent pas du vice, il ne faut pas se lasser de les leur reprocher; car ils seraient peut-être pires s'ils venaient à manquer de censeurs ou de critiques!'[23]

In the closing of the same work Eyma wrote,

> "Le jour où la France, cette avant-garde de la civilisation comme on l'a appellée, se montrera à la hauteur du grand rôle qu'elle doit jouer dans le monde, ce jour-là sera le plus heureux de ma vie de citoyen. Fasse Dieu que je le voie!"[24]

In 1874, at fifty-eight, Eyma's pivotal concern remained "le salut du pays."

Eyma appears to have been a man of considerable integrity, making every effort to found his expressed ideas regarding politics and nations upon just, informed, and objective grounds. He judged himself qualified to write of the United States only because he had lived and travelled there; he was highly informed on the matters of which he wrote--his Introduction à une politique générale, for example, makes reference to Bonald, Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Aristotle,

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[23] L.X. Eyma, Introduction à une politique générale (Paris, 1852) pp. 8-9.

[24] Introduction, p. 99.

Mably, Guizot, Cousin, Erigène, and Rousseau; he was intensely patriotic but insisted again and again that French standards must not be applied to other nations.

The personal life of Eyma remains a mystery. Judging from his correspondence and from his wide range of friends, however, he was evidently esteemed personally, and as a writer and critic, and recognized for his integrity and impartiality. Obviously the man was ambitious and diligent (how else so many books and articles?), and open to new experience. His continual dislocations from paper to paper, city to city, and country to country suggest that his was a curious, restless and energetic nature.

On April 29, 1876--one month following Eyma's death--Plon published Eyma's final work on the United States, La Vie aux Etats-Unis. On July 6, 1878, Dentu published a second edition of the 1877 Les Amoureux de la démoiselle. From that date forward, Eyma's name was seldom in print. The latest mentions of his name appear in Frank Monaghan's French Travellers in the United States (1961), wherein Eyma is judged to have been an influential figure in the formation of the French image of America; and in Simon Jeune's De F.T.Graindorge à A.O.Barnabooth (1963), where Eyma is associated with the formation of an American "type" in French literature. His works have never been thoroughly considered in their relationship to French knowledge of the United States. Because of their number alone, such consideration is warranted.

Eyma's life and activities invite the conclusion that his opinions were founded upon experience as well as upon a priori convictions. His wide circle of friends and his very style of writing, in combination with widespread publication in both newspapers and journals, would indicate that his opinions did indeed find a hearing in mid-nineteenth century France.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL FICTION

L. Xavier Eyma's literary efforts include various forms and genres; the novel, historical fiction, poetry, short tales, vaudeville, history, and even travelogues. In addition to publications dealing with the United States--the central concern of this study--Eyma published thirteen volumes of fiction, largely collections of tales. These span a period of thirty-six years (1840-1876) and include an early and highly romantic novel; short tales in the sentimental tradition; historical fiction punctuated with gothic horror and sentimental gestures; and bourgeois contes which bear some relationship to the contes moraux of the eighteenth century. Eyma's participation in various streams of the French literary tradition suggests not only his saturation in that tradition, but the eclectic nature of his fiction. It indicates, too, the transposition of traditional French literary values from the upper classes to the expanding middle class following the Revolution. In Eyma's fiction one finds, in mitigated form, the emphasis on glory and honor of a Racine or Corneille, but operative in middle class characters; the sentimentality of a Marivaux or Prevost; the soulful outpourings of a Chateaubriand or a Bernardin de Saint-Pierre.

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Examination of each work would be beyond the limits of this study. An overview of Eyma's fiction, however, is valuable for several reasons. The preoccupations of Eyma the writer of fiction are those of Eyma the observer of America; the values asserted in his fiction are the values against which he judges America. The rôle of the United States in Eyma's fiction becomes more clear when set in relief against the thematic concerns of his general fiction. His concept of character, good and evil, illuminates his portrayal of the American character. In other words, Eyma's interests and preoccupations can be discerned in and abstracted from his general fiction; these in turn shed light on his rendering and evaluation of the United States.

This chapter, then, considers Eyma's general literary techniques: characterization, structure and plot, literary devices, recurring themes, and the values and point of view inherent in these. Such a procedure, however, does violence to any fictional creation, no matter how minor, insofar as any literary work is an organic whole. It is hoped that the organic analysis of Eyma's fiction set in the United States (Chapter III) will compensate in some degree for the unfortunate but inevitable distortion which results from such a general approach.

The characters of Eyma's fiction are more typical than individual. Mothers, fathers, foster-parents and children; heroes and heroines, and even villains are essentially the

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same throughout. Eyma was most concerned with the reactions of set characters to a basic number of situations. From these reactions, and with the aid of the narrator, the reader could draw beneficial instruction. A character is invariably of a certain type; because he is of this type, he succumbs to or surmounts given difficulties.

The Eyma heroine falls into a particular physical mold. She is of average size, pale, graceful, blue-eyed, and blond.

> "Louise était de taille moyenne, mais pleine d'une grâce exquise. Elle avait les épaules bien découpées, la poitrine ouverte et libre. Son visage, au galbe allongé, dont l'épiderme, d'une transparence cristalline, laissait voir un mélange de naïveté, de mélancolie, de douceur et d'énergie. De ses yeux, plutôt réfléchis que rêveurs, jaillissaient par moments d'étranges éclairs inattendus."[1]

Zeïda, with "ses yeux, largement ouverts, d'un bleu sombre et mélancolique, son nez droit et fin, sa chevelure blonde et abondante, accusent le type des belles filles du Nord."[2] As for Marguerite of Emmanuel, she

> "n'était point un type de beauté; mail il y avait répandue sur tout son visage une candeur angélique qui fait croire à la beauté de l'âme. Son oeil presque bleu avait quelque chose de lent qui dénotait le calme intime. Elle frappait tellement

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[1]Louis Xavier Eyme, "Le Testament d'Henri," Les Amoureux de la démoiselle (Paris: E. Dentu, 1877), pp. 81-82 hereafter cited as Testament in parentheses following quotations. All works quoted are Eyma's unless otherwise indicated.

[2]Le Roman de Flavio (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1862), p. 5. hereafter cited as Flavio in parentheses following quotations.

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> du premier abord par la régularité et l'harmonie des lignes, qu'un peintre eut à coup sûr pu la choisir pour sa création; mais ce n'était point dans les traits qui brillait la beauté de Marguerite; cette beauté chez elle était tout interne."[3]

Whether sensitivity and melancholia create her appearance, or whether the reverse is true, the heroine is extremely feminine and graced with a frail beauty, thanks to qualities of soul which emanate from her and illuminate her entire person.

The character of the heroine is consonant with her appearance. She acts as one would expect. Utter devotion to cause, father, and lover marks the heroine. Thérèse Lorrain prefers the forsaking of rightful, noble name and fortune to separation from her self-sacrificing foster-father.[4] Marguerite, of Mademoiselle Topaze,[5] discovers that old Bernard is not her father, but embraces him and assures him that he will always be "père" to her. When a woman loves a man--even a man other than her father--she will heroically sacrifice everything for him, even happiness. Inès, for

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[3]Paris:Rozier, 1841, p. 21 - hereafter cited in parentheses following quotations.

[4]"Thérèse Lorrain," La Mansarde de Rose (Paris: A. Faure, 1867) - hereafter cited as Thérèse in parentheses following quotations.

[5]Paris: Lécrivain et Toubon, 1860 - hereafter cited as Topaze in parentheses following quotations.

example, cannot marry Philippe, but exclaims in revery, "'Ah! Philippe! Philippe! Que ma vie tout entière soit à toi!'"[6] The first and essential characteristic of the heroic woman is absolute devotedness.

Common to each heroine, also, is submission to, and absolute trust in, the hero. This is, of course, part and parcel of her devotedness. When Suzanne, of Jean Larcher, reveals her overwhelming fear to the hero, Grimer, he,

> Pour toute réponse...montra à Madame de Marsan sa ceinture garnie d'une paire de pistolets et d'un long poignard. -- Oh! vous avez raison, capitaine, reprit la jeune femme, avec vous je ne dois rien craindre; je sais assez quelle est votre bravoure; pardonnez-moi donc!"[7]

Obviously, heroine and hero complement one another; the relationship is reciprocal.

Another facet of the heroine's devotedness is her piety, her dependance on God, very appropriate to her angelic modesty and purity. The reader knows that she is religious because she is often surprised at prayer. "Joseph, en entrant, aperçut, agenouillée dans un coin de la cabine, une femme qui priait, le visage caché dans ses deux mains. Il poussa un profond soupir..."[8] And for what does the heroic

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[7]"Jean Larcher," Le Trône d'Argent (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1860), p.233 - hereafter cited as Larcher in parentheses following quotations.

[8]"Betzy Murlay," Le Trône d'Argent (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1860), p. 262 - hereafter cited as Murlay in parentheses following quotations.

woman pray? "Je ne demande rien à Dieu...je le prie seulement." (262, Murlay) At times the pious nature of the heroine is revealed in domestic touches, as when Donatien, viewing Marguerite's workshop, notices a "Sainte Famille" she has copied. (Topaze) Regardless of technique, the heroine's pious and religious nature is somehow revealed.

Next in importance to religious devotion is conse - cration to domestic duties, including love and care for children. The widow Catherine suffers every deprivation for her child.

> Une après-midi, Catherine, affamée par un jeûne de cinq jours, affaissée sur la terre gelée de sa cabine, les cheveux épars, le corps brûlé par la fièvre, sanglotait à grosses larmes sur le corps décharné de son fils, et pas une obole dans cette cabane pour acheter un remède! En ce moment suprême, où l'agonie planait déjà sur la couche du pauvre enfant, Catherine eût donné plus que sa vie, elle eût accompli le plus grand sacrifice pour étancher seulement la soif qui séchait le gosier du petit moribond."[9]

Catherine's straits result from a promise made at the foot of her husband's grave; she would never remarry, she promised, and "tant que j'aurai mes deux bras bien attachés à mes épaules; tant que j'aurai un souffle de vie, je n'el'accepterai (charity) de personne." (97, Catherine.) Such is the pride, nobility, and integrity of the Eyma heroine.

Often a woman's dedication to work is indicated by suggestion rather than by action, and blended with indications

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[9] "La Veuve Catherine," Les Poches de Mon Parrain (Paris: E. Maillet, 1863), pp. 97-98 - hereafter cited as Catherine in parentheses following quotations.

of respect for work is evidence of great humility. In Le Testament d'Henri, Louise shows Paul the only painting "que je n'aurai pas honte de mettre sous vos yeux. C'est une ébauche d'un sujet agreste: des chevaux de labour...j'ai longtemps habité les champs;..." (85) With one stroke the reader is told that Louise is humble and laborious, and so should a heroine be! Dedication to family and work are highly valuable feminine traits.

Eyma heroines are riddled with stock gestures which indicate that they are heroines, that they are worthy women. We have already observed the heroine surprised at prayer, the heroine painting, the heroine expressing submission to the hero. She also has a sensitive heart and a great supply of tears. Suffice it to say that many is the garden "arrosé des larmes" in Eyma's fiction. Many is the heroine who betrays her humility, modesty, and love through blushing and lowering her eyes; many is the heroine who

> "se leva vivement en déposant au pied de son lit, un métier à broder sur lequel elle était penchée, et se jeta au-devant du nouveau-venu, les bras ouverts, la joie dans les yeux et un baiser sur les lèvres; puis, entraînant le vieillard sur une chaise, elle s'assit à ses genoux sur un tabouret de paille." 10

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[10] La Mansard de Rose (Paris: A. Faure, 1867), p. 24 - hereafter cited as Mansarde in parentheses following quotations.

In other words, Eyma heroines are sentimental heroines in appearance, character, and deed. If narrator-authors are to be trusted, they are ideal women. As the hero Flavio tells us, women have a particular rôle to fulfill.

> "Le devoir des hommes les oblige non seulement à subir mais à affronter toutes les épreuves, toutes les douleurs, tous les dangers: le devoir des femmes est de nous laisser agir, de prier pour nous et de fortifier leur âme contre les malheurs qui les peuvent atteindre." (88, Flavio)

To function well in such a rôle, a woman must be possessed of particular qualities. The narrator of Les Gamineries de Madame Rivière says,

> Elles sont rares, les femmes qui abdiquent tout, sauf leur dignité, pour s'associer au malheur et qui se grandissent par le dévouement absolu et par la résignation; conscientes de leurs actes, ayant mesuré du premier coup d'oeil l'étendue du sacrifice, et se fortifiant au lieu de s'affaiblir, devant un sacrifice plus énorme encore que celui sur lequel elles avaient compté. Mères, soeurs, amies, épouses et maîtresses tout à la fois pour les malheureux qu'elles ont entrepris de secourir, souriantes toujours et dissimulant leurs larmes quand il leur arrive d'en verser, non sur le sacrifice qu'elles accomplissent, mais sur le compagnon de chaîne qu'elles se sont donné!
> Ah! Elles sont rares, les femmes qui fixent courageusement les yeux sur la pauvreté, la défient et regardent sans trop de souci leurs belles mains se déformer petit à petit aux rudes travaux du pain quotidien, qui voient blanchir leurs cheveux avant l'âge, et leur front se rider, qui se font ni peine ni gloire de leur simplicité, et se défendent quand le mari les plaint ou tente de mêler à leur tendresse, la reconnaissance pourtant de dévouement. Bénies soient celles-là! [11]

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[11] Paris: E. Dentu, 1874, pp. 270-271 - hereafter cited as Gamineries in parentheses following quotations.

The heroine, then, is a woman possessing devotion of various types: religious, domestic, maternal, filial--and all with humility; she is the epitome of self-sacrifice and lovingness; she is called upon, in the plan of things, to exercise her qualities and virtues in the elevation of others, usually men. With such qualities and in such a rôle, she advances in wisdom, age, and in a pale and melancholy beauty which emanates from the soul.

Eyma's heroines are Griselda figures: patient and long-suffering, bearing all with meekness and humility. They are blends of two types of heroine: that of the sentimental tradition, and of the contes moraux. Their delicacy, frailty, propriety, decorum, and melancholia stem from the sentimental tradition. "The genteel female was the sweet taskmaster to awe by her holy beauty the wayward and the vicious. She was, to borrow a familiar figure, a sensitive plant in a garden of noxious weeds."[12] Their relationship to sisters of the eighteenth-century conte moral rests in their unselfishness and generosity; their gratitude to benefactors. They are like them in their various types of devotion, and in their courageousness in a great love that could carry them through any misfortune. They accept tribulation in the conviction that it enhances one's being.[13] The Eyma heroine was

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[12]Herbert Ross Brown, The Sentimental Novel in America, 1789-1860 (Duke, 1940), p. 113.

[13]Dorothy M. McGhee, The Cult of the "Conte Moral" (St.Paul, 1960), p. 65.

a well-known, reliable, popular and loved type.

In return for her sacrifices and self-abnegation the heroine receives a hero whose qualities complement hers. He is first and foremost a platonic lover, placing his loved one on a pedestal and worshipping her from afar. What is his conception of woman?

> La femme aimée doit être à nos yeux sacrée. Enfermée en notre coeur comme en un tabernacle, il faut l'élever si haut au-dessus de la terre et l'approcher si près du ciel, que le bruit de nos passions n'arrive pas jusqu'à ses oreilles, et que les éclaboussures de la fange qui souille nos pieds ne puissent pas ternir sa pureté de diamant. Tout est précieux en elle; un regard perdu, un cheveu envolé, un sourire égaré, une pression de main aliénée, sont autant de trésors dont on dépouille l'amant ou le mari...Ô femmes! pour l'homme qui vous bénira et vous adoréra comme vous le méritez, ne laissez jamais volontairement une souillure humaine tomber sur vous! Gardez-lui tout; et jusque dans la pensée que vous élevez à Dieu, faites-lui une large part encore, même de Dieu il pourrait être jaloux. (31-32, Emmanuel)

For the "femme aimée," or for any damsel in distress, he is ready to sacrifice all; all women are to be respected and served by any man worthy of the name. In Le Testament d'Henri, for example, Paul Perrard comes to the rescue of a complete stranger. Louise was bothered on the street "par un de ces désoeuvrés que toute femme rencontre sur ses pas... un jeune homme d'une trentaine d'années, simplement mis, d'un extérieur prévenant, au visage calme, réfléchi, sérieux" comes to her rescue.

> Il avait entendu et compris ce suprême appel de la femme outragée...---Mademoiselle, lui dit-il, ne redoutez plus rien, je marche à vos côtés. Et jusqu'où il vous plaira que je vous accompagne, je veillerai sur vous. (83, Testament)

Not only is the hero courageous and valient in his deeds, but he is willing to sacrifice security and fortune for the woman he loves. Lucien explains to Bastienne that he had claimed her benefactor's farm (La Féconde) in order to offer a fortune in exchange for her hand in marriage--realizing that Bastienne didn't have "le droit de résister à la volonté de votre bienfaiteur."[14] Happiness, too, is ready for sacrifice on the altar of a woman's honor, integrity, and sense of commitment; witness Emmanuel, who never questions or tempts his beloved Marguerite though she has unwillingly married another man during Emmanuel's absence. Marguerite is committed, and far be it from Emmanuel to suggest she weaken--though his own happiness is at stake. Rather, he becomes a priest. "Et Marguerite présenta aux baisers du prêtre les têtes blondes de deux charmans enfans. Jamais un mot du passé ne fut prononcé entre eux." (208, Emmanuel)

The hero, like the heroine, is defined by stock gestures which indicate his platonic conception of woman. When Octave is about to confess his love for Louise, he falls on his knees before her and exclaims, "Je vous aime comme vous êtes digne qu'on vous aime, à genoux dans l'humilité et la reconnaissance d'un coeur ébloui." (147, Testament) Or again, in Le Roi des Tropiques, La Pierrière evidences the same type of devotion as,

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[14] Les Amoureux de la démoiselle (Paris, E. Dentu, 1877), p. 72 - hereafter cited as Amoureux in parentheses following quotations.

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> En entrant dans la pièce où se tenait Marie qui, agenouillée et en prières, se releva au bruit de leurs pas, calme, fière, belle de paleur, d'émotion, de dignité,--en entrant, dis-je, La Pierrière tomba aux pieds de cette femme outragée et trahie.[15]

The physical reactions of the hero betray the condition of his heart.

The Eyma hero is of the same cloth as the Eyma heroine: as she is pure, so he is platonic; as she trusts and submits, so he is courageous and responsible; as she cares for her family, so he cares for her; as she prays to God, so he finds God in her purity and innocence; as she sheds tears of joy or sorrow, so he sees no threat to masculinity in tears. The rough and rugged Grimer grips the cross of Suzanne's mother and "la serra saintement sur son coeur, et s'éloigna les joues trempées de larmes." (240, Larcher)

What of the exterior of these valiant heroes? It corresponds to that of the heroine. The romantic hero is slight, pensive, and melancholy in appearance, suggesting the introspective, sensitive nature of Chateaubriand's René or Saint-Pierre's Paul.

> Emmanuel portait dans ses yeux bleus un peu caves, signe d'une profonde méditation, dans son visage blond et légèrement amaigri, dans la sérénité de son front, dans la mélodie de sa voix, sur ses lèvres toujours riantes, comme je l'ai dit, cette espèce de souffle divin qui fait croire que la providence a ses favoris parmi nous. Il possédait tant d'affabilité, de grâces

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[15]Paris: Michel Lévy, 1860, p. 124 - hereafter cited as Roi in parentheses following quotations.

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> et de bienveillance, qu'il n'était personne qui ne l'aimât au premier abord, et qu'il n'est pas un ami qui n'ait mêlé des pleurs sincères aux larmes qu'il a versées. (10, Emmanuel)

The sentimental hero retains many of the external qualities of a romantic hero, while bearing the marks of a more active, less brooding nature. Lucien Colombier, for example,

> avait une mine de citadin plutôt que de compagnard... il portait l'habit de chasse avec aisance; la grosse guêtre de cuir n'empêchait pas sa jambe d'avoir bon air; la veste de velours dessinait avec avantage sa taille; sa moustache blonde retroussée se détachait avec finesse sur son visage un peu brûlé et ses mains, sans être d'une blancheur et d'une douceur feminines, n'avaient que la rudesse de l'homme qui passe volontiers sa vie en plein soleil. Dans son ensemble, c'était ce qu'on appelle un garçon bien planté, et que les filles ne regardaient pas d'un oeil précisément indifférent. (13, Amoureux)

Comte Philippe de Sabran is exemplary of the romantic-sentimental hero in a comic vein,

> "Ce voyageur mélancolique...était un jeune homme de trente-cinq ans environ; d'une beauté mâle et d'une élégance exceptionnelle, même sous ses habits souillés par la route. Il avait la mine fière, mais d'une fierté temperée en tout temps par une douceur charmante, et que les dispositions d'esprit où il se trouvait rendaient, comme on dit, intéressante. Il avait l'oeil bien ouvert, le regard humide et tendre; sa lèvre supérieure cachée par une moustache fine et bien taillée d'habitude..." (1, Manoirs)

In a phrase, these men are masculine but sensitive, even when concealing their romantic-sentimental nature beneath a rather gruff and sometimes exotic exterior. Such are the heroes of Eyma's adventure stories. The chevalier Grimer is typical. He

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> cachaient une vigueur et une énergie peu communes. Dans ce corps grêle habitait une âme forte, bien trempée, pleine d'honnêté et de tendresse...Grimer avait la tête nue; et un bandage de toile blanche enveloppait son front tout fraîchement ouvert par une large et profonde blessure. (227, Larcher)

Even more glorious and exotic is DeNambuc, who had, among other things, "traits mâles et bien accentués, rehaussés par une cicatrice glorieuse un peu au-dessus de la tempe droite." (2, Roi)

The hero, then, be he romantic, sentimental, or adventurous, is identified by certain distinct qualities. If his courage and daring are evident from his appearance, his tenderness and devotion, his pensive and melancholy aspects will be revealed by his tears, his gestures, his deeds. If his sentimental nature is betrayed by his melancholy eyes and soft, appealing features, his courage and daring will appear in his efforts to rescue threatened women or to sacrifice all for the woman he loves. The character of the hero is constant; his gestures and appearance place him within a particular tradition or a combination of traditions. He thus becomes all things to all heroines.

The Eyma "anti-hero" and "anti-heroine" are, of course, polar opposites of the hero and heroine. Villains are selfishly ambitious, and are unmoved by love, patriotism, or honor. They will use any means to achieve selfish ends, as does Lady Hamilton when she uses the poor Leonora as a pawn in political intrigue in Le Roman de Flavio. A villain does not become so in Eyma's work; he is so a priori and is immediately recognizable. DuRossey, for example,

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> était débraillé au physique comme au moral; ses traits cyniques trahissaient la débauche; sa parole était décousue au moins autant que son pourpoint. Dans le délabrement de sa mise, il y avait quelque chose d'affecté et de goguenard à la fois. (3, Roi)

Lady Hamilton typifies the evil woman of Eyma's fiction. She is the only female figure who fails to respond to the inherent bond between mother and child; coincident with this failure is an absence in her demeanor of the traits of an Eyma heroine. When she learns that the dead Leonora was her daughter, she

> tomba sur ses genoux; mais soit émotion vraie, soit orgueil, elle ne trouva pas une parole à prononcer; pas un mot de regret ou de remords ne sortit de ses lèvres. Ses yeux rougis ne laissèrent pas couler une larme. L'abîme au fond duquel elle regardait était trop profond pour qu'elle y pût rien voir. (246, Flavio)

Some general statements regarding characterization in Eyma's fiction can be made. First and most obvious is the fact that Eyma deals in types rather than in individuals. Both the exterior and interior of characters are drawn from stock long since developed in French literature. They are a blend of romantic, sentimental, and bourgeois types which had pleased French readers during various periods. They are romantically melancholy, sentimentally tearful, and operate in solid, middle-class fashion. They represent the personal values of the rising bourgeoisie, though embodying a concept of duty and honor worthy of their Neo-classical predecessors. That is to say, their integrity is often based on abstract values rather than on utilitarian ends; virtue is exercised

for its own sake rather than for the sake of reputation and personal gain.

Secondly, the Eyma character is revealed and marked by stock gestures and phrases. When in love, he falls at the feet of the loved one; when in danger, he brandishes his sword; when in mental anguish, he sheds tears; when confronted with a choice, he chooses honorably.

Finally, the Eyma character is a set rather than an evolutionary figure. The hero is immediately recognizable as such; the villain is immediately tagged. From start to finish of any tale, he is as he is; this "given" determines his actions and reactions, making him a perfectly predictable sort. Character reveals action rather than action revealing character. He is an absolute unity, inside and out, and can be trusted to act in a manner consonant with the reader's first impression of him. Therefore the most unsophisticated reader is capable of understanding him and even identifying with him.

Stock though they be, these personages are placed within situations which make particular demands upon them. Within a relatively limited number of plot-situations the Eyma character works out his destiny. Situations test virtue and vice, eliciting the beauty of the former and the repulsiveness of the latter.

A favorite plot-structure of Eyma's pits innocence against experience, thereby testing innocence and allowing it to conquer. In La Mansarde de Rose a backwoods, innocent

young man, Adrien, is sent to Paris, the land of experience, where his virtue is tried; his mind opened to evil; his path sorely shaken by his new and unsalutary environment. In Le Testament d'Henri the inexperienced Octave Lorrain is confronted with the frivolous life of the cynical Henri, and is thereby tempted from the path of virtue. In Sophie Bernard a young woman is enticed from her parents' side by the encouragement of an experienced theatrical agent. Again and again the pattern repeats itself:the young and naive confront a world of frivolity and debauchery, and are strengthened and confirmed by the confrontation.

This plot-situation has existed in French literature since at least the eighteenth century. The writers of the conte moral delighted in the contagion of blandishment. City life corrupts, as do riches, fortune, and ambition; and eighteenth-century writers felt called upon to preach against these. The solutions generally offered were either flight from the city, or a gathering of strength to resist contagion.[16] Contagion is ubiquitous in Eyma's fiction; the virtuous overcome by gathering their strength about them.

Eyma often places characters in an impoverished situation wherein devotion to labor, honor, and pure ideal is tested. The hero of Emmanuel finds, not happiness, but salvation in the necessity to support his poor mother. In her poverty rests his glory; from her poverty evolve virtuous,

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[16]McGhee, Cult, p. 14.

altruistic acts. Rose of La Mansarde de Rose "travaille jour et nuit, une vertueuse et chaste enfant à qui le rire est inconnu, à qui la joie est comme défendu..." (25) In La Veuve Catherine the heroine is subjected to abject poverty; she "avait dû travailler pour deux, avoir du courage, de la force, de la santé pour deux." (89) Though her struggle against poverty has hardened her hands; though the sun has burned and toughened her skin, "Catherine frappait vivement par un ensemble de lignes pures, douces, et sympathiques." (90) The confrontation of solid character with poverty permits the consolations and beauties of labor to shine, while testing character and proving it sufficient to the challenge. Such plots dramatize the truism that virtue cannot be won without temptation and trial.

A conflict between love and one's station in life provides a third plot-situation. Pierre Branchon loves his foster-sister to distraction; because adopted by the Terrière family from parents of low station, he thinks himself unworthy of Pauline's hand in marriage. From this conflict evolves Pierre's exercise of virtuous self-sacrifice. He devotes himself to Pauline without her knowledge, and without hope of consolation, reward, or recognition. "Mon rôle... est de veiller sur eux et de près, sans que ma présence soit même soupçonnée."[17]

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[17]"P.P.C.," Les Gamineries de Madame Rivière (Paris: E. Dentu, 1874), p. 323.

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In Thérèse Lorrain the noble Henri falls irrevocably in love with Thérèse, but battles this emotion because of Thérèse's low station in life; Henri met her at an inn, where she was waiting table. It is not until Henri discovers that Thérèse is of noble parentage that he listens to his heart and marries her. There is but one instance in Eyma's fiction of a character marrying beneath herself: Clotilde's marriage to Jacques in Les Gamineries de Madame Rivière violates the rules of social organization. And the good Jacques pays dearly for such an alliance. Virtue demands, indeed includes, decorum; a liaison between people of different social class is not decorous, and in fact invites disaster.

At times Eyma turns to classical and suggestively Biblical situations as pivots for his tales. A most interesting example of a classical (or Neo-classical) plot is found in Betzy Murlay. (And, I might add, this is one of Eyma's better stories, largely because the characters, though stock, are motivated by ideals rather than sentiments.) The main characters, Betzy and Joseph, are caught in a tragic conflict between love and honor. Though they love one another, honor dictates that Joseph murder Betzy's father; in turn, Betzy must murder her beloved Joseph. Honor demands revenge. Betzy cries, "J'ai vengé mon père, s'écria-t-elle, et j'ai sauvé mon frère..." (276) The conflict of love, honor, and duty makes of Betzy an Antigone or Electra. The passions which motivate her are those of a Greek tragic heroine--though they are less artistically developed, to be sure!

Monsieur Caïn has Biblical overtones, as indeed the title itself suggests.[18] The depraved Cain was named Abel at birth, but the good Abel was, figuratively, killed by the reprehensible Cain (who, by implication, lives inside of everyone). It is only when the Abel-face of Caïn is recognized by a friend; only when Caïn is again called Abel, that the good figure emerges once again. By resort to a quasi-Biblical situation, Eyma evolves an interesting character study.

The plots of Eyma's historical fiction inhere in the materials themselves. Flavio's situation in Le Roman de Flavio is that of the Neopolitain uprisings of 1798. Clara's conflict in Le Masque blanc[19] is the Irish Catholic--Protestant conflict of 1701. The rocky political straits of Aventuriers et Corsaires,[20] and of Le Grand Cordon et la corde[21] are part and parcel of the historical matter of Martinique and the Antilles. In Eyma's historical fiction, however, an almost inordinate emphasis on historical figures, as opposed to political events and conflicts, suggests an overriding concern with character rather than plot.

In fact, Eyma's plots are tools used to set characters in action, allowing them operate, for better or worse, in a

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[18] In Les Amoureux de la démoiselle (Paris: E. Dentu, 1877) - hereafter cited as Cain in parentheses following quotations.

[19] Paris: Impr. de Prève, 1853.

[20] Paris: Michel Lévy, 1861.

[21] Paris: n.p.n.d.

given context. If the situation involves conflict between love and honor or duty; if virtue in the face of poverty is the issue; if innocence confronts experience; if love conflicts with station in life, the emphasis is constant. Plot exists for the sake of character. It is within the context of given events and situations that man runs order through chaos and so reveals himself. Eyma was evidently a sort of humanist: man is king and lord of the entire creation; he succeeds or fails depending upon his response to the situation in which he finds--discovers--himself.

Structurally, the majority of Eyma's plots unroll in the same manner. A story begins with the delineation of the character of the central figure. He is the first to come on stage, as it were. He is then placed in a context which indicates his happiness, melancholia, trouble or joy--but the reasons for his mood and manner are temporarily left to the reader's imagination. Next, a character grouping is arranged, further emphasizing the pre-ordained nature of the hero or heroine. Friction and sub-plots involving other characters set heroes and heroines and the central situation in relief. This accomplished, a flashback, often of extraordinary length, reveals the past of the central figure and hints at a mysterious relationship to the group with whom he is about to interact. The reader is then pulled forward into the present and the plot unrolls. As the central figure acts and reacts to events and characters, various inter-relationships become clear. These in turn advance the

usual denouement, wherein the problematical situation in which we first found the hero, and which created his mood and manner, is resolved. In most instances the central figure lives happily ever after. A major plot is, of course, frequently enriched by sub-plots which are resolved simultaneously with the major conflict.

La Mansarde de Rose illustrates this general structure. Adrien, an "innocence versus experience" figure is sent to Paris for purposes of initiation and apprenticeship. He becomes involved with Abricotine, a temptress from the path of labor and righteousness. Next, contrasting figures are introduced: the reprehensible Robillon, a man who "essuyé des gouttes de sueur grosses comme le doigt qui lui roulaient sur le front." (6), and his friends. To provide a contrast with Abricotine, Rose is introduced. Hence certain tensions are established: Adrien versus the like of Robillon; Rose versus the like of Abricotine; one way of life versus another. Then comes the flashback: we learn of Rose's miserable past, her impoverished state, her humility, gratitude, and self-sacrificing spirit. During the flashback a sub-plot evolves: Julien, the son of Rose's foster parents, is leading a dissipated existence in Paris--precisely the existence to which Adrien, our hero, will succumb if he continues with Abricotine. Moving back into the present, the reader finds Julien continuing his debauchery with one Dahlia, and Adrien flirting with the periphery of this clique. But the

resolution of the conflict begins: Rose acts the rôle of redemptress; through her virtuous example Adrien returns to the straight and narrow--though not without an intermittent fall because of the machinations of one Irène, who is later brought to her better senses by the good Rose. Step by step "le naufragé (Adrien) avait gagné le rivage." (175) Such a resume of Eyma's structural technique is, of course, an oversimplification. Nonetheless, it indicates the manner in which Eyma's stories evolve.

Much to the dismay of the twentieth-century reader, Eyma uses numerous devices in resolving the plot. They are characteristic of the literature of his time, insofar as their repeated use has reduced them to the level of devices. Because Eyma's plots are frequently complicated by various character groupings moving on various levels, inter-relationships must be created for the sake of unity. Generally, the unifying thread is a character of mysterious parentage, an orphan, who is discovered to be related to at least one character in each group. In Le Roman de Flavio, for example, Zeïda is discovered to be the daughter of Lady Hamilton and Lord Acton; in this way the gypsy group in which Zeïda was raised is unexpectedly bound up with the power group attempting to rule Naples. Or again, in Mademoiselle Topaze Marguerite is discovered to be the sister of Donatien, thereby linking the Topaze-Saint-Phar-Donatien set to the Marguerite-Bernard twosome.

Stock devices, such as letters and jewelry, often give the clue to identity. In the case of Mademoiselle Topaze, a letter left with the abandoned Marguerite reveals her relationship to Donatien. Zeïda's identity is established by a medal held in her death grip, and which Lord Acton recognizes as his daughter's. (Flavio) Thérèse Lorrain's noble parentage is established by the half-bracelet in her possession. (Thérèse)

Where orphans fail, coincidence succeeds in introducing characters to one another. And Eyma manages extreme coincidences, thus resolving problems or rendering scenes more touching. It just so happens that Donatien is passing Marguerite's home at the very moment she calls out for help against the advances of Saint-Phar. (Topaze) By sheer coincidence, the beautiful phantom whom Octave loves on first sight is the good Louise. The final moments of Le Roman de Flavio are rendered more melodramatic when Zeïda, rushing into a bloody fray in the streets of Naples, witnesses the gory death of Moraïm, a gypsy who formerly worshipped her. Such touches abound in Eyma's fiction.

The narrator of Eyma's fiction is often the vehicle of much eighteenth- and nineteenth-century stock-in-trade. Generally the narrator is omniscient--in fact, much too omniscient. He speaks when silence is preferable; explains acts whose import is self-evident; destroys mystery and adventure by premature revelations of the course of action. "Disons quelques mots de ce voyageur mélancolique" (1, Manoirs),

says the narrator, when the words themselves would suffice. In Jean Larcher, upon hearing Suzanne's story of the attack of a ship, Grimer "s'arrêta naturellement à ce soupçon que nous savons être parfaitement fondé..." (239). Because the narrator assures us that Grimer's suspicions are perfectly correct, the possibilities of a mystery plot are destroyed and the story becomes primarily, if not solely, a character study. Eyma's narrators are often undesirably super-omniscient.

The narrators of Eyma's fiction have several other characteristics. They attempt to create a certain suspense by rather obvious foreshadowing.

> Quelle pente de la vie avait conduit Pierre Placide et Louise Saulnier au degré où nous prenons leurs existences confondues? C'est ce que l'on apprendra en temps opportun. En attendant, nous les laisserons se donner les noms de père et de fille. (81, Testament)

Of course, we discover later that Louise is an orphan.

Narrators frequently escape demanding situations by a conventional modesty.

> Il faudrait le crayon de Callot ou la plume de Scarron pour peindre et décrire cet assemblage grotesque et renfrogné, cet amas de laideur, de misère, d'oripeaux, de beauté flétrie, de dorures usées, d'habits troués, rapiécés et rapiécetés, de dégradation morale et de dégradation physique, de saleté et de puanteur... (17-18, Flavio)

If modesty provides no exit, a supposed frequency of presentation does.

> Si je voulais décrire les sites, les vallées, les beaux points de vue qui entouraient cette charmante habitation, on me dirait sans doute que cela

> ressemble à toutes les descriptions faites ou à faire sur les maisons de campagne de tous les pays; aussi je m'en dispense.[22]

Be it for reasons of decorum, artistic weakness, or limitations of space, the narrator frequently excuses himself from description of conflicts. "On connait assez le caractère de Larcher pour que je n'aie pas besoin de décrire l'épouvantable scène qui se passa." (249, Larcher)

A final characteristic of the Eyma narrator is his tendency to philosophical generalizations based on events in the lives of characters.[23] When the hero of Emmanuel realizes that he must sacrifice personal ambitions to support an impoverished mother, the narrator states,

> C'est encore une des conditions déplorables de la vie, que d'être frappés souvent au coeur par ceux qui voudraient ne nous couvrir que de tendresses. (60)

Or he admonishes, in lines such as, "Imprudente, qui ne savait pas que ce miel de l'amour si doux qu'il soit, lorsqu'il a effleuré le bout des lèvres, empoisonne..." (26, Emmanuel)

In sum, the Eyma narrator is a jack of all trades. He directs the reader in conclusions to be drawn from actions and events. He indulges in philosophizing, moralizing,

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[22]"Un Méchant Homme," Les Poches de mon parrain (Paris: E. Maillet, 1863), p. 14.

[23]Paul Van Tieghem, in "Le Roman Sentimental en Europe de Richardson à Rousseau" (Revue de la Littérature Comparée, april-juin, 1940), lists as characteristic of the sentimental novel this tendency to interrupt recitations with moral reflections. He attributes it to the influence of Marivaux.

and secret revelations. His comments foreshadow events and hint at mysterious relationships. He is both omniscient and omnipresent; even the sparse dialogue of Eyma's fiction is reinforced by the narrator's direction and commentary.

Should the narrator fail to present foreshadowings, the physical reactions of characters give the clue to future events and relationships. In Le Roman de Flavio, Lord Acton is jealous of Leonora's love, "comme si cette petite bohémienne était sa propre fille (106); and he "accouru à son secours avec une inquiétude toute paternelle." (124) On the final page of the story we discover, of course, that Lord Acton is indeed Leonora's father. When Sophie Bernard arrives at the home of her pseudo-benefactor she "eut un frisson de terreur au moment où la voiture s'arrêta devant une maison."[24] Hence the hand is tipped and the reader knows that trouble is in store for Sophie. Given the narrator and the reactions of characters, the reader never wanders unguided in Eyma's fictional world.

In historical fiction, Eyma takes pains to make his historicity abundantly clear. He attests to his accuracy by references within the body of the work itself, or appends footnotes. Eyma devotes the first eight pages of Le Roi des Tropiques to consideration of historic conflicts in the Antilles. In the same work he footnotes factual data, such as

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[24]"Sophie Bernard," Les Amoureux de la démoiselle (Paris: E. Dentu, 1877), p. 193.

"Seigneurs de la Compagnie des Îles de l'Amérique...Entre autres personnages influents, le duc de Luynes, le Marquis d'Aligre..." (73). In Le Grand Cordon et La Corde Eyma notes, "Tous les noms que nous citons sont historiques." Such indicates Eyma's deep concern with accurate historical rendering of events. His artistry is employed only in the selection of material, and in the cloaking of historical personages in sentimental dress and gestures.

But through artistry Eyma creates extremely typical historical fiction. M. G. Devonshire quotes the following from a French critic:

> "Prenez un amant inconnu, que vous faites arrêter dans un demi-volume, dans les auberges ou les couvents, selon l'époque; prenez une jeune femme mystérieuse; ayez une vieille sorcière, des évocations, des incendies, des assassinats, des châtelains bardés de fer, ou des gentilhommes en velours, des tourelles et des clairs de lune; hachez le tout menu en chapitres; mêlez avec beaucoup de couleur locale, sauce obligée, et servez chaud...s'il est possible." 25

This summarizes, in outline if not in each detail, Eyma's historical fiction. He was working very much within a particular literary tradition.

Eyma's efforts to describe inanimate objects and to create atmosphere should be considered. We have seen that a narrator often withdraws from descriptive duties with modest interjections. But at times he does rise to the occasion and

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[25] Anon., quoted in M. G. Devonshire, The English Novel in France, 1830-1870 (London, 1929), pp. 166-167.

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describes interiors and quartiers. The section of Paris in which Adrien lives is typical of Eyma's descriptive tendencies.

> De haut en bas, les maisons y sont habitées par des négociants, marchands en gros, fabricants grands et petits, une Babel de travail, d'activité et aussi de langues...les façades de maisons, les corniches, les intervalles des croisées, sont couverts de larges écritaux portant les noms des locataires et l'indication de leur industrie. Les murs extérieurs semblent faits de bois peint ou de tôle bariolée bien plutôt que de pierres de taille et de moellons. (3, Mansarde)

This description is characterized by a single appeal--that of the visual. There is no effort to appeal to tactile values; no effort of any strength to create mood or environment evocative of character or action. The description of Irène's apartment, in the same story, attempts some reflection of Irène's personality; yet its failure finds weak compensation in the narrator's comment, "dans les moindres détails enfin de cette pièce, on sentait la vie de tous les jours, on devinait le contact de tous les instants." (85, Mansarde) One has only to think of Balzac's artistic handling of setting and description to realize the weakness of Eyma's "telling," rather than "showing," technique.

The weakness of Eyma's descriptions can be attributed in part, perhaps, to his experience with vaudevilles. Often his settings seem designed for the stage rather than for fiction. Take, for example, the following description in L'Echeveau de Laine:

> En quelques mots, disons de la disposition de ce salon ce qui est nécessaire à l'intelligence de cette histoire. Dans l'un des angles, celui de droite, un guéridon chargé de livres et d'une corbeille entourée par un paravent, une autre table avec tout ce qui est nécessaire pour écrire, comme on dit en style de mise en scène. Le guéridon était placé dans la partie du salon voisine de l'appartement de la marquise; l'autre table dans celle attenante à l'appartement de M. de Loclé, et tout à fait dans le fond, à côté d'une grande porte, une croisée qui ouvrait sur la cour de l'hôtel.[26]

From a critical point of view, the key words in this quotation may be "en style de mise en scène." Indeed, Eyma seems to give only the detail necessary to verisimilitude. His descriptions, much like his characterizations, are generalized. Abstractions rather than particularities mark his work.

It is interesting to note, in this connection, that Eyma's work fits rather well into the typical pattern of eighteenth-century melodrama. Four characters were essential: a tyrant or traitor soiled by all possible vices and bad passions; an unhappy woman with all possible virtues; an honest man, protector of the innocent; and a comic figure. The melodramatic style included an abundance of moral maxims and epithets. And novels were strongly influenced by this tradition--witness Ducray-Duminil, Madame de Genlis, and Madame Cottin with "la vertu, si vertueuse qu'elle est exaspérante."[27] Not all of Eyma's fiction

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[26] In Les Deux Manoirs (Paris: Lécrivain et Toubon, 1860), p. 28.

[27] Paul Ginisty, Le Mélodrame (Paris, n.d.), p. 16.

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includes a comic figure, but the other characteristics are present, and suggest that not only vaudeville, but also the melodrama played a rôle in the shaping of his fiction.

From situations, structure, characterization and narration a number of themes and motifs emerge. Eyma's greatest thematic concern is with the value of labor, its beauty and redemptive nature. The good man is the working man and, conversely, idle hands and minds are the devil's playground. Heroines labor ceaselessly, usually in attic rooms blessed and irradiated by work. In Le Testament d'Henri the admirable Paul Perrard "avait deviné une gêne courageuse dans cet intérieur laborieux" of Louise's home. The pale, frail, and diligent Rose is sustained by her work in La Mansarde de Rose. The narrator tells us:

> Le travail, ce sûr consolateur, cet ami de toutes les douleurs, et de toutes les souffrances, n'avait jamais manqué au rendez-vous que Rose lui assignait. Il n'avait jamais non plus permis ni à l'oisiveté ni au désoeuvrement de s'asseoir au chevet de la jeune fille; à peine consentait-il à faire au repos la place qui lui appartient au foyer de toute vie. (29)

Even in the early Emmanuel (1841) the praises of labor are sung. In the preface we learn that those who "aiment encore l'art et le travail" (viii) will generously accept the novel.

Admirable, virtuous characters respect and accept labor; the unvirtuous and contemptible are idle. Character after character succumbs to sloth, and hence degradation. Anatole, the "méchant homme" of a short story of the same name, succumbs to evil desires in spite of, or because of,

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the leisure which his foster-father has allowed him. In La Mansarde de Rose, Adrien's degradation is provoked by a retreat from his profession. "Le travail lui est impossible maintenant, car il est abruti par le désoeuvrement et par l'amour." (165) The evil Abricotine gives the clue to the process of degradation: "Tant qu'il reste au coeur d'un homme l'amour de la famille ou le sentiment d'un devoir de conscience à remplir, il nous échappe toujours. Les fainéants, les flâneurs, les désoeuvrés, voilà notre proie." (71)

Labor has a redemptive quality; it rehabilitates the fallen man. Because "ce grand ressort, le goût du travail," remains intact in Monsieur Caïn, he is able to reassert his Abel-face. Adrien "avait gagné le rivage" by a return to regulated and industrious habits. The narrator tells the reader that

> Pour tout être humain il y a un refuge à tous les malheurs, à toutes les fautes: le travail qui ennoblit toujours et réhabilite souvent les plus déchus. C'est un rude consolateur que celui-là, il est vrai, qui n'épargne pas les souffrances et les douleurs, et qui met le peu aux chairs pour guérir les blessures;--une sorte de bourru bienfaisant,--si j'osais dire,--qui donne d'une main et châtie de l'autre. (121, Mansarde)

Labor, then, is a measure of virtue; a necessity to clean living; a tool which rehabilitates the fallen man and sustains the righteous. The narrator of La Mansarde de Rose summarizes the attitude toward labor in the whole of Eyma's fiction:

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> Tandis que les gens pauvres et condamnés au travail à perpétuité regrettent, dans leurs heures de lassitude, la fortune qui, seule, disent-ils, donne l'indépendance, les riches prévoyants considèrent, au contraire, le travail comme la seule indépendance et la seule richesse immuable; c'est, en tout cas, disent-ils, une corde excellente à attacher à l'arc fragile de la fortune. (3-4)

The good example of another person, and preferably that of a female, is a motif which accompanies that of the beauty of labor. A virtuous, laborious life benefits all who come into contact with it. Thus Rose functions as a source of grace for a Madeleine figure, Irène; Rose will teach her "l'amour du travail" and thereby the way to "remonter par la voie qu'elle a suivie, l'échelle du bien..." (207, Mansarde) Through this same Rose, Adrien is redeemed. "Le spectacle d'une conscience pure, d'une vie calme, d'un coeur fort et sur de lui" (168) prompts Adrien to seek his father's pardon and to return to work. Topaze, of Mademoiselle Topaze, shows "un insolent mépris pour tout ce qui n'est pas éblouissant;" but when she meets a good and generous man, "la créature dégradée se relève et redevient femme." (5) Or the help of a friend can radically change the direction of a fallen man's life, as in the case of Monsieur Caïn. "La bonté d'un seul m'a fait oublier la méchanceté ou le mauvais vouloir de tous!"(300, Caïn) This motif points to the importance of environment in the development and reinforcement of desirable traits of character.

Yet the "good example" motif is clouded by an at least apparent confusion of the effects of heredity and

environment. In some of Eyma's fiction, environment largely shapes the man; therefore good example is efficacious grace. In other instances a brand of Calvinistic determinism seems prevalent. Predestination and free will are thematic concerns, but the rhetoric of Eyma's fiction creates a confusion of emphasis and direction.

La Mansarde de Rose typifies the sort of story in which all action points to environment as the shaper of men; yet rhetoric confuses the issue. Adrien falls in with evil companions in Paris; because of their influence he slips from the straight and narrow and begins a life of frivolity and debauchery. When the good example of Rose becomes operative, not only Adrien but two of his companions are redeemed and return to a well-ordered existence. As bad example was destructive, so good example was salutary; it remained only for Adrien and his friends to respond to the witness of Rose. Yet suddenly we come upon the following:

> Prenons la route de droite, ou le chemin de gauche, nous devons toujours arriver au but que Dieu nous a marqué. Faisons couler les larmes de ceux qui nous entourent, torturons leur coeur, brisons leur âme, éteignons leurs espérances, couvrons leurs jours de luttes inutiles, vaines résistances, cruautés, gratuités, douleurs et larmes dont le remords pèse sur soi seul! Nous n'obtenons rien de plus, rien de moins que le lot qui nous a été réservé par Dieu. (119-120)

Hence the narrator confuses the issue of the story's action. Adrien in fact returns to the good life by way of the example of Rose, yet the narrator seems to imply that such was predestined by God rather than freely chosen by Adrien. Other characters fail to rise to the challenge of Rose's life.

Julien, for example, dies a miserable death; though he knew of Rose's virtue, he chose to remain in the company of unsalutary companions. Or did he choose? This the reader is unable to ascertain, for action and rhetoric contradict one another.

In some of Eyma's fiction, however, the issue is little confused within single tales, though the heart of the matter, predestination or free will, changes from tale to tale. In Monsieur Caïn, for example, the kindness and love of a friend effects a transformation in Caïn. Nothing in the story suggests that Caïn was predestined to a good end; rather, the narrator wonders if Caïn will opt the straight and narrow. The same is true in Le Testament d'Henri. Henri is obviously free to continue his frivolous existence or to respond to an inner urge when,

> "en contemplant sa riche bibliothèque...Henri s'était pris à regretter l'usage malsain qu'il avait fait de son intelligence, de sa jeunesse, de sa fortune...et s'apercevait que le néant se faisait autour de lui." (101)

He renounces his slothful ways and sets out upon an industrious, virtuous life. Both of these stories suggest, without equivocation, that man is not predestined, but is free to transcend and transform his environment.

Madame Rivière's fortunes, however, are consonant in act and in rhetoric with Calvinistic determinism. No love is capable of releasing Madame Rivière from the destructive influence of her blood, her heredity. She was formed, it is true, by her environment; the narrator says,

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"on ne se défait jamais absolument des influences de la première enfance et des exemples que l'on a eus sous les yeux." (63, Gamineries) But she is ultimately and irrevocably determined, in both her acts and the rhetoric of the story, by her heredity, which is transmitted to her daughter, Clotilde. Clotilde married Jacques, and the example he provides should be sufficient to repentance. Yet the narrator asks,

> Qu'est-ce que le péché originel, sinon cette transmission de génération en génération de la marque fatale où chaque race se retrouve? La malédiction antique qui s'étendait jusqu'à la septième génération du maudit, que signifiait-elle sinon que la responsabilité allait se perpétuant? Non la responsibilité des actes, mais la transmission de l'une à l'autre génération du vice qui a engendré ces actes...c'était, en effet, le sang de sa mère qui avait parlé en Clotilde lorsqu'elle s'était, à première vue en quelque sorte, senti un penchant irréfléchi pour Jacques. C'était encore le sang de sa mère qui avait parlé... (272-273)

It is the good Jacques himself who confirms the narrator's evaluation of Clotilde's case when, following his betrayal, he says, "Oh! lâche créature! Digne fille de ta mère! Veines impures où coula un sang maudit! Ah!..." (238) Clotilde is somehow a marked woman, predestined to evil by her very blood. She is in this respect much like Anatole of Un Méchant Homme, whose "beaux dehors...ses manières affectueuses et presque séduisantes cachaient l'âme la plus corrompue et la plus noire qu'il se puisse trouver." (10) Anatole is very much aware of the evil destiny that is his to accomplish; Clotilde accomplishes it without foreknowledge. Yet both are predestined.

The rôle of predestination and free will is significant in this study because of the part which providence plays in Eyma's considerations of America. In his fiction there is confusion regarding this rôle, both from tale to tale and within individual tales. Actions and rhetoric contradict one another; and one tale cancels another in treatment of this theme. Obviously, however, Eyma was concerned with the rôle of providence in men's lives. Though he failed to clarify or resolve the issue, he thought it worthy of both time and space.

Another constant preoccupation of Eyma's fiction is honor, both personal and familial. Its value and beauty are continually emphasized and illustrated. Frederick, in Mademoiselle Topaze, has given the best part of his life to the restitution of his father's name. He was

> résolus alors de m'expatrier, d'aller en des pays lointains chercher fortune. J'étais bien décidé à payer d'abord les dettes de mon père, puis, après, je devrais songer à moi...Grâce à Dieu, à mon intelligence, à mon activité, mon commerce avait assez prospéré pour satisfaire aux exigences des créanciers de mon père...l'honneur de mon père m'était aussi cher que celui de ma soeur... (43)

Honor is of first import even should it conflict with love. In Betzy Murlay, Betzy feels compelled to avenge her father's death though it means she must kill the man she loves. As for the necessity of personal honor; the words of Suzanne in Jean Larcher express precisely the point of view in all of Eyma's fiction. Rescued by the valiant Grimer, Suzanne

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exclaims, "Vous m'avez sauvé ce que j'ai de plus précieux au monde, l'honneur." (240)

This Neo-classical concept of honor is reinforced by a recurring motif, that of an absolute filial devotion. Mothers and fathers--be they such by blood or adoption--are to be loved, honored, and obeyed at any cost. The hero of the romantic Emmanuel sacrifices happiness because of his familial responsibilities. "La voix du devoir parlait haut en son coeur, elle étouffa celle de la passion...après une lutte cruelle, il partit..." (61) One might mention in passing that he never uttered a word of complaint. Personal honor includes uncomplaining devotion to parents.

All of Eyma's heroines--and most of them are orphans--are insanely devoted to their fathers or foster-fathers. Bastienne, of Les Amoureux de la démoiselle, is ready to sacrifice her dear Lucien to please her benefactor.

> "Résister aux volontés de mon parrain me paraît chose difficile; lui désobeir serait de ma part un acte d'ingratitude dont je ne veux pas me rendre coupable...j'aime mieux être malheureuse qu'ingrate..." (33)

And a melodramatic scene in Mademoiselle Topaze presents Marguerite's reaction to the news that Bernard is but her foster-father.

> Marguerite, elle, avait poussé un cri parti de ses entrailles et s'était jetée à genoux, le visage caché dans ses deux mains...--Ô mon père, disait-elle, mon père! Oh! laisse-moi te donner toujours ce nom-là.--Chère enfant, répondit Bernard tout attendri, toute la vie, appelle-moi ainsi. (12)

Such tableaux are common in Eyma's work.

Paternity does have its joys and compensations; it has, in fact, a redemptive quality. The hardest, most corrupt of men is moved to tears, love, and irrepressible joy when his fatherhood is revealed. The paternal rôle brings out the best in a man, and sometimes, I might add, very inconsistently. So it is in Le Masque blanc when the absolutely reprehensible Camarthen, whose life has been nothing but a succession of evil deeds, discovers that Georgina is his daughter.

> Il attira Georgina sur ses genoux pour couvrir de baisers sa belle tête blonde; et il l'entoura d'un regard qui traduisait toutes les joies de son âme, toutes les terreurs qu'il avait éprouvées. (34)

Georgina tenderly calls him "père," and dies. In our final view of Camarthen, he "se coucha sur le plancher, à côté du cadavre de son enfant, qu'il entoura de ses bras." (38) Such emotion in Camarthen is inconsistent and inexplicable; evidently it is inherent in paternity. The same emotion appears in Le Roman de Flavio when Lord Acton, another evil sort, discovers that Leonora is his daughter.

> Acton, cet homme qui n'avait grandi que par le sang, dont le spectacle ne l'avait jamais épouvanté; cet homme qui avait fait tant de victimes, creusé tant de tombes, accumulé tant de deuil, fait couler tant de larmes autour de lui, sans que son front se fut assombri une seule fois, sans que son coeur eut hesité, sans que sa main eut tremblé à signer une sentence de mort ou d'exil,--cet homme qui n'avait vécu que d'intrigues politiques, bronzé à toutes les douleurs,-- qui n'avait ni souri ni pleuré depuis vingt ans,-- cet homme s'abîma sur le corps de cette jeune fille; son coeur déborda de paroles de tendresse; sous ses lèvres se multiplièrent les caresses, et sa voix, en maudissant Lady Hamilton, trouva un accent si vrai, des paroles si énergiques, des explosions si passionnées, que celle-ci s'enfuit avec épouvante. (246)

Such a response cannot be justified in terms of character; it can only be justified on the grounds that, for the narrator, fatherhood includes participation in some sort of mystery.

Concern with honor, filial devotion, and paternity invites the conclusion that the family unit, the rôle of the family, is an essential in Eyma's fictional philosophy. Notably, the wayward women in La Mansarde de Rose draw men away from the family in an effort to debase them. Dahlia advises Abricotine that

> "Il nous faut éloigner de la famille, des amis et du travail, les hommes que nous voulons dominer; il ne faut pas leur laisser d'autre souci que nous. C'est une manière de les abrutir. Tant qu'il reste au coeur d'un homme l'amour de la famille ou le sentiment d'un devoir de conscience à remplir, il nous échappe toujours." (71)

It is within the family unit that man properly develops and is sustained in virtue. The good life is family life.

Second only to filial devotion are the bonds and obligations of friendship and love. Just as one makes sacrifices for father or mother, so one must act toward others. The aged Pierre Placide labored a lifetime to restore the fortune and name of his friend, Saulnier. By so doing he was able to "servir à la fille de Saulnier pour réhabiliter la mémoire de son père." (167, Testament) Even the basically evil are sometimes able to rise to the call of love, as does Betzy Rivière. Rather than tarnish Romule

Vernon by marrying him, she renounces him.[28] She was unable to

> consentir à faire le malheur d'un homme que je crois aimer, que je suis sûr d'aimer et que j'estime à coup sûr. Non! je ne serai pas la femme de celui-là. Je souffrirai de ce sacrifice; mais s'il doit y avoir une victime, que ce soit moi et non lui. (77, Gamineries)

The effects of evil passions weave a motif beneath each of Eyma's themes. Of special concern are avarice and jealousy. The whole of Les Amoureux de la démoiselle turns upon the jealousy of Isidore Sirugue. He is so distraught by jealous passion for his foster-daughter, Bastienne, that

> les vêtements en désordre, les traits bouleversés, le visage méconnaissable, semblait une bête fauve. L'écume montait à ses lèvres, tout son corps frémissait, ses yeux roulaient dans leur orbite; il n'y avait plus rien d'un homme en lui. (75)

The effects of avarice are no less dramatic. When money became the god of the once-generous Henry Paddly, he was transformed. The narrator tells us,

> On a souvent observé combien le coeur de l'homme se modifie dans la transition lente de la pauvreté à la richesse; tandis qu'il reste intact, avec tous ses vices ou toutes ses qualités, quand l'homme franchit, subitement et d'un bond, l'abîme qui sépare l'extrême misère de l'extrême fortune. Dans le premier cas on se figure parfois que c'est, peut-être, un excès de vertu qui empêche le bien-être d'arriver; en sorte qu'à mesure que ce bien-être se fait sentir, on est plus disposé à rompre avec ses instincts les meilleurs. Ou bien les douleurs de la pauvreté aigrissent l'âme et la rendent malade; alors l'aisance progressive est un baume qui soulage, jour

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[28]See Van Tieghem, "Le Roman Sentimental." Such renunciation was common to the sentimental heroine and reflects, again, the influence of Marivaux.

> par jour, et calme l'irritation des plaies du coeur. La fortune subite, au contraire, ne laisse pas au coeur le temps de se modifier; armé tout à coup de ce levier puissant, il s'en sert avec tous les instincts bons ou mauvais que la nature lui a donnés. (132-133)

Under the influence of Eros, bestiality rules a man. The excessively crude Larcher addresses Suzanne in the familiar "tu;" in his evil passion he ravishes her and murders her father. And his evil nature is betrayed in his appearance.

> Larcher, s'enveloppa alors dans une large casaque de marin, de façon à se cacher le visage presque en entier; et au moment où son canot effleura l'autre, il poussa une sorte de rugissement en voyant Suzanne se rapprocher de Grimer et serrer ses deux bras comme pour implorer sa protection...Le corsaire avait ressenti un mouvement indicible de rage et de jalousie, et sa main avait même caressé un de ses pistolets. (235-236, Larcher)

In fact, any excessive venting of passion marks not only the soul, but also the body. Julien Duthil's face evidenced

> les ravages profonds...Rides précoces, pâleur de nuits sans sommeil et des journées agitées, tempes dépouillées déjà par les doigts envieux de la débauche, front triste et sombre, lèvres sans sourire, yeux sans larmes, regards sans lumières. Le pauvre homme fut comme anéanti. (61-62, Mansarde)

The price of unruly passions and an irregular life is high.

A revenge motif, often stemming from unrequited love, appears in Eyma's historical fiction. Blanche, of Le Grand Cordon et la corde, is so infuriated by Renaud d'Est's betrayal of her love that she reveals him as an imposter and shouts, "Ah! je suis bien vengée!'" as Renaud is hanged. Just as Blanche's love was overpowering, so was her thirst for revenge. A great capacity for good may indicate a great

capacity for evil; one's ability to love is a measure of one's ability to hate.

Especially relevant to this study, and of great import in Eyma's historical fiction, is obvious admiration for the patriotic man. Devotion to one's country equals, or perhaps even supersedes, devotion to family. Henri d'Autanne, the hero of Le Gaoulé, loves his native Martinique and would sacrifice for it "ma liberté, ma vie, toutes mes joies de ce monde."[29] Flavio, hero of Eyma's only historical novel, Le Roman de Flavio, sacrifices all for Naples.

> Un secret commandement le pousse en avant; il obéit, jouant sa vie, sa fortune, sa liberté, sa renommée, ignorant si c'est le pilori ou le char triomphal qui l'attend. (ii)

In Le Roi des Tropiques the narrator divides the settlers of the New World into four classes, and insists that even among the fourth class, that of the founders of colonies, a proud satisfaction with the addition of one more flower to the crown of their country was mingled with their personal interests and ambitions. Patriotism is subordinated to no other sentiment in the motivation of worthy characters.

Themes, motifs, and sentiments, then, blend in a system of values made obvious by the unmistakable demarcation of good and evil characters; by the guiding, explicit rhetoric of narrators who condemn, praise, and exhort at will.

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[29] Aventuriers et Corsaires (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1861), p. 9.

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The virtuous individual - and by extension, the good society - is, above all, industrious. Labor is a positive good, a redeeming grace which spurs others toward salvation. The virtuous individual is concerned with both personal and familial honor, and preserves them at all costs. He loves, honors, and obeys his parents and benefactors. Heredity, environment, and providence play rôles in his life, but he uses them wisely. The virtuous individual places the glory and honor of his country before personal ambition. Love, generosity, unselfishness, honor, patriotism, and diligence are the mainstays of his system of values.

Though the narrators and authors of fiction are not necessarily identical, and the values expressed by the one are not necessarily those of the other, I am convinced that, in Eyma's case, thematic concerns and values were also those of the man. From a critical standpoint, Eyma's fiction is neither sufficiently artistic nor sophisticated to warrant the attribution of stated and implied values to the narrator's consciousness or to creative experimentation. Eyma's characterization and handling of point of view are largely stock; his pure and historical fiction betray an overriding concern with the didacticism, as opposed to the artistry, of his work. Also, Eyma stated directly, in prefaces to his fiction, that pleasure and delight are secondary to instruction in the evaluation of art. In the preface to Emmanuel he wrote:

> ...à notre époque surtout, le roman qui a envahi à peu près toute la littérature, a pris un rôle nouveau, important; il n'a pas reculé devant les plus graves questions, il a tout abordé, ce qui constitue sa puissance. L'histoire lui a demandé d'être l'interprête de ses grands drames, et il s'est admirablement prêté à ce rôle; la philosophie s'est accouplée à lui, et tant bien que mal a, par son intermédiare, répandu sur le monde ses hautes leçons; la religion est descendu sur son aile par tous les degrés de la passion humaine pour sanctifier toutes les émotions, toutes les actions de la vie; la politique en a fait une tribune, un foyer pour ses théories, et l'a allumé de la flamme ardente de ses systèmes; la science elle-même a déposé dans son sein quelques unes de ses discussions les plus arides; les questions sociales ont essayé avec son aide de régénérer l'humanité! Toute forme littéraire peut servir à la propagation d'une idée;... de tous les genres, c'est celui (le roman) qui aborde le plus franchement le coeur par ses côtés les plus sensibles. (xviii)

In the same preface he praises the novel because "On en peut tirer de belles leçons." (viii) And it is the instructiveness of the novelists of his day that Eyma found praiseworthy.

> "Les romanciers de nos jours qui dominent leur siècle, ont une valeur incontestable parce que leurs livres représentent des systèmes, discutent des théories, instruisent ou sèment des germes de révolution dans la société." (xviii)

Obviously the novel was, to Eyma, not an end in itself but a tool to be used in the service of science, philosophy, society, religion, or any discipline which could more readily benefit mankind if cloaked in pleasing literary form. Not literature, but the ideas and values it contains are of first importance.

In the other arts, also, the same "beau idéal" should rule. Reacting against Realism, Eyma wrote regarding Eugene Delacroix:

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> Selon nous ce n'est pas déssiner que réproduire le plus exactement possible une laideur quelconque; la parfaite imitation d'un torse plein d'anfractuosités, d'un ventre difforme et de deux jambes cagneuses, ne constitue pas le dessin à nos yeux. Un peu plus ou un peu moins d'irrégularité dans le trait n'empêche pas que vous ayez fait un monstre.[30]

It is the responsibility of art and the artist to show virtue as pleasing, vice as abhorent. Given this concept of art, it is reasonable to claim that the valuable and good in Eyma's fiction are the valuable and good in his world view.

The artistry, themes, and implied values of Eyma's fiction illuminate Eyma the individual, the artist, and the participant in the French literary tradition. If one accepts the probable identification of the narrator with the author, Eyma's values come into focus. He was a man concerned with integrity and rectitude in all areas of life. Labor is to be esteemed; abnegation, self-sacrifice, and devotion to others and to worthy causes are keys to character; religion should be encouraged and respected; the family is a positive good on both an individual and societal level; patriotism is both admirable and commendable. All things, art included, are to be used in the service of mankind, in the formation of better individuals. For Eyma believed that mankind was moving forward, toward what might be called an omega point. He wrote in his Introduction à une politique

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[30] L. X. Eyma and Arthur de Lucy, Ecrivains et artistes vivants, français et étrangers (Paris: Bureau de journal "Outre-Mer," 1840), p. 18.

générale: "Aujourd'hui, convaincus, comme nous le sommes, de la perfectibilité humaine..."[31] His fiction would be a tool in the advancement of mankind, for it indicates the qualities and concerns of the responsible and virtuous individual. It is expressive, in all of its elements, of a conservative, bourgeois estimate of life, pivoting on what have come to be considered the bourgeois virtues of stability and order. But it is spiced with Neo-classical tradition through emphasis on honor, courage, and strength of passion in proud and noble individuals--who, in Eyma's France, belonged to the middle class.

Artistically, Eyma is but a minor writer. His ultimate concern was instruction rather than art, and often art is distorted if not forgotten in the service of utilitarian values. Characters are stock because the good man does shed tears, and does sacrifice all for an ideal, and does evidence virtue at every turn and in every gesture. Moreover, the stock character is inoffensive to the common man, and therefore capable of inspiring and instructing by his good example. The narrator obtrudes himself in an awkward and unnecessary manner because the moral must be obvious, the lesson must be clear. For such is the end of fiction. Description is sparse because character and values, rather than pleasure and artistry, are Eyma's major concern.

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[31]Paris: Percepied, 1842, p. 31.

And Eyma was far from alone in his didactic preoccupations. Rather, such was characteristic of the period in which he wrote. As Cuvillier-Fleury commented in an essay written in 1854: the novel of the 1850's fancies itself a teacher, a replacement for the people's almanack.[32]

Eyma's method can be attributed in part to the tradition in which he was saturated and in which he participated in a minor, and eclectic, fashion. The bloody street scenes in such as Le Roman de Flavio are related to the Gothic novel. Notice the following:

> Moraïm ne parlait plus, les paroles ne passaient pas à travers ses dents, serrées comme des tenailles; il poussait seulement des sons gutturaux et inintelligibles; ses yeux caves, vitreux, immobiles, étaient fixés sur Zanzibar qui y lisait, face contre face comme il était avec ce moribond, une joie infernale...Chaque fois qu'il parvenait à se soulever, il (Zanzibar) emportait avec lui ce corps pesant qui, à son tour, l'entraînait...Dans la chute qui suivit, les bras du bohémien s'écarterent d'eux-mêmes et abandonnèrent Zanzibar, qui poussa un cri de douleur, car chacun des ongles du cadavre, au moment où ses doigts lachèrent leur proie, avait emporté un lambeau de la chair du malheureux jocrisse. (234-236)

Such a tableau would not have existed prior to the like of Anne Radcliffe and Monk Lewis, or Victor Hugo's Notre Dame de Paris; it stems from the tradition of gothic horror.

All of Eyma's historical works participate in the French historical novel vogue given such impetus by Sir Walter Scott. Eyma knew of Scott's work and praises it, in

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[32]Cuvillier-Fleury, "Le Roman Français en 1851," Etudes Historiques et Littéraires, I (Paris, 1854), 259-293.

the preface to Emmanuel, as the renovator of the novel tradition in France. And surely Eyma had read Hugo and other French historical novelists--a man of such wide reading could hardly fail to be acquainted with their work.

Nor did Eyma escape Romanticism, but utilized the sensitive, melancholy, brooding, introspective, persecuted hero for his own ends. Emmanuel, in fact, contains an epigram drawn from Chateaubriand: "Une grande âme doit contenir plus de douleurs qu'une petite." Emmanuel is another René; he is almost pure Chateaubriand; "il aimait à causer de ses infortunes; ce n'était pourtant jamais sans verser l'abondantes larmes." (6) And the circumstances under which Emmanuel and Marguerite fall in love are pure adaptation from the Paul et Virginie of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. Their love developed in childhood games and friendly carresses; friendship was replaced by a new sentiment; "

> "de ce jour Marguerite devint pour lui un objet de culte et de respect: plus que jamais il affectait de l'appeler ma soeur, et c'est à peine s'il osait encore déposer un bien timide baiser sur le front que la jeune fille tendait à ses lèvres brûlantes." (12)

The rest is familiar to the reader of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre.

The sentimental tradition is obvious at every turn. We have already observed its operation in characterization. Orphans, piety, tears, fainting, blushing, and modesty in characters are imports from England and Richardson, via Marivaux and Prévost. It is evident, too, in the attention given to death and graveyard scenes, as when Emmanuel tends

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the tree by his mother's grave and embraces two roses, calling them "Mon père et ma mère;" or when he selects three unopened buds and calls them "Mon frère et mes soeurs." (131) It is again evident in the seduction scene of Jean Larcher, and in the vows of the widow Catherine at her husband's grave. (Catherine) In fact, the sentimental tradition is omnipresent in Eyma's fiction.

We have already noted Eyma's participation in the bourgeois novel tradition; the emphasis on labor and stability, on utilitarian values, on the middle and working classes. Eyma's characters are drawn from common life. (Indeed, from where else could characters come in the France of the 1850's?) This bourgeois direction is mitigated to some degree, however, by a final element which appears in Eyma's fiction. The concern shown honor, courage, and individual integrity; the strength of passion evidenced in some characters suggests a Neo-classical conception of life and man. It ignores purely utilitarian ends. Man is noble in his love and rage; he is the proud center of the universe, and unwilling to debase or subordinate himself to anything less noble than himself. Neo-classical elements reside in every Eyma character who places honor and personal integrity above all else.

Eyma is best classified, it would seem, by the term "eclectic." For gathered into his fiction are bits and pieces of the entire French literary tradition. His work is somewhat Neo-classical, somewhat romantic; and bourgeois, sentimental,

gothic, and historical at one and the same time. The presence of all of these elements suggests the possibility that Eyma's work was at least modestly popular. In the early nineteenth century, French readers were captivated by the school of terror; the historical romance, whose reign began about 1820 in France with the works of Scott; novels whose stories were enacted upon American soil, and others. Fielding and Richardson, Sterne and Miss Burney found new translators at this time, and each of these writers employed the conventions, techniques, and matter used also by Eyma. The French thirst for these writers indicates that Eyma may have helped satisfy that thirst. For he appeals to the same ideals and sentiments as do these Englishmen who were obviously in demand. On this basis alone--and others will later be discussed--one can surmise that Eyma's fiction found a considerable audience.

CHAPTER III

THE AMERICAN TALES

L. Xavier Eyma published, between 1853 and 1863, five tales with American settings. "Lora Cameron" and "Dolly Geerts" appeared in 1853 in a volume entitled Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde.[1] "Bonaventure Thévenard" was published in 1860 in Le Trône d'Argent.[2] Both "L'Epopée de Betzy et d'un village" and "L'Aventure des Cinq-Chênes" are included in a collection of tales entitled Les Poches de mon parrain, published in 1863.[3] Structurally and thematically, each of these tales is much like Eyma's general fiction. The American setting, however, is especially significant. Its function, the nature of its rôle, is seemingly related to the date of publication of each tale. Time, perspective, and experience altered Eyma's fictional handling, and perhaps

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[1]Louis Xavier Eyma, Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde (Paris: Giraud, 1853). This volume saw two other editions (Paris: Giraud, 1860; and Paris: Michel Lévy, 1861). Both tales appeared again in Les Poches de mon parrain (Paris: E. Maillet, 1863). "Dolly Geerts" was published serially, under the title of "Catherine et William," in L'Illustration, XXVI (September 8, 1855), 174-175; XXVI (September 15, 1855), 190-191; XXVI (September 22, 1855), 206. Hereafter, works cited are those of Eyma unless otherwise indicated.

[2]Paris: Michel Lévy.

[3]Paris: E. Maillet.

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vision, of the United States. The earlier tales, published after but one visit to the United States (1848-1849), use America only incidentally. In the later tales, published after a second visit to the United States (1858-1859), the American setting is essential to characterization and plot; nationality bears weight on the entire tale. The depth of Eyma's American experience, then, influenced his treatment of America.

Moreover, the distance between Eyma's actual experience and the creation of the tales affected the emphasis placed on America. According to the Bibliographie de la France (ou Journal Général de l'Imprimerie de la Librairie), "Bonaventure Thévenard" was released on May 19, 1860, a year or less after Eyma's return from America. America's rôle in the tale is relatively incidental. "L'Epopée de Betzy et d'un village," however, was published four years following Eyma's second American experience; here the United States receives considerable emphasis. The perspective and reflection, allowed by the passage of time, seemingly contributed to the function of the American setting. There is, then, a possible relationship between the quantity of Eyma's American experience, the quality encouraged by perspective and reflection, and the rôle of America in Eyma's fiction. In any case, the setting, because American, creates an image of America. Implicit and explicit commentary on the New World inheres in the setting itself, if only because characters and attitudes are dramatized in this world.

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Given the French vogue for works set on American soil, readers were possibly attracted to these tales because of the setting itself.[4] The reader may have been particularly attentive to the American, as opposed to the sentimental, elements of the tales; sensitive to both explications and implications. His reading may have altered or formed his image of the United States. Because of the American setting, rhetoric and characterization gain an added dimension - that of American image - makers in the French mind. And the general image which one nation forms of another is, after all, but a composite of those formed by individuals.

"Bonaventure Thévenard" is set in Annapolis, Maryland, in 1765. The tale fills only nineteen pages; the plot is relatively simple. Thévenard, an adventurer, and Orrin, the fiancé of Alice, sail into Annapolis on Thévenard's beloved ship, the Groënland. Once docked, complications develop; Orrin and Thévenard become involved in street fighting issuing from a Catholic-Protestant conflict. Orrin makes his way to the home of Alice, asking her to flee Annapolis with him. Following a stop at a cabin on Carrol Rock, the three--Thévenard, Alice, and Orrin--make their way to the Groënland, now under attack. They set sail, only to be chased by an English corvette which ultimately sinks the Groënland.

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[4] See M. G. Devonshire, The English Novel in France, 1830-1870 (London, 1929), pp. 85-86.

> Un long hurrah retentit à bord du bâtiment de S.M. Trois fois le pavillon fut hissé et abaissé; et, à travers l'épaisse fumée qui assombrissait l'air, la corvette regagna le large.[5]

The characters of the tale are typical of Eyma's fiction. Thévenard, the captain of the Groënland, was

> un homme de quarante ans environ; ses traits étaient énergiques, mais nullement désagréables. Il y avait, au contraire, dans ses yeux une certaine douceur sympathique, et ce n'était guère que sur le coin de ses lèvres pâles et épaisses qu'un observateur subtil eut découvert certain pli qui semblait renfermer tout le secret de la magique puissance qu'il exerçait sur son équipage. Il portait une simple casaque de matelot, et aucun signe extérieur ne révélait son grade. (248)

He is a gentle, but forceful, leader; a man who commands great respect though simple in dress and demeanor. He is above all else, however, an adventuresome pirate.

> "Que la queue du diable m'étrangle d'avoir quitté mes vergues et mon pont pour venir me battre dans les rues contre ces chiens de protestants! Je suis Catholique, c'est vrai; mais je suis pirate avant tout." (285)

And in "good sailor" fashion, Thévenard is as passionately attached to his ship as another man might be to a woman or his child.

> "Ce bâtiment, c'est mon enfant, c'est mon ami; c'est tout ce que je possède de plus précieux sur la terre et sur l'Océan!...Thévenard et le Groënland!" (290-291)

The narrator forces the reader to accept Thévenard's character on faith; we are told about, rather than shown,

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[5]In Le Trône d'Argent (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1860), p. 296. Hereafter, pages are cited in parentheses following quotations, and refer to the work discussed.

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this character, with one exception: Thévenard's sentimental nature is evidenced by his treatment of Orrin before the Groënland sinks.

> "Thévenard serra affectueusement la main d'Orrin. Ce dernier ouvrit ses bras; le vieux capitaine s'y précipita en pleurant." (294-295)

A young man, Orrin, accompanies Thévenard. We are told (once again) that Orrin is the son of a rich businessman. He believes, evidently, that religious conviction demands action; infuriated by Catholic passivity in the face of Protestant threats, he throws himself with gusto into the resultant street fighting. Finally, Orrin is a young man in love. And true to the characteristics of the Eyma hero, he considers himself last and his lady first; he prefers the stigma of cowardice to that of ungentlemanliness. When the Groënland is under English attack, Orrin asks Thévenard if flight isn't possible.

> "Ce n'est pas pour moi que je te demande cela, reprit le jeune homme, en essuyant deux larmes qui roulèrent sur ses joues..." (294)

His concern is for Alice, who is on board. And the "deux larmes" betray Orrin's tender and typically sentimental heart. Tears, idle tears, are no threat to masculinity.

Only a glimpse of the heroine, Alice, is permitted the reader. No physical description of her is given, but from her reaction to danger we might guess that she is blond, blue-eyed, pale, fragile, and humble. For sentimental heroines generally are, and Alice's reactions are typical of the sentimental heroine. When asked to flee with Orrin,

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And upon arrival at the cabin on Carrol Rock, Alice, "pâle, émue, épuisée de fatigues, s'était évanouie en entrant dans la cabane." (288) Her singular fragility, love for Orrin, and ability to faint mark Alice as a sentimental figure. The reader is well able to fill in the details.

"Bonaventure Thévenard" is a well-structured, unified tale, pivoting on one central incident: the escape of the three characters from Annapolis. Peripheral materials, such as the Catholic-Protestant conflict, are held to a minimum and included only in support of the central incident. The tale unwinds in the space of one evening. The characters are merely sketched; only relevant information is given. The narrator avoids philosophizing and unnecessary asides. And the central incident dramatizes two sorts of love and devotion: that of Thévenard for his ship, and that of Orrin for Alice. Both of these loves are characterized by courage, tenacity, and selflessness, all highly valued in Eyma's canon. Both demand the supreme sacrifice: Thévenard dies for his ship; Orrin, on the ship because of Alice, thus dies, figuratively, for her.

The implications of the peripheral material are of special interest; from the periphery emerges implicit commentary on the United States. First, Thévenard's actions indicate a colonial American attitude toward the British, and

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In "Bonaventure Thévenard" we are made immediately aware of Thévenard's nationality: he is an American seaman. Though his nature is not peculiarly American, he expresses a peculiarly American attitude. It is shameful, he feels, that he failed to exchange a few "politesses" - e.g., cannon balls - with an English ship within range of his cannons. This statement functions in a dual manner. Within the story itself, irony is present if this English ship and that which ultimately sinks the Grœnland are one and the same. More importantly, however, Thévenard's statement implies a universal American attitude toward the British: at odds with English colonial rule, Americans wished to give every possible evidence of their discontent. Conversely, the British attitude toward the American colonists in 1765--eleven years prior to the Declaration of Independence--emerges. Because British corvettes had more than once given chase to Thévenard, we realize that the British insistently and repeatedly harassed the colonists. The "long hurrah," with its suggestion of gleeful conquest, which rings out from the British ship when the Grœnland sinks, reinforces this impression. In such manner the tension which existed between America and England is portrayed.

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conflict in Maryland! In the streets Orrin hears "Mort aux Catholiques." He indicates, through comment on the silence of Catholics, that overt objection to Protestant rule meant expulsion from Maryland. For the historically-informed French reader, a certain irony is implicit here, also, because of the inherent contradiction between the principles upon which Maryland was founded and the action of Protestants against Catholics. Moreover, the street fighting, the use of the phrase "chiens de protestants" by Thévenard, and the burning of the cabin on Carrol Rock in the course of the conflict give a clear view of the great intensity of this religious conflict.

Eyma created, within nineteen pages, not only a sentimental tale, but a fairly strong image of the domestic and foreign problems of the United States in 1765. He dramatized the tensions between England and her colonists, and their attitudes toward one another; and he indicated the intensity of the religious conflict in Annapolis. In terms of image-making, this is no mean accomplishment in such brief space.

The whole of "Lora Cameron" is contained, in germ, in a phrase early in the tale. "Si l'un de nous mourait, Lora, tu devrais vivre pour consoler l'autre." (184) The setting of the tale is Barrington, Massachusetts; the time: 1786. Lora, Harry, and Francis, the three main characters, are devoted childhood friends. Upon reaching maturity, Francis becomes a successful lawyer; Harry manages his family's farm,

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withstanding severe financial difficulties; and Lora is betrothed to Harry. Tensions between Harry and Francis develop on three levels: First, Harry is jealous of Lora's attentions to Francis. Secondly, Harry is jealous of Francis' financial success. Thirdly, Harry and Francis are placed in professional opposition by the historical context of the tale. Harry, a farmer, is a natural ally of the insurgents of Shay's Rebellion; Francis, a lawyer, is a natural ally of the law which attempts to quell the Rebellion. Francis and Harry's friendship becomes extremely tenuous, and Lora is, of course, inextricably involved. "Lora Cameron" is, in essence, a delineation of these conflicts. Harry joins Shay; Francis is taken prisoner by the rebels; and Lora intervenes in behalf of Francis' life. In a final dramatic moment, Harry's essential love for Francis, though previously clouded by the passion of jealousy, comes to the fore. Throwing himself in front of his friend, Harry receives the death bullet intended for Francis.

> Harry posa un regard éteint sur Lora, puis sur Francis, fit un dernier effort pour ouvrir ses lèvres pâles, et expira sans avoir pu articuler une parole de plus! (200)

And so the tale ends, leaving the reader assured that Harry's childhood wish will be fulfilled; Lora will now console the other, namely, Francis.

The three main characters are, once again, of the sentimental variety. Lora is an orphan,

> une enfant merveilleusement belle; ses sourcils bruns transhaient d'une façon charmante sur sa peau d'une admirable blancheur; son teint, chose

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> rare chez les femmes de ce pays, était légèrement coloré; ajoutez à cela des yeux du bleu le plus poétique et une chevelure noire qui ruisselait en boucles fines sur un cou un peu ombré par les caresses du soleil. (180)

Whether Lora's coloring, distinguished from that of other "femmes de ce pays," indicates that Eyma found American women more or less pale than Lora cannot be ascertained. Be that as it may, her eyes, long hair, and admirably white skin betray the stock heroine.

The narrator attempts to form and solidify the reader's concept of Lora's character by recounting a childhood incident which is reminiscent of Cooper's Deerslayer. Harry shoots a lark, thus provoking Lora's tears and accusations of cruelty against the boys. When teased for this sensitivity, Lora claims that she would cry if either of them were shot. Later that same day, Lora slips when leaping from rock to rock across a river, but saves herself by tenaciously gripping the rocks. In other words, Lora is energetic, sensitive, and courageous. But the Eyma narrator must be certain that this is evident, and comments: "Cet événement révéla à Harry et à Francis le sang-froid, l'énergie, et en même temps la hardiesse résolue de cette enfant." (194) Unable to conclude there, he continues:

> Ces petits incidents de la jeunesse des trois héros de notre histoire étaient importants à faire connaître. Ils nous ont aidé à déssiner leurs caractères et à faire pressentir le rôle à venir de chacun d'eux. (184)

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The physical appearance of Harry and Francis is ignored. But the financial failure of the former and the success of the latter is emphasized, establishing the jealousy motif which, in turn, controls events. We learn of Harry's proud nature through his response to his mother's suggestion that he borrow money from Francis. A curt "Non" is his reply. His jealousy for Lora's attentions compounds his motivation by pride. "Oh! il (Francis) peut m'attendre sans que mon absence lui paraisse trop longue, Lora est avec lui!" (191) Harry is both a proud and jealous man.

As for Francis, friendship and generosity rule his actions. A sensitive man, Francis perceives Harry's jealousy and hides his love for Lora; sacrifices his own dreams for his friend. Aware of Harry's financial plight, Francis secretly pays Harry's creditors, in hope of easing the tensions between himself and Harry. Francis is constant in his unselfish friendship, but Harry is ruled by his jealousy; his confidence in Francis is destroyed. When Francis, having paid Harry's debts, calls him to his office, Harry suspects the worst.

> Cette sommation de Francis était une preuve évidente: le jeune avocat le poursuivait afin de se débarrasser de lui et de ne plus rencontrer d'obstacle à la possession de Lora. (192)

Hence a common Eyma concern, the destructive, debasing nature of jealousy, is woven into the tale and emphasized by contrast of character. Francis has remained steadfast, but Harry has fallen victim to jealousy, thus allowing his better self to

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be overshadowed. But a sign of hope burns among the ashes of Harry's life: upon receipt of Francis' summons, Harry "se prit à pleurer comme un enfant." Thus the depth of Harry's struggle with friendship and jealousy is evidenced; his tears indicate that beneath his jealousy, he still harbors friendship and love.

The good will win out, as is seen in the resolution of the plot. Friendship is stronger and more basic to Harry's nature than is jealousy; he receives, by his own volition, the bullet intended for Francis. Francis stands among his enemies, the Shay rebels, "debout, ferme, immobile, les bras croisés, servant de bouclier à ses lâches ennemis." (198) Lora, witnessing "le courage, l'énergie et le sang-froid" with which she was earlier credited, runs to Harry to tell him of Francis' predicament.

> Harry sentit son coeur glacé. La haine, la jalousie, l'amour, la pitié, tous les sentiments l'émuient à la fois. Il détourna la tête pour cacher une larme qui brillait dans ses yeux. (199)

And here he meets his death--much to our surprise. Yet in that very surprise rests the greatest testimony to the strength and beauty of selfless friendship. Harry realizes that he has acted unjustly toward Francis; his death expiates his sin. He puts Lora's hand in that of Francis, and recalling his words of long ago, that Lora must live in order to console one of them, says:

> "C'est moi qui meurs, c'est Francis qui survit... Adieu, mes chers amis...oh! ma mère! ma mère! ajouta-t-il, aimez-la tous deux...et demandez-lui qu'elle me pardonne!..." (200)

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Thus the tale is brought to a rather fine unity; it returns to its beginning. The dénouement of the tale--Harry's death by a shot--was nicely foreshadowed in the opening paragraph: the lark was shot and fell dead at Lora's feet, much like Harry. The actions of the characters are consistent with their preordained natures. The narrator intrudes himself unnecessarily at times, as when he tells the reader that Lora's action indicated her energy and resoluteness, though the act itself has given the clue. And at times the narrator insists too much upon "telling" rather than "showing," as when he says that "Lora sortit de la maison," rather than portraying her in the act. Nonetheless, the tale does revolve upon a single incident, as is proper for so short an effort (twenty-one pages). Harry's actions spark the reader's interest because of their somewhat ambiguous motivation: does he act as he does purely from jealousy, or is his pride as much at stake because of financial difficulties? The unity of the tale is incontestable, and the effective use of foreshadowing indicates skillful structuring of the plot.

What of the United States is revealed in "Lora Cameron?" The force and direction of the story rest in the conflict of friendship versus love; the setting serves merely to complicate the conflict. The tensions between Harry and Francis, stemming from love for Lora and financial differences, could exist at any time, in any clime. The fact that they do exist, however, in citizens of Barrington, Massachusetts, and

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Several impressions of Shay's Rebellion result from Harry's experience. First, because Harry is pressed by the insurgents to participate in the Rebellion, the reader receives some notion of the urgency and determination felt by Shay's men. Secondly, the violent measures employed by the rebels come forward in the scene in which a human wall of prisoners is erected to protect the insurgents from their assailants. The cause was more valued than human life. The fact that Harry's mother urges him to avoid any involvement with the rebels reinforces the impression of violence; a woman's sensitivity here reacts against the insensitivity and violence inherent in the Rebellion. Finally, on the other side of the coin, one sees the creditor's attitude, and hence the friction which sparked Shay's Rebellion. The creditors mercilessly press Harry for payment of his debts when Harry is obviously incapable of meeting their demands. The creditors are as determined as the rebels: Harry must pay, or lose his farm and face thorough-going poverty. When violence breaks out, the creditors, supported by the law, fight fire with fire, disregarding even the lives of their supporters as they shoot into the human wall in retaliation against the rebels. Thus the violence and disregard of

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The reader is subtly asked to perceive only the situation, however; he is not encouraged to take sides. Obviously one must sympathize with Harry; the demands of his creditors are unreasonable and spell insolvency and personal dissolution. But on the other hand, Francis, who is generous and worthily motivated, is honestly allied with the law which is determined to quell the insurgents. He proudly and courageously refuses to flinch before the rebels. Neither rebellion nor law is exonerated in the story. Such neutrality, such objectivity, may be rooted in two factors. One, Eyma wrote the tale in 1860; a seventy-four year separation from the event permits objectivity. Also, Eyma's interest was not, as his objectivity suggests, centered in the Rebellion itself, but rather in the effects of the Rebellion upon the actions and passions of individuals caught in that particular historical vortex. History is used, in "Lora Cameron," to reveal character; but it unwittingly reveals itself in the process. And in so doing, an image is impressed on the mind of the reader.

Note, however, the direct rhetoric which explains Shay's Rebellion.

> Pendant la guerre, les dettes étaient contractées facilement; il existait alors entre le débiteur et le créancier une sorte de trève: l'un et l'autre ne pouvaient-ils pas tomber côte à côte sur le même champ de bataille et pour la même cause? Mais, quand

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> vint la paix, les choses changèrent de face. Plus de trève, plus d'enthousiasme.--l'intérêt prit le dessus. L'avidité des créanciers était excessive, et la loi, rigoureuse jusqu'à la démence, si on peut le dire, favorisait même des actes de barbarie.
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> Vers l'année 1786, si cruelles devinrent les poursuites, tant d'atrocités et d'injustices furent commises, que les débiteurs se liguèrent contre les créanciers. Une immense insurrection éclata dans le Massachusetts, théâtre principal de ces énormités. On appela cette insurrection la guerre de Shay. En raison de son origine, elle prit un caractère politique et divisa pendant un moment la société américaine en deux camps bien tranchés: d'un côté, les riches; de l'autre, les pauvres et les ruinés. (185-186)

This would seem to encourage sympathy with the insurgents, though perhaps the easy contraction of debts during the war implies a certain mark against them. In any case, Eyma portrayed the conflicts, violence, and historical context of an event in American history.

Like the two preceding tales, "L'Aventure des Cinq-Chênes," which appeared in 1863 in the collection entitled Les Poches de Mon Parrain, does not strictly require the Boston of 1841 as setting. The tale is in essence a murder mystery with a few sentimental trappings. The childless Dr. and Mrs. War have adopted Walter, the son of Dr. War's sister. The subsequent birth of a daughter, Alice, creates fears in Mrs. War; her husband may prefer Walter to Alice. Therefore Walter is sent West. After seventeen years and several exploits, Walter returns to Boston. His trip coincides with the murder of Dr. War's maid, Sarah, and suspicion is cast upon Walter. Dr. War and Alice believe Walter incapable of

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such a crime, but all evidence points to him, and Walter is imprisoned. The week prior to his trial, a servant, Josiah, through the use of ventriloquy, uncovers the real murderers who are subsequently punished by the Law of Lynch. The tale ends without further mention of Walter and Alice, though one assumes they live happily ever after.

The tale gives little attention to characterization. We are told that Dr. War, a reputed Boston physician, went from rags to riches during forty years of medical practice. He is both "un puits de science et de bonté," the latter illustrated by his devotion to his sister and his care for her son, Walter. His feeling for Walter, and his refusal to believe him guilty of murder, suggest, on a thematic level, the solidarity and confidence which love evokes. Of Mrs. War we know nothing save her fear that Walter supersedes Alice in her husband's affections. Of Alice we know little save that her "portrait avait été sollicité pour figurer dans un Book of Beauties publié à dix mille exemplaires, chez le célèbre librairie Appleton, de New-York." (155) She is evidently a good daughter and of a sentimental nature. At the moment of greatest distress, when Walter's guilt appears incontestable, she takes her father in her arms,

> comme un ange enveloppe dans ses ailes un pauvre âme meurtrie, et pria, plus qu'elle ne pleura, sur le désespoir de son père et sur le déshonneur de son cousin. (160)

Walter is characterized in absentia. We are told that, during his seventeen years in the West, he developed a taste for

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arms and fought with his fellow Americans against the Indians. This knowledge has a dual function: Walter's taste for arms makes feasible his implication in the murder; his efforts against the Indians suggest bravery and patriotism. We do know, through rhetoric, that he performed bravely in the Indian wars and was made a major.

The characterization of Walter reveals one of Eyma's artistic failures. Eyma seemingly had little feeling for realistic speech patterns and diction. Rather, all characters, regardless of age, express themselves in the same words and on a common, ideal level. As the ten-year-old Walter leaves for the West, he tells Dr. and Mrs. War,

> "Je pars un honnête enfant, je reviendrai, j'espère, un honnête homme, digne comme je le suis aujourd'hui, des bontés que vous avez eues pour moi et que je n'oublierai jamais, dans quelque condition que je me trouve." (154)

The double function of this speech is obvious: it characterizes Walter as an honest and grateful boy, filled with high ideals; it renders more piquant the possibility that Walter, having abandoned his youthful ideals, has committed murder and thereby succumbed to a base desire for ill-attained wealth. The function of the speech, however, does not lessen our surprise at such words from a boy of ten!

The structure of "L'Aventure des Cinq-Chênes" is interesting. The tale begins with quotations from a Boston paper in 1841: "Meurtre Horrible.--Vol Considérable.--Mystère." Sarah, Dr. War's maid, had been murdered. Another article reports a "Fatal Accident" in which a man was thrown

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from his horse and killed. The paper didn't connect the two incidents, but the narrator rhetorized, "Racontons maintenant les péripéties de ce drame mystèrieux et les faits qui le précédèrent." (151) And so the tale begins to unfold, flashing back seventeen years and introducing all characters. Chapters III and IV relate the events in Walter's life during the past seventeen years, as Walter matures and participates in Western exploits, and comes forward into the present, implicated in the murder and theft. Chapters V and VI see Walter imprisoned; Chapter VII resolves the peripities inherent in the conjunction of the two newspaper articles of Chapter I: the culprits are captured and subjected to the Law of Lynch; the "mystère" is solved; the story is brought full circle.

"L'Aventure des Cinq-Chênes" makes interesting use of ventriloquism. And ventriloquism is a major element in Charles Brockden Brown's Wieland, or the Transformation, published in America in 1798.[6] Wieland, a gothic romance, uses disembodied voices to reinforce the mysterious elements of the novel; to establish a gothic atmosphere of horror which in turn catalyzes events. Eyma knew of C.B. Brown, and his praise of him suggests that he was acquainted with Brown's

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[6] Wieland was probably the first American novel translated into French. (1808) See Durand Echeverria, Mirage in the West. A History of the French Image of American Society to 1815 (Princeton, 1957).

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work. In La République américaine Eyma states:

> Depuis vingt-cinq ans la littérature a cependant produit des écrivains distingués en Amérique. Je pourrais citer Brockden Brown, le premier qui ait ouvert le champ des fictions, esprit morose et chagrin qui vivait dans un monde idéal et tout à fait à lui. A cause de cela peut-être, ses oeuvres ont un certain cachet d'originalité.[7]

Perhaps the reading of C.B. Brown suggested the use of ventriloquism as a device in the resolution of the plot.

Eyma's use of the device varies radically from that of Brown, however. In fact, in Brown's Wieland, ventriloquism is not a device, as such, but an essential element in the creation of atmosphere and the movement of events. Eyma uses it rather awkwardly. It is introduced through the servant Josiah, who first and unnecessarily uses ventriloquism on Walter, in an effort to ascertain his guilt or innocence. Because Walter shows no response to the mysterious voice urging remorse for murder, Josiah assumes Walter's innocence. This paves the way for the use of ventriloquism against the true murderers: by imitating the voice of the murdered Sarah and recreating her cries of sorrow, Josiah brings the murderers to their knees in fear and trembling; so terrified were they by this mysterious, seemingly supernatural reenactment of their crime. The device is not too offensive. But the manner in which it is introduced into the tale (in a bar where Walter is drinking),

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[7]Paris: Michel Lévy, 1861, p. 242.

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and Walter's complete obliviousness to the voice, be it supernatural or otherwise, is too obviously contrived. It is an excuse to foreshadow the use of ventriloquy in the capture of the murderers; an attempt to justify its presence.

Once again, the United States as setting is inconsequential to the essence of the tale. But the locale does create certain images and suppositions regarding the United States. First, the tale links crime and the United States. This will be commented upon later, for Eyma devotes sections of his studies to consideration of this problem. In "L'Aventure des Cinq-Chênes" the problem is present only by implication; yet a suspicious French reader, conscious of American problems, might note the connection.

Secondly, praises of the West, and American ingenuity in its settlement, result from Walter's western exodus.

> ...Walter, bien équipé d'ailleurs et bien recommandé, fut expédié aux déserts de l'Ouest, au milieu de ces territoires nouveaux que la hache, le dollar et l'intelligence des Yankees ont fécondés. Madame War n'avait point été fachée de voir mettre entre sa maison et cet enfant, l'immensité des espaces qui séparaient alors, c'est-à-dire en 1827, les Etats civilisés de l'Union de ces Etats naissants destinés à devenir, sous le génie des Américains, la gloire et la fortune de la grande république.
>
> C'était, à cette époque, comme si l'Océan eût été placé entre les habitants de Boston et les défricheurs du Missouri, appelés à exercer tout à la fois le métier de soldat et celui d'agriculteur, à manier simultanément la charrue et le rifle. (153)

The great call of the West is heard; an intimation of the vastness of the continent is present; the will to succeed through work and ingenuity is praised; the prosperity of the American republic is indicated; the dangers and future joys

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of colonization are present. In sum, an image of the New Eden is directly evoked. And the same image is indirectly suggested by the fact that the young American, Walter, does indeed go West to try his fortunes. His success is significant. America, and in particular the West, is the land of opportunity.

From the sublime to the mundane: American culture receives disparaging comment through the intermediary of Josiah and his professional wanderings.

> Ce Josiah était un pauvre diable de saltimbanque, appartenant à une troupe d'acrobates qui avaient tout récemment exploité la Nouvelle Angleterre, et fait la joie des Yankees plus accessibles aux émotions de la danse de corde qu'aux plaisirs de la comédie, de la tragédie ou de l'opéra. (157)

Tightrope walking and circus tricks say little for American culture and taste in entertainment, especially to Frenchmen who worship at the altar of the fine arts, and harbor pre-conceived notions of a lack of culture and refinement in the United States.

Through Josiah one receives a notion of American openness, flexibility, and willingness to try anything to achieve some practical end. Josiah is very proud of his success in ventriloquism, and

> l'influence de l'art de la ventrilogie. Il rêva, pendant longtemps, à édifier sur ce sujet tout un système politique et social. 'L'avenir des nations, disait-il, est là.' On ne sait à quoi à attribuer qu'il n'ait pas exécuté ses vastes plans, dans un pays où toute théorie a chance d'être au moins écoutée. (178)

Americans are willing to listen to, and to try, any theory.

The infamous law of Lynch is brought into play in "L'Aventure des Cinq-Chênes." It is a topic which Eyma rather

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thoroughly explores in other studies; here it is only mentioned. He assumes, it would seem, that his readers are acquainted with this law. Its presence suggests a certain commentary on American justice.

> Quand le peuple en Amérique se met en tête de faire jouer la corde et la potence dont le célèbre juge Lynch lui a décrété de droit souverain, il lui faut une victime. (177-178)

In other words, a crime has been committed and someone must pay. The victim is to be Walter--until the murderers are uncovered. Because Walter will receive a trial, lynching appears in a relatively positive light. But following the trial, citizen revenge will reign, and the murderer will receive his just desserts at the hands of the populace he has threatened. Such is the American democratic method. Its inherent danger is suggested in the fact that the guilty parties are discovered only shortly before Walter was to receive his unjust due. Capital punishment may sometimes victimize the innocent. The Law of Lynch, with its demand for quick retribution and hasty judgment, increases the possibility of death for the innocent.

Finally, Dr. War's progress from rags to riches tells the reader something about America. Dr. War was a poor boy; yet by dint of virtue and labor, he became educated and established himself in a fine profession. American success stories, then, are not pure fiction. Indeed, America is the land of fortune, if only one is willing to work. Once again, an image of the New Eden, of Adam tending and transforming his garden, is evoked.

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"Dolly Geerts" is the story of The Little Match Girl with a happy ending. Its forty pages are a hymn to the positive and substantial benefits of labor, fleshed out by three motifs: love, example, and altruism. Implicit in the action of the story are impressions of the United States.

William Benton, a rich young New Yorker, encounters an extremely poor girl selling hot corn on a winter's night. He promises her an opportunity to learn a trade and thereby lead a more prosperous and comfortable life. The poor girl, Dolly Geerts by name, returns to her attic room and drunken foster-mother, and fearful that William will be unfaithful to his promise. But he is not; rather, through his encouragement and financial support Dolly becomes a model woman, self-supporting and loved as a member of the Benton family. After a six-year absence, William returns to New York and to a fully-blossomed Dolly, and falls in love with her. In spite of parental objections and financial disaster, William and Dolly marry, and part for the West to recoup the family fortune.

A general statement introduces us to William and his virtues. William is of wealthy parentage.

> Mais William, si indifférent qu'il fut, ou qu'il parût être aux misères nombreuses qui encombrent les rues de New-York, pouvait être compté parmi ces riches dont je parlais tout à l'heure (et le nombre en est heureusement grand dans tous les pays du monde), qui estiment que le premier privilège de la fortune est de soulager les pauvres. Il tenait ces sentiments de sa famille, où la bienfaisance était comme à l'ordre du jour. C'était, dans toute l'acception du mot, un

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> excellent jeune homme, au milieu même de sa vie dissipée; généreux, sensible, plein de nobles inspirations et d'élans sympathiques. Qui le connaissait l'aimait; et à dix-neuf ans, l'âge qu'il a au moment où nous l'introduisons sur la scène de ce récit, il comptait plus d'amis que bien d'autres n'en savent conquérir dans toute une longue vie. (2-3)

Hearing a child's voice crying "Du maïs chaud," he is "frappé de l'angoisse, du désespoir, de l'épuisement de la voix qui venait d'adresser cet appel à la charité." (4) William is, in other words, a sensitive man. Moreover, he is generous to a fault, giving everything possible to the poor little Dolly. Though rich, William knows the value of labor; he works for his father and travels for the family business. In sum, William is an ideal man.

Our first glimpse of Dolly is "épouvantable!" Though only twelve, she is condemned to selling corn on Broadway, a worn grey shawl wrapped around her shivering body.

> Ses cheveux, qui pleuvaient en larges tresses noires, sales et emmêlées sur ses épaules décharnées et bleuies par le froid, blanchissaient sous la neige. (4)

Dolly is a heart-rending sight indeed. But her basic physical characteristics are susceptible to sentimental transformation. For after Dolly has been trained, and is the most patronized of New York seamstresses,

> Nulle d'entre elles (rich New Yorkers), en tout cas, n'eût été capable de porter avec autant de grâce que Dolly les simples robes auxquelles l'élégance de sa personne donnait un prix et un éclat extraordinaires. L'espèce de sauvagerie et de dureté que la misère et les souffrances physiques avaient imprimée à ses traits, avaient fait place à une douceur angélique;

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> ses regards avaient une placidité sympathique; ses beaux cheveux noirs, relevés en bandeaux fournis, encadraient merveilleusement son visage d'une pâleur éblouissante. (24)

Dolly's character is solid and virtuous, as evidenced particularly in her will to work. When asked if she wishes to learn a trade, Dolly exclaims,

> "--Oui, Monsieur, oh! certes, oui! Je crois que les gens qui travaillent sont bien heureux, et qu'ils gagnent quelquefois bien de l'argent, tandis que moi...oh! oui, Monsieur, je serais bien heureuse d'apprendre à travailler." (8)

And through sheer will and tenacity, Dolly realizes great benefits from her labor.

> Dolly avait réalisé tout ce que l'élévation de son coeur et de son intelligence avait permis d'espérer d'elle. Dans la maison industrielle de M. Bill, elle avait appris tout ce qui peut agrandir l'âme d'une créature humaine, tout ce qui peut, en même temps, aider une femme à traverser sans périls les durs sentiers de la vie. (22)

Her excellence gains her the richest patrons in New York. Thus Eyma once again exploits the theme of the beauty and edification of work.

Dolly is also properly sensitive, loving, and sentimental. She longs for William's return to New York, not only because of gratitude, but because "un autre sentiment... avait fleuri dans son coeur." (24) Though she loves William, she would never, even for the sake of her happiness, provoke him to wrongdoing. When William's father objects to the marriage of Dolly and William, Dolly falls on her knees before William and urges him to respect his father's wishes.

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Thus Dolly expresses her deep respect for parental authority. And her deep gratitude to this same authority, though it has rejected her, is evidenced by her efforts in behalf of the family when financial disaster strikes.

> Et cette petite chambre, qu'elle avait rêvée devoir être le port de salut de cette famille de naufragés, devint un sanctuaire pieux où l'huile de la lampe éclaira le dévouement le plus filial et le travail le plus noble qu'on puisse imaginer. (39)

In her small room whose "honnête simplicité...poétissait (sic) l'asile aérien de Dolly" (30) (why must such rooms always be "aérien?"), she tends her needles in relentless gratitude to her benefactors. Dolly's entire self is sentimental material, par excellance, reinforced by her susceptibility to blushing and tears as she receives William's compliments.

> Dolly, toute émue, avait rougi jusqu'aux yeux; et ses mains, que William tenait dans les siennes, tremblaient; ses yeux, chargés de larmes, n'osaient plus se lever sur lui. (29)

Just as Dolly supports the theme of the beauty of labor, so she concretizes the motif of good example. When the Benton family looses its fortune, Dolly is seen as exemplary of future possibilities in spite of disaster. Just as she worked her way to success, so can young William. As he says,

> "Le travail est le gardien de l'honnêteté et l'inspirateur des grandes et nobles pensées; Dolly nous l'a prouvé. Que son exemple nous aide et nous guide!" (39)

Through Dolly's example, the Benton family recovers the possibility of success and happiness.

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In William is the motif of altruism and generosity. Because William offers Dolly the opportunity to work, Dolly develops into a fine young woman; in turn, because Dolly has utilized her potential to the fullest, the Benton family is inspired to new effort. The giver is ultimately the receiver. Moreover, the narrator tells the reader that wealth brings responsibility.

> J'ai dit tout à l'heure que William avait eu une excellente idée de s'en aller ainsi à pied. En effet, l'habitude des gens riches de sortir toujours en voiture, est cause qu'ils ignorent bien des misères dont le spectacle échappe à leur regard, qui n'a pas le temps d'effleurer le pavé des rues, comme le bruit des roues étouffe à leurs oreilles bien des cris de désespoir et bien des sanglots. L'homme qui va à pied, au contraire, qui traverse lentement les rues, est plus exposé à surprendre, à chaque pas, le flagrant délit des douleurs, des souffrances embusquées aux coins des carrefours. Les riches ne savent pas assez ce qu'ils perdent ainsi de bonnes occasions de faire le bien, sans quoi nous en savons beaucoup qui laisseraient volontiers, et plus souvent, reposer leurs chevaux. (1-2)

In other words, the wealthy ought share their good fortune, both literally and figuratively. William illustrates the fruits of such altruism.

Artistically, "Dolly Geerts" shares the faults of much of Eyma's fiction. The narrator speaks unnecessarily; "Voici ce qui était arrivé; je puis le raconter en peu de mots." (14), he says, rather than directly proceeding to the dramatization. Secondly, and typically, characters speak out of character, again demonstrating Eyma's insensitivity to dialogue and diction. Imagine a twelve-year-old saying,

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> "Ah! si ma pauvre maman vivait! s'écria la Petite Dolly en sanglotant, je ne serais pas si malheureuse et je saurais peut-être travailler aujourd'hui!" (8)

Or imagine a young girl with such insight and sensitivity as to justify, on the basis of drunkenness, the actions of an outrageously cruel adult. "Ne faut-il pas, Monsieur, qu'elle soit en cet état pour m'infliger les tortures qu'elle me fait subir?" (9) Thirdly, exaggeration takes over when Eyma wants Dolly's misery to rend the reader's heart. The attack which the girl sustains is unbelievable.

> Dolly tomba épuisée de coups, les cheveux arrachés par poignées, les épaules et les joues enflées par les tapes et les soufflets. En vain, au milieu de ses cris et de ses larmes, elle essayait de confesser la vérité à sa cousine. (13)

The cruelty to which Dolly is subjected need not be so gothically portrayed; the play upon the reader's emotions and sympathy is too obviously contrived. Finally, the tale contains an evident failure in verisimilitude in the characterization of Dolly's cousin, Hartman. The cousin cruelly beats Dolly; yet suddenly a bond of love appears when Dolly is about to receive refuge in the Benton household. Hartman insists that she loves Dolly and cannot part with her. The narrator comments:

> Il y a, dans la vie, de ces moments suprêmes où le coeur se réveille subitement, à l'heure où se rompent les liens qui avaient tenu rivées deux existences. Les êtres les plus vils, les plus rabaissés, les plus méchants, ont de ces retours subits, de ces bouffées de sentiments, si j'osais le dire, qui élèvent tout à coup le coeur et l'emplissent de parfum. Les tyrans comme les victimes de la vie intime éprouvent à l'heure dite, les mêmes commotions. Bill ne s'étonna pas plus de l'attendrissement de la cousine Hartman

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This change in attitude is in no way anticipated in the characterization of Hartman. Moreover, time has permitted no retrospective mellowing of viewpoint and heart. Artistically, this is a weakness; yet it would seem that the author-narrator genuinely believed in the existence and viability of such mysterious bonds. For the bond between Hartman and Dolly is of the same nature as those we have seen previously in Eyma's fiction: a heartless man is suddenly mellowed by a reunion with his daughter. Perhaps Eyma believed in the basic goodness of man. The author should anticipate such reactions, however, through more effectual, penetrating characterization.

Eight partial images of the United States emerge from the pages of "Dolly Geerts." The reader learns something of the American West; America as refuge for fortune-seekers; the work habits of the rich; class intermarriage; the American concept of equality; American charity; and the instability of fortunes in the United States. Some of these are implied, others are directly stated.

In "Dolly Geerts," as in other tales, the West is seen as the land of new birth and fortune. When William meets financial disaster, it is westward that he turns.

> "Allons, ajouta-t-il en se tournant vers sa mère et vers ses soeurs, je suis jeune, Dolly est courageuse et forte: partons pour l'Ouest;

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> l'avenir est à nous...et William Benton est devenue, m'écrit-on d'Amérique, un des plus riches propriétaires de l'Iowa." (39-40)

The West is the land of promise; the American Eden has moved beyond the Mississippi.

Generally an immigrant is successful in America, but Dolly's parents are an exception. Dolly tells us,

> "Mon père et ma mère étaient venus ici d'Allemagne, tout jeunes, mais n'avaient pu réussir à faire la fortune qu'ils cherchaient. Je suis née dans ce pays, et ma naissance, qui aurait du causer de la joie à mes parents, leur fut un surcroît de charges et de misère. Ils moururent de chagrin et de désespoir, ma mère presque aussitôt après mon père."(7)

Dolly's background is,of course, necessary to the evolution of the plot. But it also implies that not every immigrant meets with success and fortune. In fact, one can be as miserably poor in America as elsewhere.

Though the son of a rich man, William's work habits tell us that Americans, rich or poor, are industrious. The narrator comments,

> William avait subi la commune loi de presque tous les jeunes gens appartenant même aux plus riches familles des Etats-Unis. La fortune, dans ce pays, provenant toujours du travail, il est extrêmement rare que les pères, tout en tolérant que leurs enfants mènent grande vie, n'exigent pas qu'ils augmentent le patrimoine par le travail. (21)

Thus the reader learns that an American fortune demands honest work. Given Eyma's constant respect for labor and its fruits, he no doubt highly approved of such an approach to life.

The question of marriage between social classes is given a very interesting turn in "Dolly Geerts." Eyma comments

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here, and elsewhere, that the absence of class distinctions in America eliminates a good deal of friction from love affairs, and hence impoverishes dramatic material and American fiction.

> Soit dit sans une trop longue digression sur ce sujet, là est l'obstacle que rencontrent les écrivains américains à créer des romans de moeurs intéressants, où les luttes entre l'amour et les conditions sociales fournissent matière, dans notre vieux monde, à tant de fictions saisissantes, à tant de péripéties dramatiques. Ce qui est la règle commune ici, devient l'exception là-bas; comme l'exception ici est exposée, au contraire, à devenir la commune loi dans cette société nouvelle. (26)

In an effort to overcome this obstacle, Eyma places old Mr. Benton in an "Old World" frame of mind, causing him to object to William's marriage to the socially inferior Dolly.

> M. Benton avait l'orgueil d'une grande fortune, honnêtement acquise d'ailleurs; mais il oubliait volontiers de combien était loin du point où il était parvenu, le degré de l'échelle sur lequel il avait mis le pied au départ. M. Benton, en définitive, n'était que le fils d'un simple matelot déserteur, et il avait commencé par être portefaix sur les warfs de New-York. Mais si les gens qui s'élèvent dans la société ont quelque raison de tendre à s'élever toujours et à prendre pour point de départ de leur famille leur point d'arrivée à eux, aux Etats-Unis où la seule distinction qui sépare les classes est la richesse, il est moins permis que partout ailleurs, à un homme d'atteindre le but envié. Ainsi ne raisonnait pas toujours M. Benton; et Dolly avait entendu parfois sortir de ses lèvres, à ce sujet, des doctrines qui lui avaient donné le frisson au coeur. (27)

Mr. Benton's attitude provides the dramatic material which Eyma thought so valuable. And Dolly, too, has a touch of the Old World about her; she is aware of the potential impropriety of her feelings for William. At times she almost hopes that by some change of fortune the gulf between

her and William might be narrowed.

> Peut-être pensera-t-on que Dolly était bien ambitieuse dans ses rêves, et qu'elle se versait elle-même l'amertume de ses joies? Oui, il en serait ainsi au point de vue de nos moeurs européennes, où le dénoument demandé par Dolly n'est qu'une exception aux règles de notre société; mais nullement au point de vue des moeurs américaines, où l'influence des grandes lois de l'égalite autorise ces alliances, sans distinction de classe, pourvu que l'homme ou la femme que le marriage élève de la pauvreté ou de l'obscurité à la fortune et l'éclat d'une condition nouvelle, en soit digne par sa conduite et par ses qualités. Les mêmes motifs, qui ne s'opposent point à ce qu'une ouvrière honnête bien élevée, distinguée de coeur et d'intelligence, soit admise à la table et dans l'intérieur des riches familles, légitiment parfaitement l'ambition qu'elle peut nourrir d'entrer dans le sein de ces familles par la grande porte du mariage. (25-26)

Dolly's aspirations are justified. And the young William is thoroughly American; just as he looks westward for a prosperous future, so he insists on the realization of the doctrine of equality, and marriage to Betzy. When she urges him to listen to his father, William plants a kiss on her forehead and says only, "Impossible." The second-generation American is a pure product of American culture and customs. The introduction of the "class and marriage" theme illuminates, through contrast, the differences in American and European attitudes.

This brings us to the subject of equality in America. The hospitality which the Bentons show Betzy implies an absence of class distinctions in the United States. William's comments make it evident that, given Dolly's character, it is only just that his family should fully accept her.

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> "Dolly...Bonne, honnête, laborieuse, à n'en pas douter, puisque je vous vois dans la maison de ma mère, et que votre place est marquée à sa table entre mes soeurs! C'est bien, Dolly! et je vous remercie du fond de mon coeur de la joie que vous me donnez en ce moment." (29)

The narrator completes the image of American equality.

> Dans beaucoup de familles américaines, les ouvrières appelées à travailler en journées sont traitées sur un pied d'égalité à peu près complète, en tant que par leur conduite, par leur éducation et par leur tenue, elles s'en montrent dignes. Ainsi elles prennent leurs repas et le thé à la table des maîtres; cela s'explique moins peut-être par la pratique absolue du principe de l'égalité politique, que par le grand honneur où, dans ce pays, on tient le travail rehaussé par la bonne conduite. Ce fait se constate notamment dans les Etats de l'est et du nord; et dans ces derniers, les domestiques eux-mêmes, qui reçoivent et prennent le titre d'aides, mangent quelquefois à la table des maîtres. (23)

In America, labor is the measure of equality.

Eyma's picture of sections of New York City is none too pretty. Dolly's residence is as poor and ugly as anything that might be found in Paris.

> La pauvre petite mendiante...disparut dans une allée sale et noire, au bout de laquelle elle trouva une sorte d'échelle qu'elle grimpa jusqu'à une mansarde hideuse, ou plutôt une halle planchéiée, sous un toit effondré en bien des places.
>
> Dans ce cloaque vivaient pêle-mêle une vingtaine d'individus, un échantillon de tout ce que New-York renferme de plus misérable et de plus vil; gens de toutes professions: musiciens ambulants, montreurs d'animaux, chanteurs de cabarets, coupebourses, etc. (10)

Moreover, Dolly is not the only New Yorker who, caught in the grips of poverty, stands in the cold and sells hot corn. Quite the contrary!

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> Quoique habitué à l'entendre retentir tous les soirs et souvent très-avant dans la nuit, dans toutes les rues de New-York où il y a affluence de promeneurs... (3-4)

the narrator says, suggesting the constancy of a poverty element in the city. And he compares poverty in New York and Paris.

> La vente du maïs bouilli est une industrie nocturne que les enfants pauvres et les bohémiens de la ville impériale exercent à New-York. Il en est des crieurs de maïs chaud, comme de ces petits marchands de bouquets ou d'allumettes qui courent nos boulevards parisiens, le soir, se contentant d'accepter l'aumône qu'on leur fait, en conservant pour le lendemain leur marchandise que personne ne prend jamais. (5)

These comments, in combination with the financial failure of Dolly's parents, suggest that America is not necessarily, at all times and for all people, the land of milk and honey.

American charity takes unique forms, we are told. Dolly is put to work in an industrial establishment. William's charity, then, is at first personal, but later institutional. Such is generally the case in the United States.

> M. Bill avait fondé à Brooklin (sic)...un établissement industriel moitié école, moitié hospice; un refuge hospitalier en tout cas, où il recueillait les enfants et les adultes qui venaient à lui, ou qu'il convertissait au travail et à la morale. Aux Etats-Unis, la charité s'exerce ainsi, par la propagande et par institutions, sur une grande échelle. (15)

The fact that the narrator supplies this information suggests that such was not the European experience; rather, it demands elucidation because it is a phenomenon peculiar to America.

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Finally, the events of the tale impress on the reader an image of the instability of American fortunes. Mr. Benton had made an honest fortune; he as honestly lost it in the fluctuations of American business. And the reader is encouraged to accept the commonness of such an event.

> Si grande, cependant, que fût la fortune de M. Benton, elle était, comme tant d'autres grandes fortunes des Etats-Unis, exposée à sombrer d'un jour à l'autre. (27)

Fortune in America can be explained in an adaptation of a catch phrase: hard come, easy go.

"Dolly Geerts," then, gives a relatively realistic, unidealized image of the American scene. Equality is a positive element in American life, and the West is a land of promise. But in America, as elsewhere, poverty exists and fortunes are lost as well as made.

Only one short story remains to be considered, that "L'Epopée de Betzy et d'un Village." The title itself indicates that the tale treats not only a woman, but also a village. Significantly, it is an American village.

The story revolves around two young people, Betzy and John, who are neighbors in a burgeoning American village, Marytown, Ohio. Marytown, John, and Betzy have grown up together. At fourteen, Betzy is orphaned. Entrusting her little brother to John, and borrowing forty dollars, she leaves the village to learn a trade and become self-supporting. After five years of silence, Betzy returns to Marytown a prosperous young woman. And just as she had prospered, by dint of work, so had John and Marytown. John had long loved

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Betzy; because she accomplished her objectives, he feels free to ask her hand in marriage. So ends the "L'Epopée de Betzy," and here begins the story of Lowell, Massachusetts, where Betzy had learned her trade.

Betzy's strongest character trait is stoicism. She is absolutely determined to succeed, regardless of, and without reference to, the sacrifice entailed. For example, when she tells John that she must leave Marytown,

> Elle n'avait ni pâli de la pâleur de John, ni pleuré à la vue des larmes qui coulèrent le long des joues du jeune homme. Son visage demeura impassible comme un marbre. (111)

Betzy is also a very courageous young woman. She has no idea of what awaits her in the outside world, but she proceeds nonetheless. Asked where she plans to go, Betzy replies,

> "Je ne sais encore; demain peut détruire mes projets d'aujourd'hui; les événements sont les seuls maîtres de nos volontés." (113)

Her stoicism and courage are foreshadowed in the reader's introduction to Betzy. We are told that she is strong-willed and a bit of a tomboy. Yet "Betzy avait donc un caractère mâtiné de douceur et d'énergie." (104) Her tenacity increased with maturity, enabling her to overcome severe hardships while maintaining her integrity.

> "Toute pauvre que j'étais, je suis restée, ai-je besoin de vous le dire, John, une honnête fille. J'ai préféré souffrir, avoir froid, et faim quelquefois." (121)

Betzy's silence during her trials is attributed to her desire to prove herself; to continue her efforts. For John would surely have rescued her had he known of her misery. "J'ai

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mieux aimé souffrir toute seul...J'ai triomphé de tout." (121) Betzy is obviously a strong, independent heroine.

John's outstanding character trait is his sensitivity to Betzy's nature, his comprehension of her basic goodness. When others reject Betzy because of her independence, John insists on her infinite worth. Realizing that Betzy's nature demands attainment and self-sufficiency, he makes no protest over her departure from Marytown. Incessantly concerned about Betzy during her five-year absence, John once set out in search of her. But he turned back because of the implications of such an act. John has complete confidence in Betzy; he trusts her and hopes in her. John is of a sentimental nature, witness his tears over Betzy's departure. And finally, John is faithful to his responsibilities, witness his care for his elderly, paralytic father. In sum, John is worthy of Betzy.

Betzy is aware of John's confidence in her. In fact, his confidence motivates her; she wants to prove herself worthy of his trust. She tells him that she suffered alone "avec la conviction où j'étais que vous aviez assez de confiance en moi pour ne pas m'accuser." (121) Hence a theme common to Eyma's fiction again emerges: love's power to transform the individual in whom one trusts. John's trust and confidence motivate and sustain Betzy.

Another theme which figures in the tale is the familiar one of work and its blessings. Work makes Betzy feel worthy of John; makes John a prosperous Marytown landowner; Marytown a prosperous and expanding community.

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This theme binds the entire "Epopée;" Betzy to John, and the two to the village.

Marytown is presented as a typical American village, founded and developed by American ingenuity. The rhetoric of the tale creates a sense of the rapid and, as it were, providential growth of the New World.

> John et Betzy vivaient dans un village sur les bords de l'Ohio; village à peine ébauché, à l'état de bourg, avec quelques maisons ou plutot quelques cabanes clair-semées, à deux cents yards du fleuve dont les ondes puissantes pouvaient les transporter à peu près sur tous les points de la grande république où ils auraient voulu se rendre, et à cinq cents yards d'une grasse forêt. Dans cette forêt une trentaine d'émigrants avaient abattu un grand cercle d'arbres défoncé, défriché, ensemencé un vaste périmètre de champs; tracé des rues qu'eussent enviées une ville européenne de deux cents mille âmes; bâti les quelques cabanes que nous avons dites; établi des routes; marqué la place où s'élèverait un jour le City-House (hôtel de ville), jeté les fondements d'une église, ceux d'une école publique, et planté le cimetière juste au milieu de la future cité. Car on avait bien compté que ce camp de travailleurs deviendrait une cité. Sous ce rapport les Américains se trompent rarement; c'est pour cela qu'ils décorent à l'avance du nom pompeux de cité, à la grande surprise et pour le guidissement irréfléchi de certains voyageurs, le moindre village dont-ils viennent de jeter la graine en terre. (106)

The Marytown villagers were right; the village did become a town and a riverboat center. And the riverboats brought people, who in turn increased the labor force, which in turn developed Marytown. And so it is in America, we are told. The search for well-being and fortune pushes the populations ahead, always seeking the best.

> Et puis, il existe une race d'hommes dont la mission semble être de laisser sa trace sur ce vaste continent en y jetant des jalons de civilisation, pour aller plus loin mettre la cognée dans les arbres des forêts et enfoncer la charrue dans le

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>
> Cette race est celle des Yankees, ces descendants des puritains, qui ont eu le Massachusetts pour berceau, et qui ont, ensuite, couvert de leur industrieuse énergie toute l'Amérique du Nord, commençant les villes, fondant les grandes fermes, ébauchant les manufactures, construisant les chantiers, puis, laissant au flot qui court sur leurs talons le soin de compléter leur oeuvre. (116-117)

The mobile, floating nature of large segments of the public, and their willingness to clear and settle vast regions, are explained by American fearlessness, self-confidence, and faith in the future. A Bible in the hand and an axe on the back, these pioneers immigrate to new sections of the United States.

> C'est un trait caractéristique de la vie des Américains et un des secrets de leur grandeur, que cette facile et constante émigration à l'intérieur. Le Désert ne les épouvante pas; l'émigration n'est point l'exil pour eux. Ayant la conscience de leurs forces productives, ils savent bien que ce long voyage qu'ils entreprennent, a un but fécondant. La patrie est pour eux là où est le travail.
>
> Ils se séparent héroïquement de leur famille; rompent résolument avec la gêne, quelquefois même avec un bien-être médiocre ou peu stable, pour courir les aventures, plus ou moins certaines, d'une émigration, tantôt vers les contrées nouvelles, tantôt vers les villes où le miroir de la fortune attire l'alouette. (107)

For the American fears not work, but misery; he expends infinite energy, and fears no sacrifice, if only poverty can be avoided.

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> Ce qui effraye l'Américain, c'est la misère, et non la lutte; il aime même cette dernière, et la première l'épouvante. Pour l'éviter il se transporte aisément de la Californie en Louisiane; du Massachusetts dans le Texas; du New Jersey dans l'Iowa, et visa versa, insensible aux variations des latitudes, infatigable aux longues courses, bravant tous les dangers.
>
> C'est ainsi que les chemins des grands et féconds déserts de l'Ouest ont été ouverts à des populations entières, par de hardis pionniers qui n'ont pas tous recueilli à parts égales, le bénéfice de leur dévouement et de leurs sacrifices. (108)

Eyma evidently admired this American tenacity and drive. His lengthy explanations of the American pioneering spirit suggest that this spirit was foreign to the European, and therefore a source of curiosity and wonder.

It is interesting to note the American customs and "idiosyncracies" which fascinate our European observer. A fine example of a custom thought "normal" by Americans, but thought exceptional by Eyma, is the location of cemeteries in the perimeters of towns. Eyma attributes this to the cleverness of speculators who found villages. As villages grow, cemeteries must be moved, and therein is profit. "Souvent c'est là tout le bénéfice de leur entreprise, et souvent aussi ce bénéfice est considérable." (107)
Eyma had a highly developed, if not suspicious, sense of the American eye for business and profit. Even the American dead are subject to the machinations of speculators!

Both business methods and pioneering spirit are related to the American attitude toward fortune. Prosperity is perhaps the largest, most obsessively pursued American goal. No one, not even a woman, is to be discouraged from

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> Et puis, Betzy avait parlé de fortune à faire; ce mot contenait pour John tout un enseignement: un Américain n'essayera jamais de détourner quelqu'un de la voie qui mène à ce but; il croirait assumer une responsabilité dont plus tard on lui demanderait compte, sans aucun doute. (112)

The fact that Betzy would so ardently pursue fortune tells something of the American, as opposed to the European, woman. The New World environment encourages and permeates each citizen regardless of gender; all institutions are geared to the same end: prosperity.

> Les femmes américaines ont le caractère particulièrement viril; c'est le résultat de leur éducation. Elles ont vite pris un parti, quel qu'il soit par exemple. Les moeurs américaines favorisent singulièrement ces résolutions soudaines et énergiques; l'égalité sociale, le respect protecteur dont on entoure les femmes, la crainte qu'elles ont de la misère, et un instinct pour ainsi dire national du travail et de l'apreté au gain, voilà en quoi certaines rudesses extérieures de la société américaine tournent finalement au profit de cette société. (109-110)

Even the absence of some of the most indispensable elements of European culture, such as a particular sort of femininity and certain social graces, is converted to profit in America.

"L'Epopée de Betzy et d'un village" contains an interesting comment on the attitude of the Yankee toward the South. When Betzy must decide upon a locale in which to ply her trade, her Puritan background affects her decision. She doesn't go south because

> elle avait ouï parler du relâchement des moeurs dans cette riche cité du Sud, et Betzy, fille des puritains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre, s'était effrayée de ce contact dangereux. C'est pourquoi elle tourna vers le Nord. (114)

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What the evils of the South were cannot be ascertained. But perhaps the French reader drew, from this passage, conclusions regarding the puritanical nature of the Yankee mind, rather than visions of southern degeneracy. Inherent in such rhetoric is another common theme: the potential effects of environment upon the individual.

Betzy's success depends not only upon her innate qualities, but also upon her environment in Lowell, Massachusetts. She found there "un sanctuaire de honnêteté, de travail" (121); and she studies there "car toutes les femmes y ont une éducation de ladies." (121) Lowell was, for Eyma, not only a great fascination but a model which Europe might well imitate.

> On y trouve la solution radicale de tous les problèmes de la morale que l'on poursuit dans les grands centres indus triels de l'Europe. (123)

Drawing from Michel Chevalier's Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord, and quoting from J. -J. Ampère's comments of 1851, in Promenades en Amérique (Vol. I), Eyma describes and praises this model community. He gives statistics on employment and salaries; the number of girls trained; appearance and dress. He notes that France would never conceive of separating girls from their families, yet these American girls are scrupulously tended by responsible matrons. In sum, Eyma finds unique advantages in this peculiarly American enterprise, and recommends it to his own countrymen.

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Finally, the American West again receives tacit notice as the land of the future. Just as the heroes and heroines of the previous tales had gone West in search of fortune, so Betzy's brother goes to Texas to realize his dreams. His attitude illustrates American hopes and expectations turning westward. For this young man expects to be a rich farmer within five years. One can imagine the French reader's reaction to the prospect of such rapid fortune! Either American optimism is incurable, or the West is indeed the Promised Land. Given the prosperity of the New World, the latter may have been the more tenable possibility.

The American setting of "L'Epopée de Betzy et d'un village" is essential to the tale. Though Betzy's character traits are universals--which is only to say that human nature is universal--these traits find outlets and are developed in a peculiarly American manner. Because Betzy is American, she grows up in a rising American community; is tailored to American standards of womanhood; is apprenticed in Lowell. Consequently, Eyma has opportunity to explicate certain American customs and conditions. He creates an image of the typical American village and its growth; American tenacity and will; the new western frontier, the rôle of environment in the formation of the American woman; a model American enterprise; the American attitude toward fortune, work, and misery. This conflux of images emerges pleasantly, through the story of a young man's confidence

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Several conclusions regarding Eyma's artistry, and the image of America which he promulgated, can be drawn from these five tales. From a critical point of view, Eyma's tales lack artistry. They contain obtrusive narrators, stock characters, inconsistencies in characterization, and artificial diction. On the positive side, however, we have noted considerable unity of plot, effective foreshadowing, appropriately single plots, and attention to limited but significant detail. As considerations of his novels will indicate, Eyma was more effective when dealing in the short story form.

I would suggest, however, that the artistic failures of the tales contribute to the strength of the American image which emerges from them. Because characters and their reactions are stock; because the reader could not be perplexed by ambiguous motivation, and caught up in startling personalities, his attentions could be wholly directed to that one aspect of the tales which was somewhat new and different: namely, the American setting, with its implications. This element of Eyma's tales would catch the eye and mind of the French reader. Because characters, themes, and motifs are stock, and therefore provoke little pondering or psychological exploration, the mind dwells on the one element--the American--which provides possibilities, wonder, and the mystery of the unknown for the nineteenth-century

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Frenchman. The outstanding man of letters, the artistic genuis, enchants the reader on such a variety of levels that the mind is dazzled, and divided among many elements. The minor man of letters brings few innovations and little freshness to his work. In Eyma's case, only one factor stands out, only one innovation is present to captivate the reader's mind. That innovation is America.

One must ask, of course, if the tales found an audience. Two factors support a positive response. One, French readers of the period were enthusiastic about tales set on American soil; they demanded such tales.[8] The setting itself, then, may have attracted an audience. Secondly, two of the tales saw more than one edition. "Lora Cameron" appeared in four separate volumes; "Betzy Geerts" saw four editions and one serial publication in a popular journal.[9] Numerous editions suggest popularity, and promise an expanded circulation and availability, and therefore a wider audience. One can safely assume, then, that Eyma's tales were read by many Parisians, and that Eyma's image of America, outstanding by contrast with stock elements, was impressed on the minds of his readers.

Explicitly and implicitly, through rhetoric and action, several images of America emerge from the tales. America is the New Eden, a paradise where fortunes are made--

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[8]Devonshire, English Novel, p. 85.

[9]See footnote 1.

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but also lost, a land in which hard work and virtuous living are rewarded. The American West is the new frontier; a land of hope, promise, and prosperity. America is the land of equality. American women have singular traits. And American attitudes toward business, fortune, misery, and pioneering are singular. The French reader found, in Eyma's tales, a partial image of the United States; its people, its culture, its motivating force.

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CHAPTER IV

THE AMERICAN NOVELS

L. Xavier Eyma published two novels set on American soil. Le Trône d'Argent appeared in 1860,[1] followed in 1866 by La Chasse à l'Esclave.[2] The novels, like the American tales, are here considered as art and as vehicles of images of the United States. Like the tales, they present American customs and attitudes on both explicit and implicit levels. The novels indicate, however, that Eyma the artist was less competent in the novel than in the short story form.

It is interesting that Eyma did twice turn to the longer novel form in communicating his impressions of America. Though popular taste and demand may have encouraged his use of an American setting, it would seem that Eyma saw unique possibilities of communication in literary form. The facts of American life could be presented in non-literary guise, as indeed they were in Eyma's non-fiction studies. Eyma's choice of literary form suggests, however, the unique function of a literary presentation. The drama of fiction subtly reveals nuances and attitudes implicitly creating an image of America.

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[1]Louis Xavier Eyma, Le Trône d'Argent (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1860). Hereafter, works cited are those of Eyma unless otherwise indicated.

[2]Paris: P. Brunet.

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Eyma's proximity to his American experience affected the rôle of the United States in the novels, as it had in the tales. Le Trône d'Argent appeared on May 19, 1860, one year following Eyma's return from the United States; the rôle of the United States is incidental to the story's central concern.[3] La Chasse à l'Esclave, however, appeared on June 2, 1866, seven years after Eyma's American travels; here the rôle of America is integral. Perspective and reflection seemingly enlarged the function of the American setting within the literary whole.

The date of publication of La Chasse à l'Esclave, 1866, suggests that the Civil War may have prompted its publication. Eyma was very much interested in the Civil War (as his newspaper articles indicate). But the French public, too, followed the conflict with interest, and Eyma may have written La Chasse in response to the tastes and demands of an interested public. As is often the case, a completely extra-literary phenomenon stimulates the writing of fiction. In the case of La Chasse, an image of the United States reaches a much larger audience than usual - an audience brought to the novel by extra-literary events.

Le Trône d'Argent is set in New York City, in 1850. The complication (and it is literally that!) involves several sets of individuals who are, we discover, unknowingly related

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[3]Dates of appearance of both novels are taken from the Bibliographie de la France.

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to one another. The hero of the story, Antoine Roche, has come to New York to make a fortune, and hence exonerate his father who had been robbed and consequently died insolvent. En route to New York, Antoine becomes acquainted with two Germans, Hermann and Rosa; the three part when the ship docks. Antoine delivers himself to Mr. Rosenwallen and his wife, Gertrude, through whom Antoine hopes to become established. Upon visiting a cousin's grave, Antoine meets not only Gertrude, but also his shipmates, Rosa and Hermann. And here the interrelationships, almost inextricable, come to light.

Gertrude Rosenwallen had been the fiancée of Antoine's dead cousin, Constantin. The marriage of the two had been prevented because of Constantin's unjust implication in a murder. Through the murder, however, Constantin obtained a foster-daughter, Lucie, who was related to the murderer.

It evolves that Antoine's shipmate, Hermann, was Constantin's best friend; he later married Lucie, and the fruit of their union was Rosa. Hence Rosa is a relative, twice removed, of the murderer whose crime had indirectly prevented the marriage of Gertrude and Constantin. Therefore Gertrude is ill-disposed toward Rosa, and hopes that Antoine, who loves Rosa, will marry Betzy, Gertrude's daughter.

To further complicate matters, Hermann holds some mysterious grudge against Rosenwallen, though the latter is backing Hermann financially. Rosenwallen, we discover, is operating under an assumed name; his real name is Altkirch,

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the murderer who had come between Gertrude and Constantin. And poor Gertrude is married to the man! As if this weren't enough, Rosenwallen-Altkirch is also the man who robbed Antoine's father long ago in France. And there's more to come: Rosenwallen-Altkirch is also Rosa's grandfather.

Perhaps this can best be summarized by simply saying that everyone in the story holds something against everyone, or is related to everyone; the plot unravels the relationships, sees Rosenwallen to financial disaster and Antoine to success, and places Rosa in Antoine's arms. Along the way it provides revenge for Hermann, who protects the reputation of all innocent parties through careful manipulation of events. After this exhausting series of unravelings, Hermann, Antoine, and Rosa return to France.

The series of relationships established in this plot is obviously preposterous. That Rosenwallen should happen to be the man who murdered Lucie's sister, and the robber of Antoine's father; Hermann and Rosa should happen to be on the same ship as Antoine; Antoine would happen to be sent to Rosenwallen for financial backing--such contrivance obviates critical commentary. Obviously, Eyma handled the plots of tales much more effectively; the novel form gave him too much latitude, too much freedom, here used to the point of license.

Moreover, the story is riddled with the characteristics, here become devices, of the sentimental novel tradition. There are the expected graveyard scenes: Antoine visits the cemetery and,

> En regardant, les larmes aux yeux, les tombes fleuries qui l'entouraient, il songea à l'abandon où devait être celle de son oncle. --Pauvre tombe! disait-il; elle est perdue sans doute sous l'herbe; nulle main pieuse ne l'a soignée depuis dix-huit ans, nulle larme ne l'a arrosée![4]

And Rosa, when visiting the same tomb, gesticulates as a sentimental heroine must.

> La jeune fille prie, prosternée sur le marbre du tombeau...elle n'avait point levé la tête. Elle n'avait rien vu, rien entendu...A ce moment, Rosa, qui avait fini sa prière, se leva, et s'avanca en rougissant vers Hermann et Antoine. (47, 51)

Note the characteristic blush upon seeing Antoine. And every character has a most generous supply of tears.

> ...Madame Rosenwallen, dont les yeux étaient gonflés de larmes (38)...Les sanglots étouffaient la voix de Madame Altkirch (42)...Madame Rosenwallen émue jusqu'à la suffocation (45)...Hermann n'acheva pas; ses yeux se mouillèrent de larmes, et il détourna la tête (91)... Antoine passa la main sur ses yeux et détourna la tête pour cacher ses larmes. (113)

Now-familiar themes and motifs emerge through stock gestures which function in Eyma's characterizations: the dutiful daughter, the devoted lover, the constant friend, the honor of family name, the intuition of mysterious bonds. Rosa, always ready to execute her father's wishes, is the dutiful daughter, as seen in a typically sentimental gesture.

> Ouvrant alors les portes, il (Hermann) montra à Gertrude Rosa, tranquillement assise dans un fauteuil, au fond d'une pièce voisine, et lisant.-- Vous avez besoin de moi, mon père? demanda la jeune fille en se levant. (80)

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[4] Le Trône d'Argent, p. 38. Hereafter, page numbers appear in parentheses following quotations, and refer to the work under discussion.

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Antoine and Rosa are the devoted lovers, finding in one another a guiding light and a sanctuary. Antoine tells Rosa,

> "C'est à moi de vous bénir, Rosa, car vous transformez ma vie, en m'ouvrant des horizons et des espérances que je n'eusse jamais osé entrevoir. Vous avez soulagé mon âme de toutes les tristesses et de toutes les obscurités qu'y avaient accumulées les horribles doctrines de ce Rosenwallen." (58)

When Rosa replies to Antoine's marriage proposal, she delineates the qualities of the sentimental hero.

> "Votre nom que je savais, répondit Rosa, l'affection cachée que vous gardait mon père, le souvenir de votre oncle qui se reportait naturellement sur vous, votre tristesse à bord, l'émotion anticipée de notre rencontre prévue ici, tout appelait mon attention, Monsieur Antoine, et...Rosa n'acheva pas; elle baissa de nouveau les yeux en rougissant.."(56)

Hermann is the faithful friend, determined to clear the name of Constantin; to this end he has given his life. In Gertrude one sees another aspect of such fidelity, the religion of memory. She is faithful in spirit to Constantin. As Hermann tells her.

> "Personne au monde n'a le droit de vous reprocher cette religion du souvenir. Vous êtes la meilleure des mères, vous êtes la plus vertueuse des épouses, vous êtes la femme qui était digne de ce bon et noble Constantin. Les grands coeurs et les grandes âmes sont faits pour être unis, et quand le malheur ou les tempêtes de la vie les séparent, c'est vraiment une triste chose!" (53)

Family honor is the very basis of the entire tale; the necessity to restore the dignity of the family name brings Antoine to New York in search of fortune. Antoine tells Rosa,

> "De fortune, je n'en aurai jamais à vous offrir, car ma vie, cela n'est pas probable du moins, ne sera jamais assez longue pour que je fasse deux fortunes:

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Closely allied with Antoine's sense of honor is his filial piety. He comments,

> "J'en juge par moi-même, car si jamais un mot outrageant contre mon père tombait de la bouche d'un homme, je tuerais celui qui le dirait." (193)

Finally, the intuition of mysterious bonds appears in Rosenwallen; once again, we see the mellowing effects of paternity.

> Par moment, en effet, Rosenwallen ressentait pour Rosa des accès d'affection qu'il s'efforcait de maîtriser en présence de Gertrude et de ses filles, mais qui le trahissaient souvent. Plusieurs fois sa femme l'avait surpris tenant dans ses bras et pressant contre son coeur la jolie tête de Rosa qu'il arrosait de larmes et de baisers. (148)

Eyma's technique is part and parcel of what might be called sentimental foreshadowing, a tendency to indicate by "frissons" et "sentiments" that more is present than meets the eye. In the person of Gertrude a good bit of this appears. She is aware, for example, of some relationship with Antoine. "Le nom de ce jeune homme et les premières paroles prononcées par lui avaient profondement ému son coeur." (21) Foreshadowing extends into characterization; because individuals react to their emotions, we know them to be sensitive and soulful. When Gertrude tells Antoine of the events surrounding Constantin's implication in murder, "Infamie! s'écria Antoine en cachant son visage pour sangloter." (45) Thus we receive one measure of the man. We receive another by the posture of characters, as when Antoine gives thanks for Gertrude's love of Constantin, "en

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interrompant tout à coup Madame Rosenwallen et en s'agenouillant devant elle avec un respect plein d'attendrissement..." (46) Passions are expressed through tableaux drawn from melodrama. Notice the manner in which Hermann's anger is portrayed.

> Hermann se promenait dans la chambre avec une vivacité de lion. Ses longs cheveux blancs flottaient autour de sa tête, comme une neige qu'éparpille un tourbillon de vent; ses poings crispés frappaient tantôt la muraille, tantôt s'abattaient lourdement sur quelque meuble. (76)

Gertrude's hatred for Rosa, stemming from her relationship to a murderer, is delineated in the same melodramatic manner.

> Madame Rosenwallen, au contact de la jeune fille, dégagea brusquement sa main que tenait Rosa, et recula sa chaise avec une sorte d'épouvante. (85)

The description is not enough, however; the Eyma narrator is forever in the same skin, compelled to reveal the precise meaning of such behavior.

> Tous ces mouvements rapidement et énergiquement exécutés, trahissaient la haine subite qui était née dans l'âme de Gertrude contre cette pauvre enfant, et la repulsion insurmontable qu'elle éprouvait à sa vue. (85)

Eyma's use of sentimental devices and melodramatic techniques reveals them in their bony, and I might say devitalized, essence. His fiction reveals the weaknesses of the sentimental tradition, its obvious contrivances and excessive appeal to the emotions. Though it seems impossible from our contemporary point of view, the nineteenth-century reader actually relished such tableaux. Which reader? The one concerned, not with art, but with the almanach; the moral of the story.

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In Le Trône d'Argent, Eyma abandons the ventriloquy device used in "L'Aventure des Cinq-Chênes," and turns instead to the "play within the play" technique to rouse the conscience of Rosenwallen. In this case, however, it is a "story within the story." Hermann has arranged a banquet in Rosenwallen's honor. Addressing the gathering, Hermann tells Rosenwallen's story; the latter realizes he has been found out. He had hoped to drown "l'horreur de son passé qu'il avait cru oublié par vingt années de succes, de puissance, et de considération publique." (149) But his conscience is aroused. He straightens his financial affairs, swears that "c'est pour la dernière fois que j'ai occupé ce trône édifié sur des dollars et sur des billets de banque" (220), and dies. The story within the story catalyzed Rosenwallen's remorse.

The character descriptions in Le Trône d'Argent are repetitive of Eyma's others. Rosa is fifteen, "grande, mince, pâle, langoureuse...yeux bleus...ombragés de cils très blonds, comme ses cheveux." (10) Antoine is "de taille moyenne et d'une complexion délicate. Sa figure maigre et osseuse...accusaient de violentes souffrances morales et physiques." (1) Hermann resembles the traditional "God the Father" image; "De grands cheveux blancs lui tombaient des tempes et de l'occiput sur les épaules...de petits yeux fins et intelligents pétillaient sous ses sourcils très accentués." (11)

Hermann's character is among Eyma's most realistic. He might be labeled a pragmatic idealist, or a sentimental

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realist. He is noble; sheds tears; feels deep love and loyalty, all revealed in gestures which mark him as sentimental. Nonetheless, he is capable of great calculations; and--astonishing in a sentimental character--can restrain his emotions to achieve some practical, calculated end. He tolerates Rosenwallen without any betraying "frissons," until the opportune moment at which he can be unmasked without injuring the honor and name of Gertrude and the girls. He has reverence for the dead and dying, but not so much as to forestall the practical act of silencing the dying Rosenwallen.

> Après que la porte fut fermés, Hermann retira sa main qu'il avait collée sur les lèvres de Rosenwallen: S'agenouillant alors devant le cadavre: --Que Dieu me le pardonne! murmura-t-il. (222)

Hermann is a relatively realistic blend of sentimental reverence and pragmatic action--all, of course, in the service not only of practical ends, but of ideals that inhere in the sentimental tradition.

In the characterization of Rosenwallen we are brought to the American aspects of Le Trône d'Argent. His is a devastating image of the American businessman, his ideals and motives. We discover that Rosenwallen is a murderer and thief; in this he is atypical. But the discovery occurs long after we are introduced to Rosenwallen, long after he is established in the mind of the reader. The greater emphasis of the story falls on him as financier, as opposed to thief

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and murderer. And from this emphasis evolves a distinct, and distasteful, impression.

When we meet Rosenwallen, he insists on the title of General. He immediately states that he has made his fortune honestly. "J'entends une grandefortune et je me hâte d'ajouter: par des moyens honnêtes, avouables, irréprochables, scrupuleusement délicats." Methinks he protesteth too much, and I suspect that the French reader would agree. Rosenwallen lives in luxury, one source of his pride.

> Rosenwallen promena lentement les yeux autour de la salle à manger, où s'étalait dans chaque coin, du plafond à la riche et fine natte qui couvrait le parquet, un comfort exquis et opulent. Il lui parut que ce n'était pas là un si mauvais usage à faire de l'argent, lorsqu'on en a. (27)

There is a suggestion, in this opulence, of the splendiferous lack of taste of the "nouveau riche." Because Rosenwallen is a rich American, his taste casts certain aspersions on American taste--for we don't know, at this point, that he is a culprit.

In Rosenwallen is the American success story, the "rags to riches" theme. He tells Antoine that he arrived in New York

> "avec de gros souliers troués aux pieds, une veste de laine percée aux coudes et mal raccommodée aux manches, une casquette de loutre sur la tête..." (24)

This didn't prevent him, however, from attaining his goal. Once he had money, he became a public functionary, then was sent to the state legislature, followed by a tour in the Senate of the United States, and

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> "l'on ne trouverait pas...que c'est un admirable pays que celui où moi, qui étais un pauvre diable de colporteur à Hesse, je puis devenir vice-président de la République, sans que nul ne s'inquiète de ma naissance, de ma famille, de mon entourage, de mes antécédents; me jugeant ce que je suis au moment ou je me présente au suffrage de mes concitoyens! Tout est possible, cher Monsieur, tout est possible en un pareil pays!" (24-25)

Here is the American miracle and the European dream. Any man can succeed in America; indeed, any man can be president!

The physical description of Rosenwallen provides strong commentary on American values.

> C'était un homme de cinquante à cinquante-cinq ans, grand, mince, osseux; il avait la froideur de l'Allemand entée sur le compasse américain, le tout doublé d'une niaise affectation de dignité, conseillée par l'uniforme charmarre qu'il portait en ce moment. Rosenwallen, selon l'expression du terroir, valait, général ou non, deux millions de dollars; pour parler notre langue, sa fortune s'élevait à ce chiffre. (20)

This implies that money is the American measure of worth; of the value of the individual. The implication must have indeed sparked a negative response to the American system of values.

Financial considerations completely preoccupy Rosenwallen. Money is of greater importance than any ideal or the honor of family name. Antoine's selfless desires to restore his father's fortune and name are utterly incomprehensible to Rosenwallen. He is "incapable de les comprendre et de les apprécier." (83) And he says, "Est-ce votre faute, à vous, si des faussaires et des bandits ont dévalisé la caisse de votre père?" (33) Moreover, Rosenwallen states, "sur un ton de complète indifférence," that Antoine's father

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was a fool to despair at the loss of his fortune. After all, if one looses, one simply begins again, as does an American. This provincial point of view is imputed, through Rosenwallen, to the American businessman. The capstone on Rosenwallen's worship of the dollar is the following: "Le regard du spéculateur parut se rallumer à la vue des chiffres qui s'additionnaient devant lui en colonnes serrées." (219)

Rosenwallen is the antithesis of all of the thematic values in Eyma's fiction. His provincialism, lack of integrity, and absolute obsession with wealth to the neglect of all other values are implicitly extended to the American business community. For Antoine was sent to Rosenwallen, the man who could, because of his know-how, set Antoine in fortune's path. It is to Rosenwallen, the representative, that Antoine puts questions; from him that Antoine seeks counsel. Antoine says,

> "C'est le point (la généralité) où j'entends vous poser de nouveau ma question, moins sur le fait d'acquérir la fortune que sur celui de savoir si ce pays offre réellement assez de ressources à l'intelligence, à l'activité, au bon vouloir, à la probité, pour faire, je vous le repète, cette fortune rapidement et honnêtement, honnêtement jusqu'au scrupule." (25-26)

We learn the irony of Rosenwallen's rôle as counselor--but not until later. He remains representative throughout the first half of the story. He tells Antoine that one can certainly make a fortune honestly; the question of scrupulosity is left to the reader's imagination.

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In addition to the Rosenwallen problem, there are other events in Le Trône d'Argent which contribute, implicitly, to an image of America. Once again, the New World as a repository of wealth emerges; young Antoine has chosen the United States as his fountain of prosperity. Secondly, Rosenwallen looses his fortune, again contributing to a concept of the instability of American wealth. Thirdly, Rosenwallen was highly respected until he met financial disaster; once poor, he becomes friendless. This is a sad commentary on an American confusion of values: that of possessions and wealth with the person himself. Fourth, at the story's end, Antoine, Rosa, and Hermann return to France. The United States is a vehicle of fortune; life is better lived, on a permanent basis, in the Old World.

Without the interjection of authorial comment, then, the reader has assimilated certain impressions of America. The strongest has been that of the American businessman, with his ostentatious lack of taste, his insensitivity to non-material values, his obsession with the dollar, and his judgment of life and people on the basis of wealth. The reader has seen, by implication, that Americans are "worth" their fortunes and are judged accordingly. And he has seen that sensitive individuals, such as heroes and heroines, prefer the Old World to the New.

The direct rhetoric of Le Trône d'Argent presents the United States in a much more objective, and perhaps a more positive, light. As previously, Eyma uses the American

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setting in an inorganic manner. The major preoccupation of the story--the unraveling of the lives of the sentimental characters--could be conducted on French as well as on American soil. But Eyma expands rhetorically on the American setting at every possible turn. Hence the story is fleshed out, and America is illuminated.

Antoine's journey to America occasions commentary on emigrants. On board the North-Star one sees

> cette masse de pauvres diables, s'en allant demander au travail lointain la fortune ou même le pain quotidien. Il éprouvait à leur vue l'émotion que donne le spectacle du soldat s'apprêtant à livrer bataille, chacun comptant bien revenir sain et sauf, tout en se résignant au sacrifice de sa vie. (6)

The motives directing the emigrants to the New World are significant.

An incident on the ship illustrates the democratic concept of equality. Antoine tells the captain of the North-Star that a certain passenger would honor the table of a king.

> "Pourquoi plutôt la table d'un roi que celle du capitaine du North-Star? demande l'Américain avec un accent plein de fierté démocratique qui déconcerta un peu son interlocuteur." (9)

Antoine explains that he was using poetic hyperbole, and

> Le fier démocrate parut assez satisfait de ce changement de langage de son jeune hôte. Cette petite scène donna à réfléchir à Antoine sur les managements qu'il lui faudrait prendre à l'endroit des fibres démocratiques de ses future concitoyens. (9)

The customs and mores of the United States receive considerable attention in Le Trône d'Argent. Eyma places characters advantageously, then explicates the scenes in which they move. Like the Germans, Americans are given to considerable hand-shaking.

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> Même dans les plus tendres épanchements de la famille, les poignées de mains remplacent, aux Etats-Unis, les affectueuses caresses que nous échangeons dans nos relations intérieures. (19-20)

Americans are also enamored of parades, which form part of the "moeurs publiques du pays." Any excuse for a parade is acceptable, including elections, when candidates march silently through the most populous sections of town, banners raised high, and

> escortés des bravos et des encouragements des femmes dont les maris appartiennent au parti et qui agitent leurs mouchoirs aux fenêtres. Il n'y a rien d'alarmant dans l'attitude de ces groupes, non plus que dans celles de leurs adversaires, qui regardent stoïquement passer ce flot, qu'ils remplaceront le lendemain. (209-210)

Other organizations, especially charitable ones, parade at will, also, thus recalling "son existence au public et réveiller ses sympathies." (210) Or religious sects and fraternal organizations parade.

> Enfin, tout ce qui, aux Etats-Unis, se constitue en corps et a besoin de l'appui du public, a recours à ce moyen. C'est un mélange de réclame ambulante, de publicité, de démonstration imposante, de dénombrement de forces, d'incitation à la sympathie. (210-211)

Eyma adds that such parades are both "grotesque" and "sérieux," laughable and yet provocative of deep reflection. He saw this propensity to parade as peculiarly American, and as a manifestation of naiveté and innocence.

The parade provokes an observation regarding American women: namely, their custom of throwing flowers.

> C'est un des traits particuliers aux femmes américaines, et presque une monomanie chez elles, que de prodiguer ainsi les fleurs comme témoinage de leur sympathie. (211)

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Another peculiarity of the American woman is her willingness to address public gatherings. "Il est très commun, aux Etats-Unis, que les femmes se donnent ainsi en spectacle dans les meetings, et y prennent la parole. (163) Americans in general are great "whittlers," Eyma notes through Rosenwallen, who

> suivant l'habitude de la plupart des américains, habitude que l'on finit par contracter en vivant beaucoup au milieu d'eux, tenait entre ses doigts un petit morceau de bois qu'il taillait avec un canif, et dont il fit une charmante coque de navire. (137)

They are also great ones to prop up their feet! Rosenwallen

> "allongea à la mode américaine ses deux jambes sur la table, et se renversa sur le dossier de sa chaise en allumant un cigare de la Havane." (138)

In the context of this study, these things are not of interest in themselves, but as amusingly indicative of small cultural traits which strike a foreign observer.

American barrooms are another curiosity to the foreign observer. They are the recreation centers of laborious Americans; theaters for organizers and orators; and therefore "presque toujours à l'état d'agitation," (163) especially prior to elections.

Eyma seems to look at the young American through a wise old European eye, suggesting again American innocence and the American Adam. Americans are so easily enthused!

> "Il y a dans ces faciles enthousiasmes du peuple américain et dans leurs bruyante manifestation un côté naïf qu'on n'a pas la force de blamer." (189)

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Essential to the American way of life is public activity; hence, people are willing to give much time and energy to meetings.

> Tant il est vrai que l'agitation publique est l'essence véritable de ce peuple. Et puis la vanité y entre pour beaucoup. C'est quelque chose de présider un meeting, d'y prononcer un discours, de jouer à l'orateur, de devenir l'âme d'une affaire! (176)

There is a certain innocence, again, about this aspect of the American character. In fact, Eyma calls it a "chose incroyable!"

Another notable aspect of American life is amazing efficiency. Prompted by Rosenwallen's banquet, the narrator comments,

> Tout les préparatifs avaient été faits, avec la promptitude familière aux américains, qui se connaissent également en luxe et en richesse, s'ils ne sont pas tout à fait irréprochables sous le rapport du bon goût. (199)

The narrator is struck here, as elsewhere, by the American propensity to financial speculation. He says that "ces sortes de speculations, sur une échelle gigantesque, sont très communes aux Etats-Unis." (151) But American business sense has unfortunate aspects, especially with respect to moral values. The narrator tells us that

> Antoine n'avait point encore épousé les préjugés du milieu où il vivait; il ne croyait point encore que si la fortune peut naturellement ajouter à la considération dont jouit un honnête homme, elle ne saurait absolument imposer la considération envers un voleur, et un assassin! Il éprouvait alors des répugnances violentes qu'Hermann avait grand'peine à dominer. (151)

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This says little in favor of America, especially to the European mind. The narrator drives the point home unequivocally with

> C'est, en effet, un grand mérite en Amérique de ne manquer jamais une occasion de gagner un peu plus d'argent, quel que soit le moyen employé. (66)

Coupled with the foregoing is the comment that Americans expect payment for everything, including oratory.

> Le salaire en est reçu sans pudeur ni hésitation, en vertu de l'axiome courant dans le monde des affaires de ce pays: nothing for nothing (rien pour rien). (198)

It should be noted here that, negative as is the rendering of the "American and money" theme, it is perfectly consonant with the story. The title is indicative of this; the plot itself suggests the opposition of European and American values; without the money problem there would be no complication. The problem could exist outside the United States, but to Eyma and, in all probability, to his reader, it could best generate friction among characters if set in America. For such doesn't offend verisimilitude. And this, in turn, reveals something of French preconceptions regarding Americans and wealth.

Two pages of Le Trône d'Argent are given over to a description of Wall Street, where one finds "toutes les sources d'où sort l'argent, toutes les embouchures où va se jeter la pactole américain." (64) Eyma is especially captivated by the incessant activity and "brouhaha assourdissant" of Wall Street, and by the topics under discussion there, from

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local to European politics, to governmental acts. He finds the variety of people to be fascinating.

> C'est un va-et-vient étourdissant; ce sont des accumulations de groupes à défier les forces de l'antique bélier; des enjambements et des courses à tête basse, d'un troittoir à l'autre. Rien de pareil ne peut se décrire; il le faut voir pour s'en rendre un compte exact. (65)

As Eyma says, the Paris Bourse is child's play by comparison; the contrast provides the curiosity of it all.

Eyma is fascinated by American politics, as might be expected given the turbulance of French politics in the 1850's. In Le Trône d'Argent the fascination is less evident than elsewhere, but it does appear. He notes a contradiction between theory and practice, between ideology and its implementation. The contradiction results from a tendency to overlook theory when public office may accrue from the oversight.

> Ces contradictions sont d'ailleurs fréquentes aux Etats-Unis, où l'on n'y regarde pas de si près, quand il s'agit du succès d'une doctrine, quelle qu'elle soit. Comme les élections sont le champ de bataille presque quotidien où les partisans des systèmes se peuvent compter, il arrive que du maire aux aldermen, du gouverneur au général et aux officers des milices, tout doit appartenir au principe triomphant. Jackson exagéra cette étrange théorie jusqu'à vouloir que les plus minimes fonctionnaires publics, y compris les balayeurs des rues, fussent des partisans avoués et dévoués de sa politique. (19)

We are told once again that in America, the end justifies the means.

A final Americanism which Eyma notes is an attitude toward death, which he associates with Orientals.

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> Ils se sont plu à éloigner de la mort tout appareil lugubre, toute terreur repoussante. Ils ont donné à leurs champs de repos des noms séduisants et poétiques. (37)

The narrator comments that a certain cemetery, Greenwood,

> est donc non seulement un lieu de pieux pèlerinages, mais quelquefois aussi un but de promenade; la beauté des arbres et la grandeur du spectacle y attirent les visiteurs. (38)[5]

The narrator's comments suggest, also, an interesting area of speculation quite outside the bounds of this study: that of current American issues, customs, and problems which were foreshadowed by foreign observers more than a century ago. America has come of age, insofar as the origins of contemporary concerns can be traced in a deep-rooted past.

In Le Trône d'Argent, then, a number of American phenomena are elucidated, and cast a reflection on the American way of life. The person of Rosenwallen and his attitudes suggest an uncomplimentary sketch of American values, mores, and materialism. The narrator's rhetoric reveals aspects of American life, from barrooms to politics to women and parades. Some of Eyma's observations are minute; others strike to the roots of the American character, as he perceived it. Significantly, some suggest an America of fortune and promise, a New Eden, coupled with a sort of lovable innocence and naiveté which he sensed in the people of the New World.

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The very title of La Chasse à l'Esclave, published in 1866, reveals the burden of the novel: the slavery issue in America. The tension of the novel arises from the contrast between the good and bad master, and the effects of slavery upon individuals. The setting is organic; the novel's situation is American. Though the characters are sentimental, their problems are rooted in American soil.

One might wish that Eyma had opted for the tale rather than the novel form. In addition to the main plot, six tales are operative within this single framework. And I advisedly call them "tales" rather than sub-plots; they are joined to the main plot by the most tenuous of threads, if at all. Hence, one can assume that they are digressions which allow Eyma to further explore American slavery.

The central plot relates events in the lives of two female slaves, Francine and Betzy. Francine is a very beautiful woman, "un type exceptionnel de grâce délicate." A slave-trader, Brower, is about to sell her to a new master, Fabrice, who wants another equally beautiful slave. Brower knows that Francine has a beautiful sister, Betzy, who is in marronage; he keeps Francine in the hope that she will lead him to Betzy, thereby effecting a double sale to Fabrice.

Another slave-trader, Tatems, realizes that either Betzy or Francine, because the daughter of a wealthy Louisiana plantation owner, is tremendously valuable. And here is the mystery of the central plot: which girl is white, and which mulatto? Another marron slave, Flora, has mothered

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both girls. The prospect of freedom for the white girl leads Flora to claim Betzy as her mulatto daughter. This is a ruse, of course. Flora, in her motherly love, desires freedom for her daughter, Francine. She is found out by her evident dismay when Francine is wounded and dies; only a mother, not a wet-nurse, would react so violently to a death. Betsy's race is established, she receives her patrimony, marries Fabrice, and is a gentle, loving mistress to her slaves.

La Chasse à l'Esclave begins with an eight-page digression on the importation of slaves from Africa, justified by Brower's trading activities. The second tale, or digression, tells of the father of Fabrice and his benevolent relationship to his slaves. The third tale introduces Francine: her entire background is painfully detailed. The escape to Canada of Francine's lover, Bill, constitutes the fourth situation. The fifth tale is Tatems' biography--a horror story. And the sixth tale, which occupies forty-two pages, is a digression on vigilance committees in America.

How does Eyma structure such a mass of information and plot? La Chasse opens in front of a slave market; Joe Brower is chatting with Fabrice. The narrator reports a dialogue, which reveals Brower's slave-trading activities in Africa. This accomplished, Fabrice's father is considered, good master that he was. Finally, forty-six pages later, Francine is introduced. An entire chapter is given to her

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biography, and at last we return to the main plot. But only five pages later, the narrator leaps in again with: "Je demande au lecture la permission de me substituer à Francine, et de raconter l'épisode de cette lutte..." (70), and off we go on the story of Bill's escape to Canada, in all of its ugly detail. Ten pages later we again regain the main thread and stay with it for twenty-nine pages. Hélas, Tatems appears; he requires sixteen pages of biography. Then and only then can the reader take up the thread; only once more will it be taken from him, and then for a forty-two page essay on vigilance committees.

All of this leads to a fairly extensive and explicit portrayal of slavery in the South. Eyma arranged a series of oppositions: the good master, Fabrice, versus the cruel master, Tatems; the kind trader, Brower, versus the cruel trader, Tatems; escaped slaves versus those in captivity. Spicing this potpourri is a number of observations and implications.

Every characterization reveals something of slavery or the condition of slaves. Everything in the story, in other words, is relevant to the French image of American slavery. Joe Brower, the slave trader, is a man who

> jouissait d'une réputation d'habileté incomparable à faire valoir sa marchandise, qui était toujours, je dois le dire, d'un choix remarquable. (11)

The Negro is a piece of marketable merchandise. And in America this is a perfectly respectable business.

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> En Amérique de très-honnêtes gens se font marchands d'esclaves comme ils se feraient épiciers ou confiseurs. Leur considération personnelle n'en souffre que médiocrement; c'est une affaire de moeurs. (12)

And Joe Brower is a perfect gentleman "dans toute la rigueur du mot; bien élevé, très-poli, élégant dans sa tenue." (11) The combination of slave trader and American is potentially volatile. Brower will break any agreement he makes with slaves if

> Il y avait une belle et grosse affaire d'argent pour lui, Brower ne pouvait éprouver le moindre scrupule. Son double caractère de marchand de nègres et d'américain, voyant, avant tout, un bénéfice à empocher, se montra tout entier. (80-81)

Tatems is Brower's opposite. He indulges in formal trading only when great profit is possible. He is an exceedingly cruel master. The burning of a shack on his plantation reveals a horrifying spectacle. Inside were found seven slaves, chained hand and foot,

> lacérés de coups, les épaules sanglantes, les membres tumefiés, le corps dévoré par la vermine. L'un...déclara qu'il subissait ces tortures depuis cinq mois. (121)

A sad commentary, indeed, on slave conditions.

But Tatems represents but one side of the coin. On the other is the master such as Fabrice's father, a man who cared for his slaves as his own children. He asked pardon for those destined to be whipped; provided medical treatment; prayed with his slaves, who in turn "demandèrent à Dieu de protéger leur maître et leurs maîtresses, et de répandre sur

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eux ses bénédictions et ses bienfaits." (35) Eyma makes a concerted effort to present a balanced picture of the slavery issue, to point up the ambiguities of the institution. The narrator reports,

> C'est ce que ne comprendront peut-être bien aisément ceux qui n'ont point assisté à ce drame intime de l'esclavage, qui ne savent pas les liens d'attachement qui ont souvent uni le maître à l'esclave, l'importance que le planteur donne à l'accomplissement de ses devoirs de famille envers ces enfants noirs dont il a la conduite et la responsabilité. M. Fabrice était arrivé, d'ailleurs, par ses bons et paternels soins, à mériter l'affection de ses esclaves. (32)

The slaves themselves are a bit incomprehensible in this regard. Even the horrendous Tatems receives their aid, in spite of atrocities; they enable him, actually assist him, to escape punishment for his crimes. Generally, however, it is a kind master who receives the love of his slaves, as did old Fabrice. His plantation was in ruin, his creditors pressing him; with funds gathered by and among his slaves, his debts are paid. Kindness begets kindness; his slaves found money for him

> "dans les jardins que vous nous avez donnés, dans les nids des poules et des pintades que nous élevons autour de nos cases...nous vous les prêtons, maître; vous nous les rendrez quand viendra une meilleure récolte, s'il plaît à Dieu! (40)

Tatems, unfortunately, is presented as an "assez commune" sort in America. He has an immense fortune and

> Tatems, en un mot, représentait dans ce pays le principe de l'esclavage dans les conditions excellentes:--le peu de considération dont il jouissait signifiait la réprobation que les honnêtes gens infligeaient à sa cruauté;--la

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> tolérance qu'on lui montrait affirmait la lutte entre les deux races, lutte qui, devant l'opinion, implique la victoire en faveur de la race des propriétaires.
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> En un mot, Tatems représentait le Janus à deux visages, sur le dos duquel se joue ce double jeu des sentiments américains à l'égard de l'institution de l'esclavage,--et que Brower, de son côté, representait assez bien, lui aussi, avec sa minie de commentaire sur le Code noir. (112-113)

This quotation reveals the tensions which, from Eyma's point of view, sparked the Civil War. The same ambivalence appears in Brower's handling of the "Code Noir:" he uses it to justify both cruelty and benevolence, as the spirit, and personal gain, move him.

The slaves themselves are characterized as a race. We have seen a certain ambiguity in their approach to their own condition: some hate a cruel master like Tatems; others help him escape the law. Slaves make a distinction among whites.

> Les esclaves mettaient en outre une grande différence entre un blanc ordinaire et un marchand d'esclaves; ils faisaient de celui-ci une famille à part dans la race blanche. Le contact incessant, une certaine communauté d'existence, la réserve excessive qu'apportait le marchand à punir le moins possible l'esclave, afin de laisser toujours bon air à sa marchandise et de lui conserver avec le contentement le sourire sur les lèvres: autant de raisons qui attenuaient le respect de l'esclave pour ce maître de passage, et autorissaient entre eux la familiarité... (174-175)

The Negro attitude toward a white man varies. He is fearful and respectful in daylight, but more open at night. Eyma is intrigued by this, and has decided that

> ce qui effraie le plus un nègre, dans l'homme de race blanche, c'est la domination du regard, et

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> dans les ténèbres, cette influence plus ou moins magnétique disparaissant, il se sentait plus à l'aise. (173-174)

The rapport between Negro and Negro is another matter. Distance doesn't interrupt their relationships. "Les Nègres, comme toutes les races, comme toutes les sectes opprimées, ont entre eux une affiliation." (68) No matter where they may be, in a free or slave state, orders are carried back and forth "par quelque fil électrique invisible." (68) For they possess their own language

> qui se traduit par les signes extérieurs les plus inoffensifs, par l'échange le moins apparent d'un brin d'herbe, par l'envoi de tel ou tel objet. Les variations de l'atmosphère même entrent dans ce mystérieux et lugubre alphabet. (68-69)

The Negro constitutes an American sub-culture, mysterious and incomprehensible to the white.

Of special interest is the Virginia Negro, a special type. He loves Virginia; it is for him a homeland, and hence he has

> un caractère particulier de mélancolie que l'on ne rencontre pas chez les nègres des autres contrées. Hors de la Virginie, ils se trouvent dépaysés partout. Ce sont, d'ailleurs, des hommes robustes, bien constitués, sains, faciles à conduire, conséquemment fort recherchés et fort appréciés. Voilà pourquoi, sur toutes ces horribles boutiques d'esclaves où dans le Sud on tient (ou tenait) débit de cette marchandise humaine,...on lit toujours cette enseigne alléchante et parfois menteuse: Beaux Nègres de la Virginie à Vendre. (910)

A class of white man, also, is characterized in <u>La Chasse à L'Esclave</u>, that of the slave hunter, perhaps the most ignominious of all whites. The search for Francine's sister,

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Betzy, provides opportunity for a rhetorical description of this class, with their varied costumes:

> Grandes bottes ou guêtres de cuir montant jusqu'aux genoux, vestes en drap de toutes couleurs et de toutes formes; quelques-uns portaient même, peu coquettement il est vrai, le frac noir; chapeau de feutre gris, noir, blanc: au total, une tenue complètement dépenaillée. L'uniforme était dans le rifle qu'ils portaient tous en bandoulière, et dans le double révolver autour de la ceinture, armée en outre d'un long couteau. (115)

Their absolute indifference to the humanity of the Negro is evidenced in several gothic tableaux such as the following:

> Les douze cavaliers marchaient deux par deux; en tête allait un nègre, véritable géant, tenant avec peine en laisse un groupe de six chiens énormes de l'espece de bouledogues, et dont les gueules bavaient du sang...sur un cheval conduit en main, pendait le cadavre d'un blanc placé en travers de la selle...inondés du sang qui coulait d'une large blessure à la poitrine...Sur un autre cheval, on voyait le torse nu d'un vieux nègre, les mains liées à la hauteur des reins, et le dos lacéré de coups de fouet récents... (130-132)

Such are the horrid methods of the slave hunter; such is the miserable, inhuman lot of the American Negro.

These men are even more reprehensible than the slave traders because they are absolutely unprincipled. Money is their only motive; they will side with any cause for profit. This implication emerges through the attitude of the hunter, in whom one would expect to find segregationist principles, and therefore opposition to abolitionists. Rather, as one hunter states,

> "Les abolitionistes sont nos pourvoyeurs naturels, Ils sèment, avec l'espérance d'une liberté difficile à conquérir, les idées bien plus pratiques et bien

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> plus réalisables du marronnage. Ils peuplent les bois et les gangs du gibier qui nous fait vivre; j'ai donc un grand respect pour eux, et, au besoin, je les encourage dans leur industrie. Qui sait si un jour ce ne sera pas mon salut?" (140)

To persecute the Negro on principle is one thing; to do so for profit, encouraging even those whose ideology is at variance with one's own, is another, and worse.

Another unprincipled class, and operating on a sort of "game" basis, are the inn-keepers. Like the hunters, business and profit are their only concern; theory has no relevance to action. Thus it evolves that they give refuge now to slaves, later to their pursuers. They neglect nothing to please their clientele.

> S'ils assurent, à l'occasion, la fuite d'un nègre en quête d'un gang, si même ils lui donnent volontiers l'hospitalité, et répondent de lui sur leur tête, d'une autre part ils garantissent aux chasseurs d'esclaves la sécurité de leurs prisonniers.
>
> Chasseurs et nègres savent le double métier des aubergistes, et par un pacte tacite, ils tolèrent cette duplicité, favorable aux uns et aux autres. On peut même dire que les chasseurs consomment le wiskey vendu aux aubergistes par les nègres marrons qui sont leur pourvoyeurs. (135)

Money, then, provides the backdrop to the American slavery issue. Men such as Fabrice are segregationist in principle, and treat their "possessions" kindly. Men such as Tatems, Brower, the inn-keepers and the slave hunters--and in the story they are numerous--operate on the profit motive. They are neither segregationist nor abolitionist, but businessmen. Their method of selling is that of merchandising; even advertising is used.

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> Le 23 décembre 18--, il sera vendu, à la Bourse Saint-Louis, par Wild Larder, encanteur: le mulâtre Peter, âgé d'environ vingt-quatre ans, bon cocher, bon domestique de maison, un peu cuisinier; pleinement garanti. Conditions: au comptant...(48)

The indignities to which the Negro is subjected through this merchandising technique are narrated.

> Les ventes à l'encan jouissent d'une trop grande faveur aux Etats-Unis pour que les Américains aient négligé de les pratiquer à l'égard des esclaves. Ce système, suprême degré de l'humiliation infligée à l'espece humaine, florissait dans tous les Etats à esclaves de l'ancienne Union. Ces encans d'esclaves se font, d'ailleurs, sans aucun de ces scandales, sans aucune de ses péripéties dont on a tant parlé dans certain romans. Le nègre, mis à l'enchère, ne s'en emeut pas plus que le boeuf ou le mulet vendu quelques minutes avant lui. Si ces ventes ont donné lieu à quelques scènes émouvantes, le public n'y a guère pris part;--c'était un secret entre deux ou trois personnes... (47-48)

The reflection cast on the American character is devastating. The narrator explains the usual American method of doing business.

> Deux Américains traitant d'affaires rendraient des points aux plus madres Normands. Chacun sent un piège dans la parole de son interlocuteur, tout en lui tendant une embûche. C'est une parade perpétuelle accompagnée d'une riposte incessante. (91)

This cleverness is insupportable when human life and dignity are at stake, but it exists, it is implied, in all business dealings. Combine this with American indifference to the source of fortune:

> Peu de gens savaient l'origine de la fortune de Tatems; ce n'est pas là ce qui inquiétait l'opinion publique, peu scrupuleuse à cet endroit en Amérique. (112-113)

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Add the narrator's observation that slave trading coincides and is intensified by the American's native propensity to seize "avant tout un bénéfice," as previously quoted, and one has a highly-seasoned but distasteful potpourri. If one thinks next in terms of the Eyma reader who had previously encountered Rosenwallen in Le Trône d'Argent, and couples this with European conceptions of American materialism, one can assume that the French image of American business was ugly indeed.

It is notable, however, that the narrator does make some effort to distinguish between the nation's principles and those of its inhabitants. He points out that in 1808 the American Constitution (Section IX, Article 1, he footnotes) outlawed the importation of slaves from Africa. Officially, no Negroes were to be admitted. But "clandestinement et par fraude, si bien faite que fut la police maritime à cet égard," (15) individuals broke the law. The government made every effort to prevent this.

> Toutes les fois que les bâtiments américains préposés à cette police ont surpris des bâtiments en flagrant délit de traite, ils les ont impitoyablement saisis, et leur cargaison humaine a été reconduite, aux frais du gouvernement, sur la côte d'Afrique, à la colonie de Liberia. (16)

The official American position is clear.

The narrator attempts, also, to balance the scales of condemnation of individual attitudes. He attributes such attitudes to the customs of the country, to a sort of

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in-breeding which has less to do with conscience than with habit. "En Europe, on donne les poupées et des joujoux aux enfants; en Amérique, on leur fait cadeau d'un petit esclave." (55) That is just "the way it is" in the United States. Moreover, the institution can be attributed, in spite of the contradiction in law and action, to its longevity, which has removed it from the domain of conscience.

> A la longue, on s'y accoutume, à ce point qu'on peut dire que le spectacle continuel de l'esclavage, ses pratiques étranges, le langage auquel il donne lieu finissent par émousser l'indignation. C'est à cela que cette institution doit, incontestablement, sa si longue durée. (12)

Slavery is not justified; the overwhelming evidence of the story supports abolition. But it is explicated, to some degree, by the American milieu. And everyone, even the former slave, is influenced by his milieu. For it is notable that, as the story ends and Betzy has been recognized as white, and has married Fabrice; this Betzy who has herself endured the cruelties and indignities of slavery, owns slaves. In other words, she herself questions not the institution, but the miscarriages of justice within that institution.

> Quant aux douze jeunes servantes que Fabrice avait achetées pour sa soeur, elles passèrent naturellement au service de Betzy, qui trouva très-original de posséder à son tour des esclaves.
> Les bruits publics ne l'ont jamais accusée d'avoir été une maîtresse sévère pour ses nègres. (280-281)

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With the exception of Fabrice, all of the humane characters in La Chasse à l'Esclave are Negroes. It is to them that Eyma attributes the attitudes and sentiments which we have come to associate with heroes and heroines. Implicit here is the concept of the innate equality of Negroes and whites. The Negro, like the white, is human; his drives and aspirations, loves and fears, are the same. This concept inheres in action of the story.

Of special note is the slaves' desire for freedom. This instinct is stronger than security, or life itself. Marronnage, or escape, brings with it horrid consequences should the slave be recaptured; more often than not, he is. As Brower explains to Francine:

> "Tu parles de sécurité...et tu sais bien que si formidables que soient les gangs des nègres marrons, nos chasseurs d'esclaves et leurs chiens finissent toujours par les découvrir, et qu'un coup de fusil à tirer ne leur coûte rien pour arrêter un esclave dans sa fuite, pourvu qu'ils gagnent la prime qu'on leur paie." (66-67)

Yet such gangs are numerous; slaves continue to attempt escape. Indeed, freedom speaks in their souls, as we see through Francine. In her case, as she enters the forest in search of Flora and Betzy,

> Le parfum de ces bois où soufflait le vent de la liberté, ces dangers eux-mêmes qu'elle évitait et bravait en même temps, avaient rallumé dans son coeur ce goût du marronnage qui revient toujours aux esclaves qui ont passé par là, et qui est instinctif chez tous en général. (166)

As for security versus freedom, an escaped slave, Tommy (note the name!), tells the tale. "Il n'y a pas de maison en ville

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qui vaille une case dans les bois." (166) The escape and chase of Francine's lover, Bill, is a dramatic instance of the depth of this instinct. It is the record of a "lutte héroïque dont les détails justifieront les sentiments de terreur." (70) Bill plunges into a river, hollering "Laissez-moi! laissez-moi! J'aime mieux me noyer que tomber vivant entre les mains de mon ancien maître." (72) He is wounded and bleeding, yet the pursuit continues for ten hours, so great is Bill's thirst for freedom. Freedom is an inalienable right, a universal instinct.

In a woman, the only desire greater than that for freedom is that for union with the person she loves. Francine's imputed white blood causes her as much sorrow as joy. About to die, she

> entr'ouvrit les yeux, et d'une voix à peine intelligible:--Oh! Je suis heureuse de mourir! Fille blanche, je n'aurais pas pu épouser celui que j'aime; esclave, je ne suis pas digne de lui. Je serais morte de chagrin tôt ou tard! Et Francine prononca le nom du jeune mulâtre Bill. (271)

Southern law prohibited marriage between white and mulatto. And love is a woman's greatest passion.

A Negro mother has the same sentiments as a white. Her instinct to protect her child, to do all possible for her, is universal and profound, as witnessed by Flora. She knows Betzy is white; yet she prefers injustice to a negation of motherhood, and represents her mulatto daughter, Francine, as white. Her motherliness is evidenced in typically sentimental gestures. Flora covers Francine with "larmes et de

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baisers les mains, les genoux, les joues de la jeune fille." (186) The profundity of Flora's motherly instincts solves the mystery question of parentage, in fact. Flora's instinct is uncontrollable, and in the resultant gestures, Francine's blood is betrayed. On her knees alongside the dying girl, Flora

> poussait des gémissements à ébranler toutes les fibres du coeur. Ses cris, ses larmes, les caresses qu'elle prodiguait à Francine, son désespoir, qui augmentait à mesure que la mort s'approchait de la jeune fille, tous ces signes d'une violente et sincère douleur étaient trop vifs et trop naturels pour n'avoir pas frappé Brower et Betzy. (270)

Betzy is white, Francine mulatto. For surely Flora's reaction is that of a mother.

In the Negro, as well as in the white of any integrity, resides a profound sentiment of gratitude. Recalling the kindness of his master and mistress, a Negro rejects his plan to murder their son, Fabrice.

> Le nègre demeura comme anéanti devant le souvenir de tous les bienfaits que la nourrice venait d'énumérer à son coeur. Il laissa tomber son coutelas, se jeta aux genoux du jeune enfant, dont il embrassa les mains et les pieds avec respect. (29)

Note the sentimental posture. Note, too, the implications of a universality of values possessed by the good man, regardless of color.

In structuring La Chasse à l'Esclave and in bringing the plot to its resolution, Eyma employs concepts and techniques which we have previously noted. Eyma characters generally sense their parentage or a mysterious liaison with those of their own blood. In La Chasse Eyma plays off this

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intuition against the mystery of Betzy's race, thereby giving a clue that Betzy, rather than Francine, is white.

> Il ne semblait pas qu'elle trouvât dans son attachement filial une compensation suffisante à ses illusions perdues. Elle ressentait une haine involontaire, mais profonde,...On eût dit qu'elle avait le secret pressentiment de l'ambition dont on la faisait victime. Les émotions qui l'agitaient se traduisaient par de violents soubresauts de son corps, par les sanglots bruyants qui s'échappaient de sa poitrine, par les contorsions nerveuses de ses bras. (198)

The "secret pressentiment" is typical; physical response as betrayer of emotion is sentimental and Eymaesque. When Francine and Flora arrive, "Betzy se sentit prise d'un accès de rage; elle poussa un cri et tomba évanouie." (199)

And La Chasse à l'Esclave is not free of outrageous coincidences. When Francine and Brower, in search of Flora and Betzy, arrive at the forest inn, hunters bring in an escaped slave who happens to be the same Tom (every slave is named Tom!) who had murdered the wife and son of Tatems. Moreover, it so happens that this Tom was in the same "gang" as Betzy and Flora, and can therefore reveal their whereabouts. Coincidentally, one Bruskin, who is the father of Francine, happens to be in the woods at the same time. Thus Eyma manages to tie together and resolve the complexities of the plot.

The story lends itself beautifully to the insertion of gothic elements, and Eyma utilizes the possibility to the fullest. In so doing, he not only follows in the tradition of gothic horror, once so popular, but intensifies the

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impression of the ugliness of slavery. We have already remarked the tableau of Tatem's slaves chained in a burning cottage. No less grotesque is the scene of the battle between escaped slaves and their pursuers.

> Le sol était labouré par les pieds des chevaux; de distance en distance, on apercevait une masse noire et immobile trempant dans une mare de sang; c'était un cadavre de nègre resté sur ce champ de bataille. Le corps d'un de ces nègres pendait aux branches d'un arbre, du haut duquel il avait défendu sa vie et où il avait trouvé la mort. Tout était ravagé, dévastation et sang sur cet espace d'un demi-mille d'étendue. (159-160)

The use of dogs compounds the gothic effect of many of the scenes, emphasizing the cruelty involved, and providing opportunity for further horror. "Les chiens harassés s'étaient couchés à plat ventre et tiraient la langue en haletant...Les chiens grognaient autour de Flora..." (133,209) The dogs have a function in addition to their gothic aspect; they are used to mislead the reader, to suggest that Francine is indeed the Caucasian.

> Soit lassitude de leur part, soit pour une cause qu'aucun des spectateurs présents n'eût pu expliquer, s'ils avaient pris garde à ce fait en ce moment, les chiens habitués à donner l'aboi à la vue d'un nègre ou d'un sang mêlé ne bougèrent pas à la vue de Francine. (133)

They have deceived us, of course; their gothic traits are more reliable.

In a sentimental passage in the novel's denouement appears a failure in verisimilitude. Eyma seems intent on forcing all characters in all stories to respond to the depths of family ties, or some evidence of them, even when

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such is utterly inconsistent with characterization. Bruskin and Brower have committed every possible atrocity in their treatment of Negroes; beatings, bloodshed, harrassments beyond human endurance. Yet when Francine dies and Flora is forcibly dragged from her dead daughter, the two men are moved.

> Brower et Bruskin qui n'avaient, certes, jamais eu le coeur tendre à l'endroit des esclaves, se sentirent émus des cris déchirants qui poussait Flora, et des larmes montèrent à leurs yeux. (274)

One would have thought such men too calculating and cold to cry; but not when they are Eyma's creations!

Conventions of the eighteenth-century novel appear in La Chasse as in the rest of Eyma's fiction. In describing a scene the narrator states, "Le pinceau de Callot eût seul pu rendre l'effet pittoresque de cette salle..." (155) And awkward rhetorical interjections appear here as elsewhere, witness the following:

> Mais un événement que nous raconterons en temps et lieu lui ouvrit la voie beaucoup plus facilement et beaucoup plus vite qu'il ne l'espérait. (109)

Such inartistic foreshadowing and obvious use of conventions mark Eyma's weakness. One scene, however, should be especially noted for its artistic effectiveness. As Francine, Flora, Brower, Bruskin, and Betzy walk through the forest, they dream of freedom and wealth. This is not only psychologically sound, lending great verisimilitude to the scene, but it is also effective as a subtle method of uniting threads of action in the reader's mind. (Indeed, he sorely needs

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them, given the story's digressions!) Bruskin is preoccupied with his personal position; Flora is anxious lest her deception be discovered; "Betzy, plus sombre et plus morne qu'elle ne l'avait encore été, rongeait le frein de sa colère et sa jalousie;" (205) Francine dreams of freedom; and Brower plots to locate Francine's family. Unfortunately, the narrator is unable to leave "well enough" alone; he adds,

> Nous allons voir que les événements qui s'étaient accomplis dans l'intervalle étaient de nature à renverser toutes les combinaisons de Brower... (207)

In the main, however, the scene is both artistic and functional.

Though the numerous digressions of La Chasse à l'Esclave are indefensible from a critical point of view, they do provide additional images and concepts of the United States. The reader is given to believe that the American system of justice is ineffective and vigilance committees are a consequence; steamboats are provocative of crime and numerous problems; Americans are adventuresome; Americans are largely indifferent to others.

From the machinations of Brower and Bruskin over Francine's parentage arises an image of the ineffectiveness of the American judicial system.

> La manière dont s'étaient passés les derniers faits que nous venons de raconter...pourrait paraître bien légère dans tout autre pays qu'aux Etats-Unis. Mais quand on sait la négligence inimaginable que la justice y apporte dans ses investigations, la facilité avec laquelle on peut obtenir son mutisme et son ignorance des faits les plus simples, on ne s'étonnera plus que

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> Brower ait compté sur le maniement de ses dollars pour calmer les inquiétudes de Bruskin...aux Etats-Unis le serment domine en quelque sorte la loi... (203-204)

Though the narrator draws no conclusions regarding law enforcement and vigilance committees, a perceptive reader might well assume that vigilance committees are an outgrowth of lax law enforcement; an effort to implement "justice" in one way or another. The narrator terms vigilance committees

> une des curiosités de la vie sociale en Amérique... leur justice est toujours sommaire: ils se constituent dans toutes les occasions extraordinaires où l'autorité légale est ou se montre impuissante, soit matériellement, soit moralement. (227)

The methods of such committees are, however, "quelquefois terribles, souvent impitoyables." The blame for these excesses is laid at the doorstep of American individualism as encouraged by the law itself.

> C'est le relâchement de l'autorité, la faiblesse du pouvoir, conséquence obligée des institutions américaines, qui ont encouragé ces usurpations du particulier sur la loi. Le respect exagéré peut-être, que montre celle-ci pour l'individu, a conduit l'individu à suppléer la loi dans son insuffisance ou dans son excès de respect.
>
> De là est venu le principe, adopté comme un acte regulier en Amérique, que la défense et la justice individuelles sont de droit pour les citoyens; et nécessairement on en abuse. (227)

Following this explication, the narrator gives a brief history of American methods of self-defense: the duel; gun-toting; the bowie-knife. He comments that in the South and West, the sword and revolver "sont comme une partie intégrante de la toilette des hommes." (239); that "comités sont armés jusqu'aux dents" (249), and encourages readers to draw their own conclusions with,

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> On s'imagine...ce que peuvent être les incidents, ou plutôt les accidents, qui résultent de cette doctrine de la justice individuelle, que chacun se croit autorisé à appliquer, et qu'on appelle le doit de la légitime défense, dans un pays où chacun à la tête près du bonnet, selon le dicton vulgaire, où chacun à surtout la main près de la poche dans laquelle dort d'un sommeil fort léger un révolver ou un bowie-knife. (236)

One wonders if any reader of La Chasse à l'Esclave would emigrate to the United States!

On the other hand, however, Americans are indifferent to one another, and thereby overlook much crime and injustice; as when travelling by steamboat. Betzy was in transit to the United States with her uncle, Koenigs; he is killed by one Baker, who sells Betzy to Bruskin. Why did no one question Koenig's absence? How could a man be pushed overboard without some repercussions? Yet, the narrator insists, this

> est tellement conforme...à ce qui se passe quotidiennement à bord des steamboats en Amérique, que nous prions le lecteur d'écarter de son esprit tout idée d'exagération et d'invraisemblance de notre part. (102)

Such an event reveals not only the circumstances on steamboats, but is, according to the narrator, a very accurate reflection of American society,

> où l'indifférence la plus complète sur le sort de son voisin est le caractère dominant. Personne peut-être ne connaissait Baker à bord; personne ne s'inquiéta même de savoir qui il était. (103)

The narrator makes no attempt to account for this indifference. He merely states that it exists, and thereby justifies one of the peripities of Betzy's life.

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Finally, the reader receives an image of the American as an adventuresome sort. Thus vigilance committees are formed, and the frontier is pushed toward the Pacific.

> Les gens prêts à des expéditions de toutes sortes ne manquent pas aux Etats-Unis, et surtout dans le Sud.
>
> Les uns sont guidés par l'appat d'un salaire; les autres n'ont d'autre mobile que leur bravoure qui trouve une occasion de s'exercer, où cet esprit d'aventures qui est le propre de la jeunesse de ces pays. (218)

The American is, indeed, a breed unto himself.

To summarize our analysis of La Chasse à l'Esclave: artistically the novel is one of Eyma's poorer, suffering an excess of the weaknesses we have noted in his other fiction. The major offense is the lack of unity between the central plot and appended incidents which are so numerous, so extensive, and so tenuously related to the novel's central issue as to be justifiably considered separate tales. In addition, the novel is weakened by the usual sentimental trappings--perhaps acceptable in themselves, but unacceptable when awkwardly and obviously employed to arouse the emotions of the reader. Present, too, are superfluous rhetoric, offensive coincidences, and contradictions in characterization for the sake of sentimental values.

The value of La Chasse à l'Esclave rests in its implicit and explicit information on slavery in America. In this respect the novel's artistic weakness, its tendency to exaggeration of sentiment and gothic horror, reinforces the American image. From the action of the story emerges the

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concept of Negro and white equality, based on the universality of human nature as evidenced by sentimental response to values. Heroes and heroines are Negroes; their maternal instincts, sense of gratitude, love, and thirst for freedom are akin on all levels to that of a Caucasian. The color of one's skin doesn't affect the interior man, his human nature.

In the United States, however, the Negro is denied equality and brotherhood; he suffers horrifying injustices. But the institution of slavery is not the real issue; rather, cruel individuals are to be condemned. Such men operate not on principle but on profit motives. American materialism, as applied to slave trade, is the central issue. Here the most malignant aspersions are cast upon the American character, and dramatized in the action of the novel.

The novel makes some gesture toward balance, however. Individual acts and the Constitution do not necessarily coincide. Cultural patterns and habits promote slavery without reflection. In other words, the master-slave relationship is not intentionally malicious, but results from American history. The American conscience lies dormant; habit has made it impervious to the institution. Eyma obviously did not condone slavery per se; yet he understood its "raison d'être" in America. He blames injustice, but not the United States; he understands individual motives, but does not condone individual actions.

The date of publication of La Chasse à l'Esclave, 1866, suggests that it found a wide audience. It appeared one

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year following the close of the Civil War, when French interest in the American slavery issue was high. Two other factors make the assumption of popularity reasonable: one, Harriet Beecher Stowe's influence in France was still viable in 1866; and two, the slavery question enjoyed a fairly long history in French literature, accounting in part for Stowe's very popularity. Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852) joined many other works of the same genre.

In 1824, Madame la Duchesse de Duras published Ourika, delineating a Negress' educational progress and consequent pain of deprivation. This was not an abolitionist novel, but a portrayal of the cruelties inherent in French law, and the injustices and obligations of society. In 1826, Servais Etienne's Sources de Bug-Jargal, depicting generous Negroes revolting in the Antilles, appeared. Prosper Merimée's Tamango was published in 1829--and filled with horror it was! The Altar-Gull of Eugène Sue was a tremendous success in 1831. In 1835 Louis de Maynard de Queilhé's Outre-Mer appeared, presenting atrocities and exonerating slave owners by reference to their philanthropic qualities. Alexander Dumas published Georges in 1843, rending hearts with a tale of a mulatto's love for a white girl. Finally, in 1847 appeared Paul Féval's Mendiant Noir, depicting a black domestic overflowing with devotion. All of these books were tasted by a public for whom justice was "à la mode," and whose "âme sensible" yearned for the triumph of the

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[7] Lucas, p.

persecuted. The theme of the virtuous Negro, suffering from the ills of slavery and color prejudice, was a well-worn novel theme.[6]

Nor was the issue of American slavery a novelty in France. America was a great curiosity to the French. Tocqueville had taken up the American slavery issue and judged that the Negro profited, rather than lost, by the institution of slavery. Beaumont's Marie, ou l'Esclavage aux Etats-Unis (1835) enjoyed great popularity, and criticized the contradiction between the American doctrine of equality and the institution of slavery. America was defended against French criticism in 1837 by Eugene A. Vial, in a brochure entitled Réponse à quelques imputations contre les Etats-Unis énoncées dans les écrits et dans les journaux récents. In other words, when translations of Uncle Tom's Cabin began to roll from the French press in 1852, they fell on fertile, cultivated ground.[7]

Moreover, slavery was a political issue in France herself. In 1848, slavery was abolished in French colonial possessions. "Après 1848 les français envisageront la question de l'esclavage du côté politique...le roman de

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[6]Edith Lucas, La Littérature Anti-Esclavagiste au 19e Siècle (Paris, 1930). Miss Lucas notes, also, that the Negro theme was used extensively in the French theater, witness Le Nègre (1830), Le Code Noir (1842), Le Docteur Noir (1846), and finally, Lamartine's Toussaint Louverture (1850), which enjoyed twenty-five performances.

[7]Lucas, p. 50.

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Madame Stowe a surtout pour effet de maintenir le sujet à la mode."[8] And so it remained in the 1850's, and well into the 1860's, as evidenced by the appearance of Madame Emery's Le Nègre de la Louisiane in 1864; Denance's Deux Chasseurs Noirs and Esclaves Affranchis in 1865; Madame Grandsard's Bianca l'Esclave in 1866; and Madame de Stolz's Blanche et Noire in 1872.

One reasonably assumes, then, that Eyma's La Chasse à l'Esclave reached a wide audience. Like so many of its predecessors, it was more concerned with the excesses of slavery than the institution itself; its content was familiar and acceptable. It is likely that many read the novel, given the political and literary tradition viable in France in 1866. These facts, coupled with the interest sparked by the Civil War, suggest that Eyma made a significant contribution to the French image of slavery in America.

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CHAPTER V

STUDIES OF AMERICAN POLITICAL AND DOMESTIC LIFE

Between 1853 and 1857, L. Xavier Eyma published a quartet of studies of the New World: Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde in 1853;[1] Les Deux Amériques in 1853;[2] Les Peaux Rouges in 1854;[3] and Les Peaux Noires in 1857[4]. These volumes deal with the entire American hemisphere; they are a mixture of tales and commentary. The material related strictly to the United States, however, concerns us here. The structure of each of the four volumes will be evident as Eyma's comments on the United States are examined. The latest published of the four volumes, Les Peaux Noires, is treated first, and for two reasons. One, the author

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[1]Louis Xavier Eyma, Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde (Paris: Giraud, 1853; Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1860 and 1861.) Hereafter, works cited are those of Eyma unless otherwise indicated.

[2]Paris: Giraud.

[3]Paris: Giraud; Paris: Michel Lévy, 1860.

[4]Paris: Michel Lévy. Eyma states in the introduction to this study that he planned three other volumes: Les Peaux Blanches; Les Portraits des Hommes d'Etat américaine, and Les Chroniques du Nouveau-Monde. However, I found no indication that these volumes were published.

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delineates his intent and conception of the entire quartet in the introduction to Les Peaux Noires; and two, the question of slavery is related to La Chasse à l'Esclave, discussed in the previous chapter.

Eyma explains that Les Peaux Noires is the fourth in a series of studies "sur la vie politique et domestique du Nouveau-Monde...une oeuvre de patience et de conscience à la fois."[5] Race is essential in considerations of the Americas because the races of the New World

> ne sont pas seulement soumises aux influences d'un état politique variable selon les latitudes, elles subissent en même temps et avant tout les influences de la couleur de la peau...cette délimitation entre les races, ayant chacune ses moeurs, ses habitudes, ses antipathies, ses préjugés, ses superstitions, et vivant isolément dans le même milieu; c'est à la longue qu'on aperçoit les chaînes qui les rattachent, et qu'on reconnait le point où leur existence se confond et devient une. (v)

The essence of the Americas is intimately related to the racial phenomena within their borders. In order to understand the hemisphere, one must understand its peoples. Though each has its own customs, each is forced to live alongside the other "en haine et en guerre, et se donnant cependant, chaque jour, des témoignages réciproques d'affection et de dévouement." (v) Skin color, and the tensions it creates, are the unifying elements of the quartet.

In Les Peaux Noires Eyma attempted to

> pénétrer plus avant (sic) dans les délicatesses de la vie privée et de mettre davantage en lumière les

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[5] Les Peaux Noires, v. Hereafter, page numbers are cited in parentheses following quotations, and refer to the work discussed.

> éléments qui rapprochent les deux races par l'éducation et par des sentiments nés de leur antagonisme même...ces causes de sympathie et de discorde...les luttes de la vie domestique américaine se produisent là sous la forme du drame. J'y ai tâché du moins. (vi)

The states of the New World combine two essentially contradictory elements, liberty and slavery, which, oddly enough,

> s'allient merveilleusement dans cette société qu'on ne connaît et qu'on n'apprécie bien qu'après l'avoir longtemps pratiquée, et y avoir vécu, en dehors de tous préjugés et de tout parti pris. (vi)

Eyma consistently attempted to assume an American point of view, thus obviating the weakness of judgments based on irrelevant standards--the standards of the Old World.

Eyma's approach to Negro culture and the institution of slavery is predicated not only on observation, but on his own experience as a slave owner in Martinique.

> Ayant vu l'esclavage de près, l'ayant pratiqué moi-même dans des conditions de bonté et d'humanité qui ne laissent aucun regret à ma conscience, je l'ai toujours considéré comme un état de transition utile à l'esclave lui-même. J'ai toujours pensé qu'au bout de tout esclavage, de tout asservissement, devait venir nécessairement la liberté. Les pays qui ne le comprennent pas et qui ne voient pas que l'esclavage, sous quelque forme que ce soit, est fini dans le siècle où nous sommes, se préparent de dures calamités.
>
> Que les fureurs de la liberté conquise par les armes épargnent donc les Etats-Unis!
>
> C'est le souhait que je forme pour un pays que j'aime et que j'admire sincèrement. (viii)

On the basis of observation and experience, then, Eyma saw slavery as a transitional institution designed to acclimate, then free, the Negro. From these grounds, he proceeds to a consideration of the Negro in the Americas.

Les Peaux Noires contains eight chapters, three of which are related to the United States and indicate Eyma's position on the question of American slavery.[6] "L'Epitaphe de l'Esclavage" precisely delineates Eyma's attitude toward the institution. "Le Code Noir" presents the root and summation of all elements in the life of a slave. "La Traité des Nègres" unmasks the conditions and methods of slave traffic from Africa to America.

"L'Epitaphe de l'Esclavage" treats the misunderstanding of the rôle of the institution of slavery, its place within civilization.

> Le rôle réservé à cette institution n'a été malheureusement compris, ni de ceux qui l'ont appliquée, ni de ceux qui ont gemi sous ses lois, ni de ceux qui ont travaillé à sa destruction. (5)

Abolitionist, master, and slave have reduced slavery to odious proportions, to inconceivable brutalities, thereby encouraging the attack against the institution itself.

> L'esclavage est une institution condamnée par la civilisation et par l'humanité. C'est un mot à rayer du dictionnaire de la langue des sociétés modernes...c'est une affaire de temps et d'accident; la plume et la pensée n'ont plus rien à y voir, plus rien à y faire. (4-5)

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[6] The remaining six tales are: "Madeleine Jérémie," set in Basse-Pointe, Martinique in 1820, and pivoting on the love of a white man for a mulatto woman; "Les Borgias Noirs," delineating Negro use of poisons and including a recipe for sang-gris, a specialty of Martinique; "Lisa la Cabresee," set in Martinique, and a tale of vengence via poison; "Les Créoles des Mornes,: another story of a slave's revenge; "Mademoiselle de Surgy," a tale of promiscuity among Negro women; "Les Doublons du Commandeur," set in 1835 in Saint-Domingue and exonerating the good master; and finally, "Tobine," a sentimental tale set in Havana, Cuba, in 1834.

But slavery did have a place in human progress. There were monstrous happenings, but these have been exaggerated by abolitionist tracts which, Eyma says, he could not read "sans être prêt à crier au mensonge, me faisant fort de démontrer la fausseté de pareilles accusations, l'impossibilité de pareils actes." (5)

How, then, can Eyma justify the publication of La Chasse à l'Esclave? In that novel Eyma presents not only the crimes of the cruel master, but the beneficence of the kind Fabrice. Through dramatization he indicates that Negro and white share the same nature; both races love, aspire and are subject to the same emotions and dreams. Therein is the justification of the novel, for in "L'Epitaphe" Eyma states,

> J'ai pris le nègre pour ce qu'il est,--un homme, au bout du compte, et ressemblant au reste des hommes. Il n'est pas du tout le vase d'élection où Dieu a concentré toutes les vertus...son coeur n'est pas non plus l'antre de tous les vices et de toutes les perversités de ce monde. Le nègre a reçu sa part de bon et de mauvais, de vertus et de vices. Il a, comme les autres créatures humaines, des passions dont toutes les gammes sont indiquées sur le clavier de son âme et de son intelligence. (7)

Each tale of Les Peaux Noires dramatizes the humanity of the colored man; he is, above all, a human being. This is the burden of the entire study, and of La Chasse à l'Esclave as well.

Negro passions and immoderation are "la fruit de sa nature et de son origine première." (7) But the climate of the New World, "sous lequel germent et se développent ces

passions," (7) is also responsible. All men of the New World, regardless of skin color, are distinct from the "grande famille humaine par bien des points." (7) They are

> comme les avant-postes et les tirailleurs d'une armée, s'éparpillant sur les ailes, un peu au caprice et au hasard des rencontres, s'aventurant, sans souci des règles et des lois de la guerre, en des routes où la masse des troupes ne pourrait pas aller sans compromettre le sort commun. (8)

The extraordinary conditions of the New World produced extraordinary men; the institution of slavery bound white to black in inter-dependence, in a mutual effort to tame a savage wilderness. The excesses of the Negro are those of the North American, white or black, and the product of the harsh conditions of life in the American hemisphere.

Unfortunately, the literary significance of the American climate and the men it produced has been ignored or distorted. The peculiarities of this new civilization are a mine of dramatic material, a source of "sujets d'étonnement et un intérêt exceptionnel." (8) Because slave territories have not had "un romancier à proprement dire...romanciers doctrinaires ou systématiques" (7) have produced distorted visions of slavery. Thus a fertile literary terrain has been defiled. Impartial writers would find that

> les moeurs résultant de l'esclavage ont un côté curieux et intéressant à étudier et à raconter, en les ramenant aux proportions du drame et du roman. Par leur originalité, par la nature des rapports étranges existant entre les maîtres et les esclaves, ces moeurs, ces habitudes sont incontestablement une source féconde d'émotions, de péripéties, de combinaisons dramatiques, neuves à coup sur. (6)

La Chasse à l'Esclave and the tales of Les Peaux Noires are efforts in this direction, attempts to indicate, through dramatization and the nuances which it alone can suggest, the basic nature shared by white and black, and the distinction of both races from those of the Old World.

In "Le Code Noir," Eyma considers the foundations of the slavery drama.

> Tous les drames que présente la vie des esclaves dans le Nouveau-Monde; tous les sentiments que peut inspirer ce spectacle de l'omnipotence d'un côté et de la soumission absolue de l'autre; toutes les émotions, toutes les accusations, toutes les injustices, toutes les pitiés, tous les abus de pouvoirs, toutes les générosités, toutes les révoltes, tous les crimes, toutes les larmes, se resument dans la loi qu'on a appellée le Code Noir. (287)

Obviously, one cannot understand the slave or the master if one fails to understand the basis of their relationship.

The code has been misunderstood, Eyma states. It is believed that "chaque mot met aux mains du maître un instrument de torture." (287) This is but one side of the coin.

> Le Code Noir n'est qu'une loi protectrice, protectrice pour l'esclave, et pour le maître à la fois.
>
> L'esclavage étant donné, le Code Noir a du exister; ce n'est pas le Code Noir qu'il faut condamner, mais l'esclavage. Les abolitionistes ont beaucoup déclamé contre le Code Noir, sans trop savoir ce qu'ils disaient. Ils ont batailé contre un mot, et rien de plus. (287)

The black code is a positive statement. It gives the master no extraordinary power over the slave. (Society has given him this). Rather, it imposes

> des devoirs au maître, définit et limite ses pouvoirs, ses droits. Ce n'est pas contre le Code Noir que l'esclave se révolte, c'est contre l'esclavage. L'esclavage a rabaissé une race humaine, l'a dégradée, asservie; la loi a pris le nègre en cet état, et l'a couvert de son bouclier protecteur, en prevenant les abus, mais en le tenant toujours dans une condition inférieure au blanc; l'esclavage a fait le nègre la propriété du blanc, propriété intelligent, active, susceptible conséquemment de toutes les passions; passions d'homme libre d'abord, puis passions d'esclave. Sans une loi également protectrice, le maître pouvait commettre autant de crimes sur la personne de l'esclave que l'esclave sur la personne du maître. (288)

The code in no way justifies the institution of slavery; rather, it keeps it within more or less reasonable bounds. As in La Chasse à l'Esclave, where American legal principles and the acts of individuals were distinguished, so here Eyma separates the law governing both slave and master from individual distortions of the law.

> Il est bon que le lecteur prenne une idée de ces codes noirs; il aura ainsi la clé de bien des faits que j'ai consignés dans le cours de ce volume. (289)

Comprehension of the law provides a basis on which the actions of states and individuals can be evaluated.

Because all slave territories have a code of some sort, Eyma presents an exemplary code of twenty-one articles, each limiting either the slave or the master. Significantly, the former is subject to greater regulation. As Eyma states, "partout le nègre est l'esclave et le blanc est le maître... partout l'esclavage porte à ses rameaux des fruits amers." (289) But he urges the reader to distinguish law from individual practice; the code is so ingrained in the public

conscience that infractions raise public indignation. Atrocities are condemned; offenders are prosecuted.[7]

Yet, because the code does exist and forms part of the public conscience, one must heavily condemn

> l'impunité et surtout l'indifférence publique en présence d'infamies qui s'abriteraient derrière un texte de loi dont l'élasticité serait exagérée. (296)

In other words, and in sum, if slavery exists, the Code Noir must exist for the good of all concerned; yet one cannot, in conscience, blink away American indifference to distortions of the Code. One cannot gloss the attitude of the public; in this Americans are culpable.

The facets of the slavery argument in Les Peaux Noires provide another illustration of the relationship of perspective and reflection to Eyma's perception of the American scene. Les Peaux Noires appeared in 1857; it presents no hypothesis for the longevity of slavery in America. La Chasse à l'Esclave was published in 1866; it explains the institution by reference to the effects of custom and time upon conscience. In no work, early or late, does Eyma condone the institution of slavery. Yet perspective seemingly

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[7]To illustrate the consequences of public indignation, Eyma tells the story of Tatems of La Chasse à l'Esclave and his maltreatment of slaves discovered in a burning hut. However, in Les Peaux Noires the evil-doer is a woman, who is subsequently banished from the United States. This aside, the story was evidently transferred, verbatim, from Les Peaux Noires to the later La Chasse à l'Esclave.

contributes a new dimension to the issue. By 1866 Eyma had more thoroughly penetrated and assimilated his American experience; he was able to perceive American motives in terms of history, institutions, and a broad cultural context. He could, given perspective, condemn the sin while forgiving the sinner.

The American press plays a definitive rôle in the slavery issue, Eyma notes. It presents philosophical discussions and factual evidence in support of abolition.

> Ils sont plus habiles...c'est par le drame qu'ils font des prosélytes, par le récit habilement arrangé de faits, faux le plus souvent, mais appropriés à la vie douloureuse des esclaves, en présentant toujours un côté vraisemblable. (298)

Harriet Beecher Stowe is relevant to any consideration of American slavery, for she drew much of her material, according to Eyma, from the American press.[8]

> A vrai dire le roman de Madame Beecher Stowe est une reproduction adroite et ingénieuse d'une multitude de petites histoires disséminées dans les journaux américains. On sait le succès prodigieux du livre célèbre auquel je fais allusion, livre où, pour les besoins d'une cause toute gagnée devant le coeur, mais perdue devant les intérêts des propriétaires, l'auteur a faussé le caractère du nègre, imaginé des cruautés impossibles, exagéré et méconnu les rapports entre maîtres et esclaves. (298)

It would seem that, though personally an abolitionist, Eyma would not admit false evidence in pleading the cause. The end

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[8] Eyma relates here the story of Bill and his escape to Canada, another tale transferred directly from Les Peaux Noires to La Chasse à l'Esclave. Here, however, Eyma states that the story was drawn from a newspaper account, which may have been taken from Uncle Tom's Cabin; or H.B. Stowe may have borrowed the novel's episode from the newspaper account.

does not justify the means, even in the case of H.B. Stowe. But in her, and more particularly in the American press, Eyma saw a powerful weapon serving abolition.

"La Traité des Nègres," the final section of concern to us in Les Peaux Noires, is already familiar. It is Brower's story, transferred later to La Chasse à l'Esclave and discussed in the previous chapter. In Les Peaux Noires, however, we learn that the episode is based on an article which appeared in a California newspaper, the Evangelist, in 1855. In fact, Eyma merely translated the article, inserted it in Les Peaux Noires, and later in La Chasse à l'Esclave. This suggests that La Chasse is at least as intellectual as experiential, based on reading as much as upon observation. It suggests further that Eyma's major concern, as noted previously, was information rather than creation. Even in the case of fiction, drama functions in the service of information, evoking attitudes and nuances which are impossible and inappropriate to straight reporting. And attitudes and nuances create emotion , which may in turn catalyze real-life action, just as H.B. Stowe's novel was designed to "toute gagnée devant le coeur" by obliterating all materialistic concerns which pleaded in behalf of slavery.

Les Peaux Noires, then, tells us that Negro and white share the same nature, rendered peculiar by the climatic and environmental conditions of the New World. Slavery, from the author's point of view, is to be condemned; yet judgment must be tempered by knowledge of the American cultural context.

The Black Code is, and must be understood as, a containment of slavery, limiting both slave and master. Nonetheless, the American indifference to inhumane excesses is inexcusable. In sum, Les Peaux Noires attempts to establish without equivocation, but with reference to factual data, a balance in the judgments passed by foreign observers on the institution of slavery in the United States.

Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde saw three editions; 1853, 1860, and 1861. For this reason alone, it is important as a potential image-maker. Like Les Peaux Noires, it deals with the entire American hemisphere, but treats the United States, exclusively, in certain chapters. The first forty-two pages of the study are devoted to North American questions, including "Premières Impressions" and "Les Trois Races Blanches." Next, life in the Antilles and in Central America is considered.[9] Our major concern reappears with "Américaines et Créoles," and with two chapters entitled "Types de femmes.--Lora Cameron.--Catherine Geerts." (These two tales were discussed in Chapter III, and hence will be ignored here.) American modes of travel are treated in "Les Voyages et les hôtels," and four chapters later, the

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[9]Chapters in this section are entitled: "Une Nichée de Venus," treating three types of women found in the Antilles; "Christine et Méala," set in the Antilles, another tale of a white man's love for a Creole woman; "Les Postillons d'ébène, les serenos et les fleuves de diamants," a story of the indolence of Cuban Creoles.

United States again appears in a section entitled "Quelques Traits de moeurs américaines."[10]

Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde, dedicated to Eyma's sisters, is unified by the social habits and customs of women. Characteristically, Eyma wanders from his theme, but always to our advantage; his digressions further illuminate the United States. It would seem, in fact, that Eyma thought these digressions amply justified. For he states, "pas de pays sur le compte duquel on commette plus d'erreurs et sur le compte duquel on se fasse plus d'illusions." (1) Eyma hoped to rectify misconceptions of the United States, and in "Premières Impressions" he outlines the proper approach needful for the observer-traveller.

To understand a people, one must surprise them

> dans le secret de ses moeurs, et des institutions qu'il faut étudier dans le milieu de leur influence pour s'en faire une idée exacte. (1)

Failing to do so,

> l'on s'expose à voir la tyrannie, le despotisme, l'horrible même, au lieu de cette liberté et de cette grandeur dont les Américains du Nord sont si fiers. (1)

Once within America, however, the observer-traveller faces distinct problems because of the very individuality, the uniqueness, of the United States, which tends to

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[10]The three chapters omitted are entitled: "Miss Catt et le Royal Fusilier," a sentimental tale set in Martinique; "Le Champagne et le Volcan," a story of the creation of a society element in Martinique; and "La Calenda," an explication, with peripities, of the dance and other social customs in the American hemisphere.

paralyze him and invalidate all previous norms. Therefore he must

> renoncer à la prétention de retrouver là-bas ce qu'on a laissé chez soi; il faut y chercher, au contraire, précisément ce que l'on ne possède ni à Paris, ni à Londres. Autrement, quoi sert de se déplacer? à quoi sert de voyager? (3)

This done, in what manner does one proceed to assimilate and recount his experience of this New World? For after all, "la comparison est la morale de tout voyage, je le sais." (3) The proper spirit must be brought to such comparison. One must proceed

> avec intelligence, impartialité...un esprit libre de préjugés, ardent à l'étude, accessible à toutes les impressions...L'égoïsme est le pire bagage avec lequel un voyageur puisse se mettre en campagne. Il allonge la route, il assombrit le plus beau ciel. C'est l'éteignoir de l'observation. (3)

Having created a proper spirit, an impartiality and openness to the novelty of America, the observer-traveller must equip himself with knowledge of customs and institutions--not only generally, but specifically. For

> les moeurs, les habitudes, les races d'hommes elles-mêmes changent, de la manière la plus absolue, d'un Etat à l'autre, je puis presque dire d'une ville à une autre ville. (11)

Life in New York varies radically from life in the South, for example, and generalizations on the United States expose the commentator "à porter les jugements téméraires." (11) As we shall see, Eyma accuses his countrymen of this fault.

In order to approach American culture openly, and positively, one must "donc de se pénétrer de l'esprit américain." (14) One must realize that "la société, aux

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Etats-Unis d'Amerique, est essentiellement morcelée" (14) in seemingly contradictory, yet basically unified, elements. "Des impressions différentes et des jugements complètement opposés" (15) result from the observer's failure to perceive the variety within this unity; to fractionate his judgments just as American society is fractionated. Each state, and in fact each city, of the United States is alone responsible for its actions, progress, and well-being. "Comment raisonnablement établir, alors, de solidarité? Comment raisonnablement l'exiger?" (16) Yet previous traveller-observers have demanded exactly such solidarity--or more aptly, have premised its existence to support their own theories which are, consequently, distortions of the real America.

Two other pitfalls open to the foreign commentator are the imposition of European standards upon New World culture, and the confusion of personal failure with failures in the culture under observation. Tocqueville, generally to be admired, erred in comparing "les institutions américaines aux institutions constitutionnelles qui florissaient en France au moment où il a accompli son voyage." (2) Indeed, "presque tous les écrivains qui traitent les questions américaines dans la presse française" (2) are guilty of the same. The novelty of America creates confusion, and false judgment. Madame Trollope and another female writer, left anonymous (but probably Harriet Martineau), perpetrated "calomnies à l'endroit des Etats-Unis" (4) because of personal,

commercial failures experienced there. Moreover, "tous les livres systématiquement hostiles à l'Amérique du Nord...ont une cause identique." (4) Though women are generally sensitive in their judgments, any "nuage d'amour-propre blessé, d'orgueil, de susceptibilité ou de convenance de position" (15) impairs their vision and impartiality. This is especially ironic, given "le respect profond que l'on prodigue aux femmes dans ces pays si cruellement outragés par deux Européennes." (4) Eyma here wields a two-edged sword: he has nullified the criticisms of Mrs. Trollope and friend, and has simultaneously indicated a weakness in woman's nature.

To whom, then, can the curious man turn for factual information on the United States? Eyma recommends Tocqueville, Ampère, and Chevalier; men who observed America without financial motivation.

> Ils allaient étudier un pays dont le développement donne le vertige à le suivre; un pays élevé aujourd'hui au rang des premières puissances du monde, où la population augmente chaque année dans les proportions colossales, où l'activité commerciale et industrielle atteint des limites prodigieuses. (5)

From such expectations, followed by observation, came books of the stature of La Démocratie en Amérique, Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord, and Promenade en Amérique, "trois succès désormais inséparables." (6) When one judges America impartially, one is convinced

> que tout est pour le mieux dans l'Amérique du Nord...dans cette société encore en travail sur quelques points, toutes les idées solennelles qui agitent le coeur des hommes et le coeur des nations y ont trouvé des représentants dignes d'elles. (6)

Ampère treated myriad details of American life in the capacity of poet, philosopher, and scholar. He brought the novelty of America to life; he juxtaposed the European treasures of creative genius, before which one stops to "rêver et remonter...le courant des âges" (8), with "les résultats immenses du présent, que l'on constate...les mystères et les espérances de l'avenir" (8) which are the soul of America. Tocqueville studied America from a political and social vantage point; Chevalier concerned himself with American business. All brought openness and impartiality to their task; all saw the quality of American experience as radically different from that of Europe. In America, the present and future captivate, and identify the land of promise, the New Eden.

Indeed, to Eyma as well as to Americans, the United States is a second paradise, a land destined to prosperity by Divine Providence. The American people have confidence "dans la mission divine qu'il dit avoir reçue,de faire pousser sur ce vaste sol l'arbre du bon sens et les fleurs de la raison." (17) The assimilation of immigrants, "cette puissante domination de l'esprit américain" (17), speaks for the providential breath which sustains the New World. In America, all is but a question "de temps et de patience;" equilibrium will follow oscillation and experimentation as night follows day.

Another proof of the workings of Providence in America is her obvious rôle as cradle of democracy and liberty.

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> La Providence, à qui nous devons attribuer dans ce fait un rôle puissant, a creé ce pays pour les hommes qui l'habitent, et les hommes pour le pays qu'ils exploitent. (18)

Immense rivers and lakes witness the Divine Plan to

> indiquer au génie de l'homme que partout où il voudra pénétrer la route lui est aisée;...lui prescrire d'accomplir ce pèlerinage de la civilisation, en lui interdisant tout prétexte d'impuissance...n'est-ce pas là un beau défi et une magnifique tentation lancés à la hardiesse de l'homme! L'esprit du peuple américain a accepté ce défi et s'est jeté dans cette tentation avec un audacieux courage. (18-19)

The American temperament, "froid, calculateur, positif à tout prévu, tout combiné" (19), encourages the movement from calm to storm, from civilisation to disorder. For the American believesin himself and his mission.

> Il a dans ses propres forces une confiance telle qu'il sait bien que sa présence seule et son exemple ramèneront le calme à la place de la tempête, qu'il assoiera la prospérité sur les ruines et la misère, et qu'il étouffera le désordre sous l'influence du travail. (19)

Thus Eyma articulates the American myth of the New Adam, in a New Eden wherein Providence has given man opportunity to rectify the errors of European civilisation, by diligently running order through the virginal chaos of the New World.

As though to illustrate the necessity to judge the United States sectionally, "Les Trois Races Blanches" treats Americans in three categories: the Yankee, the Virginian, and the Westman. Generically American, these people nonetheless

> se divise en trois types bien tranchés, opposés les uns aux autres par le caractère, par les moeurs, par les habitudes morales, comme par les conditions physiques d'existence, d'attitude et d'éducation. Il en résulte que trois jugements également vrais, également faux, peuvent être portés sur les Américains par ceux qui n'auront vu, étudié ou rencontré qu'un seul de ces trois types isolément. (23)

The Yankee is the direct descendant of the pilgrim who was "une sorte de missionnaire religieux, politique, industriel, commercial." (27), and has conserved his temperament. He is

> l'Américain froid, défiant,guindé d'esprit et d'allure, peu communicatif, reflechi, taciturne, calculateur à l'excès. Il a peu d'élans sympathiques; rarement il laisse dominer sa tête par son coeur, pas plus en politique qu'en affaires, non plus que dans les actes de la vie privée. (27)

The Yankee is a "Robinson volontaire;" he has opened vast territories; he is the father of public education, of consummate business techniques; a "fourmi travailleuse, jamais oisif."

> Ce qu'il fit donc par calcul d'abord, devint peu à peu une pente naturelle de son caractère; il est resté souverainement supérieur aux autres populations dans toutes les choses pratiques. (28)

The Yankee has, however, his faults. Though proud of his American heritage, he lacks "d'enthousiasme et de chaleur nationale." (29) Significantly, only two American presidents have been Yankee; "C'est là une preuve incontestable du peu de sympathie politique dont jouit le Yankee en Amérique." (29) His excessive conservatism and austerity are reflected in the towns of New England - cold, uniform, and monotonous; in the condemnation of games and pleasure, even the dance, considered "un fléau et une cause de désordre;" (30)[11] in Yankee dress, of "une simplicité

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[11] Eyma here credits and paraphrases Michel Chevalier.

rigide qui indique le mépris qu'il professe pour tout ce qui est luxe, apparat, étalage. Jamais un bijou ne brille sur lui." (30) Given his character,

> Il a besoin d'être connu à fond pour être apprécié, jamais comme un être divertissant, par exemple; mais comme un homme capable de toutes les choses pratiques, propres à créer un pays, et à le pousser dans des voies de prospérité inouïe. (31)

Eyma characteristically penetrates appearances to arrive at their foundations, character and temperament. Not cities themselves, but the spirit which animates them is his primary concern. The Yankee spirit, "dans toute sa pureté nationale," can be seen in the architecture and atmosphere of Boston, "le soleil des Etats-Unis." (31-32) Boston is a vast academy, its citizens academicians; Philadelphia is an American monastery. In both cities, a multiplicity of churches, giving "une idée bouffonne de l'esprit religieux des Américains," reveals a strange but sincere combination of "moeurs religieuses et spéculatrices des Américains." Church architecture, because adaptable for public entertainment, suggests the American propensity to mingle finance and profit in all areas of life.

The second Americain "race," the Virginian, is "l'antipode du Yankee. C'est l'Américain par excellence pour ceux qui le connaissent bien." (34) The Virginian is expansive, gregarious, witty, open, relaxed, and "ne manque pas de laisser percer de petites velléités d'aristocratie, quoique la démocratie ait son foyer le plus ardent dans les Etats du Sud." (34) He relishes games and dancing, and is

> sympathique, chaud de coeur, enthousiaste, serviable, hospitalier jusqu'à la vanité. Il n'aime pas les demi-mesures en rien, il a même une tendance marquée à l'exagération. (34)

Jefferson, in his flexibility and broad-mindedness; his enthusiasm tempered by good sense; his intuition of the just and practical, was the prototypical Virginian. "Quoiqu'il en soit, le type virginien est devenu le type dominant aux Etats-Unis," (36) and has contributed many distinguished sons to the service of his country, witness Monroe, Madison, Henry, Lee, and Caw. Eyma preferred the Virginian, and for obvious reasons. The warmth and "joie de vivre" of the Virginian, in combination with aristocratic, yet democratized tastes, is naturally agreeable to any European observer-traveller. The Virginian might be said to combine the best of both worlds.

The Westman, Eyma's third American "race," is an exaggeration of the Virginian. He

> en a tous les bons côtes, moins l'urbanité, moins le raffinement, moins le luxe et l'attrait sympathique de la première rencontre. Les grandes et excellentes qualités de l'homme de l'Ouest sont cachées sous une enveloppe rude et grossière même. (36)

The harsh exterior of the Westman is understandable, and in fact to be expected. For he is an agglomeration of all American types; he has withstood "les épreuves cruelles... leur corps était brisé aux fatigues de toutes sortes; leur esprit s'était dépoli à ce genre d'existence." (37) In him, civilization has receded into dream and memory; hostile conditions have been his reality. Hence self-defense has

become his principle and the pistol his Bible. "Une colonie militaire, moins la discipline," (37) resulted from the difficulties of daily life. The Westman, then,

> "est sans gêne, rude, grossier, indépendant, fier de son individualité, et pourtant familier à l'excès...le sentiment d'égalité...est poussé aux dernières limites." (38)

General Jackson, who even when president drank with statesmen and woodsmen, is the prototypical Westman, this "race" which is

> peu soigneux dans sa mise...il s'habille comme les fermiers, de drap épais, et ses vêtements ont toujours les formes les plus commodes. (39)

Beneath his rude exterior is a heart of gold: "Il est en effet généreux à l'excès, grand dans son hospitalité, dévoué jusqu'à la mort, obligeant sans calcul." (39)

The closing of "Les Trois Races Blanches" summarizes Eyma's entire approach to the United States. The observer-traveller must make distinctions, avoid generalizations, and probe the heart of a culture before delivering judgment. Because there are three American "races,"

> On ne peut plus s'étonner...que les opinions formulées par les voyageurs sur cette société soient si diverses et souvent si opposées. Il est arrivé, en effet, que beaucoup d'entre eux se sont contentés de l'examen de l'un de ces types, le premier rencontré, et qu'ils aient pris la partie pour le tout. (40)

One must accept the United States in its startling multiplicity; in its infinite variety. Then, and only then, a true but paradoxical conclusion is possible. For having probed American diversity, one finds at bottom

> une unité parfaite entre elles en ce qui concerne le but où elles tendent. A des moments donnés, Yankees, Virginiens et Westmen sont avant tout Américains, et c'est là ce qui concourt le plus à donner de la force et de la sécurité à la nationalité et aux institutions des Etats-Unis. (41)

"Américaines et Créoles" is a thirty-four page essay on two "races" of American women, Louisiana Creoles and Americans "proprement dites." Valid judgment, once again, demands proper categories of thought. It would seem that Eyma's fascination with the distinctions between American women can be attributed to a culturally-oriented interest in Louisiana women; they are of French extraction, and they live in New Orleans, as did the Eymas. The woman of New France forms

> en Amérique un type à part qui commence à se perdre cependant, par suite de l'envahissement des habitudes et des moeurs exclusivement américaines, et des unions qui se font depuis quelques années entre les deux races. (107)

Eyma may have wished to preserve this vanishing breed for posterity. In any case, New Orleans society reveals the woman and her traits.

Louisiana women are shown to best advantage at the theatre. They are

> fraîches, éclatantes, ont la peau fine, transparente et veloutée...aux charmes du corps, les Louisianaises joignent les grâces de l'esprit. Elles sont passionnées pour le plaisir, les bals, les spectacles; elles cherchent toutes les occasions de briller et de conquérir! Seraient-elles femmes sans cela? (106-107)

Louisiana women contribute a poetic aspect to traditions, such as the "loves me, loves me not" custom of plucking the petals of flowers, which acquire in New Orleans

"ainsi l'immortalité...d'un amour." (111) The Spanish tradition of serenading beneath a woman's window is "une manière d'établir à l'avance la bonne harmonie dans les ménages," (112) and delightful.

The American woman "proprement dite" has

> un cachet tout particulier. Ce n'est plus ni la grâce, ni la pureté des lignes des Louisianaises; ce n'est plus ni la froideur compassée des Anglaises, ni la dignité des Hollandaises, mais c'est un ensemble de tout cela. (113)

The ensemble is protected by tradition, the first of which demands formal introductions. Without it, "une Américaine vous rebutera par son aspect roide et dédaigneux;" Once introductions are made,

> tout à coup son visage change, ses lèvres s'ouvrent au sourire, sa main se pose dans la vôtre, il y a tout de suite vingt ans que vous vous connaissez! (113)

And immediately a stimulating conversation may develop, for "l'éducation des femmes...est une intéressante chose à observer...elle est plus sérieuse, plus solide, plus étendu qu'en aucun pays du monde." (118) Thus equipped, the American woman is permitted great liberty and precocious contact with the world, which in turn broadens her experience and her conversational abilities.

> Ce n'est point chez elles une théorie, c'est une pratique dont elles ont appris les secrets au milieu de l'immense, et trop immense liberté dont elles jouissent. (119)

Capping the American woman's freedom is her respectable

residence in hotels.[12]

> Un très-grand nombre de jeunes filles, même séparées de leurs familles, adoptent la vie commune d'hôtels, tout comme les hommes. (119)

One must, of course, relate this custom to the nature of the American hotel, wherein "tout ce qui est célibataire se réfugie...et y prend gîte et table." (119) Fortunately, in hotels the sexes are separated.

The American woman travels fearlessly without male escort. Hence gentlemen along the route assume the rôle of protector. Indeed, spontaneous relationships between the sexes are encouraged in the American home, where young women receive "toute visite qui leur convient, sans que les parents s'en préoccupent et y assistent." (121) The chaperone, in other words, is superfluous in America.

Oddly enough, such liberty produces "des épouses exemplaires." Having acquired a broad range of experience before marriage; having been "ardentes aux plaisirs de leur sexe pendant leurs années de liberté, elles deviennent tout à coup d'austères recluses." (112) Moreover, women are an object of profound respect; no other country is "plus sévère, dans le principe, contre toutes les atteintes portées à son honneur et à sa dignité." (132) The law is very severe in

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[12]These comments appeared earlier in two articles entitled "L'Hôtellerie aux Etats-Unis," L'Illustration, XXII (July 16, 1853), 43; and L'Illustration, XXII (July 23, 1853), 62.

cases of adultery; the authority of the law reinforces "une position exceptionnelle pour la femme. Elle est respectée, mais rarement adulée." (133)

The respect paid women promotes a ridiculous spirit of "secte, pour lequel les femmes montrent une ardeur plus intraitable peut-être que les hommes." (133) The Quakeress exemplifies this spirit which promotes religious intolerance.

> Aux Etats-Unis, ce pays si froid, si calme en apparence, si tolérante pour toutes les idées qu'elles soient, l'esprit religieux, a, de tout temps, produit le fanatisme le plus violent. C'est le seul point peut-être sur lequel la liberté soit méconnue et outragée comme elle l'est, et plus particulièrement dans les Etats de l'Est et du Nord, où cela est de tradition. (134)[13]

Given the persecution which Quakers suffered, their intolerance is doubly strange. But "on en faisait des martyrs, c'était assurer leur triomphe," (135) and the Quakeress has perpetuated religious despotism. As she spread her sect, so she "se montrait tyrannique." (136) Her austerities were many; her ridiculous puritanism (covering piano legs, for example) frequent. Nonetheless, the Quaker sect has had a salutary influence on the American masses, and has given eminent men to the service of the country.

Would Eyma raise his daughter "à l'américaine?" He answers in the negative.

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[13]These comments appeared earlier in an article entitled "Quakers et Quakeresses," L'Illustration, XIV (September 8, 1849), 18.

> Car si le corps sort pur de ces luttes quotidiennes, si la raison s'y fortifie pour l'avenir, le coeur y laisse sa chastete. Et l'Européen, habitué à chercher et à rencontrer dans la jeune fille la candeur, la naïveté, la poétique pudeur des anges, est cruellement désappointé. (121-122)

The liberty of the American female contains certain advantages, but the European product is preferable.

"Les Voyages et les Hôtels" presents an aspect of American life which obviously captivated Eyma.[14] Because "aux Etats-Unis, voyager est une chose sérieuses," (188) every possible accommodation is available, and described by Eyma. Yet here, as elsewhere, the physical realities of America are not in point. Rather, Eyma is concerned with the spirit and temperament illuminated by these realities; the American character as expressed in physical surroundings.

In navigation, Eyma finds "l'audace des Américains du Nord se déploie dans toute son excentricité...cette audace, cet esprit d'aventure finit par vous subjuguer..." (189)[15] On steamboats and tow-boats, an "absence complète de tout commandement, de tous cris, de tout bruit" (192) reflects the

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[14]These comments appeared earlier in an article entitled "Souvenirs d'un voyage aux Etats-Unis en 1847. Les hôtels, les auberges et les cafés," L'Illustration, XI (August 12, 1848), 355-358.

[15]These comments appeared earlier in an article entitled "Bateaux à vapeur et autres," L'Illustration, XI (June 10, 1848),235-238; and in another entitled "Chemin de fer, routes, voitures, etc.," L'Illustration, XI (July 22, 1848), 316-318.

American system of government, wherein "l'on ne retrouve nulle part le pouvoir, et où l'on sent partout son action." The thrust of the American spirit is amazing; it realizes that "tout progrès à son côté fatal," and hence lunges forward in spite of accident and error which, Eyma adds, have been exaggerated in the case of steamboats.

Land transportation, too, is daring but happy. The pace of drivers expresses another aspect of the American temper. "Ses chevaux sont tout aussi américains que lui sous ce rapport. Ils vont toujours, toujours." (195) Railroads have been constructed through vast forests in order to

> "appeler des populations nouvelles...créer des villes et des villages...semer la fortune...répandre la civilisation." (198)

The New World thus expands and prospers.

Having reached his destination, the American finds sumptuous accomodations at his disposal. For he "aime, par nature, ses aises." (203) He expects to find the comforts of home "partout où il s'arrêtera." (203) Luxurious hotels are the result of American mobility, and hence demand; conversely, their existence promotes travel. Hotels are, in fact, a sort of national monument in America, because "en toute chose, le caractère distinctif des Américains du Nord est d'avoir emprunter son ampleur à la nature au milieu de laquelle ils vivent." (207) American taste dictates vast and imposing buildings (often an unfortunate imitation of the Greek orders). These, in turn, impress travellers, who receive every possible service from the innkeeper. And this

is a source of national pride.

The French, Eyma judges, "le peuple le moins avancé" in hostelry, should take a lesson from the Americans.

> Nous avons le préjugé de croire que, pourvu qu'un homme ne soit pas exposé à la pluie, au vent, à la neige; pourvu qu'on lui loue très-cher une chambre et un lit, cela suffit, et que toutes les conditions que le voyageur est en droit d'exiger ont été remplies. Grave erreur! (205)

American hotels provide every comfort, from libraries, to bars, to barbers. They deserve imitation.

The amplitude of the American system of travel and hostelry is a reflection of the American spirit.

> Dans l'abîme qu'a produit l'extraction des racines d'un arbre centenaire, il faut jeter les fondations d'une maison éternelle, et non point les bases d'une cabane...au milieu de ce chaos d'où il s'agissait de tirer un monde...placez une civilisation à l'eau de rose, des hommes aux habitudes paisibles et polies, vous assisterez incontestablement à une décadence. Il est entré dans les desseins de Dieu, qui a voulu faire des Etats-Unis une oeuvre à part, de leur imposer ces orageuses jeunesses traversées de tempêtes et d'éclairs. Le calme est toujours revenu peu à peu et en son temps. (217)

Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde closes with an essay entitled "Quelques Traits de Moeurs américaines." As the title indicates, matters of custom are considered, but again with an eye to the spirit which created them. The liberty of women, their education and attitudes, result from the exaggerated independence of both men and woman; the "vanité extrême que domine dans le pays." (290)

"Leap year," and the consequent freedom of women to propose marriage, is exemplary of woman's liberty. It is symptomatic of a deeper problem, that of education. The

American woman is taught only to "danser et flirter, voilà le base de leur éducation...on ne leur enseigne point autre chose depuis l'enfance." (289) So judges an American source which Eyma quotes. But our observer-traveller defends the badgered female and American society, which is

> guindée au milieu même de l'extrême licence. Elle se montre sévère à qui paraît faire fi du qu'en dira-t-on. Il n'y a pas de pays où l'on pratique la débauche sur une plus large échelle et où le monde soit moins indulgent pour ceux qui ont le tort ou la maladresse de se laisser surprendre. (290)

One must distinguish principle and practice. And the American woman must be credited with a certain simplicity and naïveté, in spite of her extreme independence rooted in national pride.

Because of the attitude of women toward Negroes, a digression on Negro problems can be justified. A white woman refuses even to view a play of Negro authorship, indicating once again that "d'un bout à l'autre des Etats-Unis, le préjugé contre la classe de couleur est intraitable." (295)

Thus the volume ends, having woven a pattern of American customs and attitudes as related to women, and having established rules for the just and impartial observation of a foreign culture. Eyma made every effort, it would seem, to practice his preachments. He presented not only superficial observations, but penetrated the motives and spirit which the face of America manifests.

Les Deux Amériques is fundamentally a study of the origins and character of the North American people, as opposed

to the Central American states. By way of contrast, Eyma attempts to indicate the need for a monarchical, rather than democratic, form of government in Central America. The bulk of material in the study relates purely to the United States, however, and is of considerable relevance to this study.

The volume is divided into eleven chapters, ten of which treat North America almost exclusively. Eyma considers imperialism, democracy, the founders of the American republic, public instruction, arts and letters, industrial and commercial America, political habits, impressions, the American temperament, travel, and a bit of American history. Because some of this material appeared in Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde, and because other material appears in volumes to be later discussed, only certain sections of Les Deux Amériques are of interest here. Eyma's basic love and admiration of the United States are the predominant impressions left in the mind of the reader.

As the study opens, one finds Eyma highly critical of American imperialism, and its designs upon Central America. This criticism, however, is soon placed in context. Eyma's strongest sentiment toward the United States is

> celui de la gratitude d'abord, et...de l'admiration. J'ai vécu aux Etats-Unis, j'ai beaucoup écrit sur ce pays. Il n'est pas une ligne que je me repente...et qui ne soit l'expression sincère de la profonde impression qu'ont produite sur moi ce pays, ce peuple, et ces institutions,--difficiles et même impossibles partout ailleurs, mais parfaitement adaptées aux populations de l'Union. (38-39)

Industry, domestic prosperity, public establishments--all are indicative of the success of the American experiment. But the circumstances of the United States differ from those of Central America, and these very circumstances are requisite to the success of democratic forms.

First, the American immigrant was impregnated with virtue, austerity, and reason; these have been perpetuated in the United States. Secondly, a religious spirit, moral principles, a persistently progressive thrust, an energetic will to become a great people, and pride in his cause have sustained and protected the American. Thirdly, Americans have dared, in their success, to defy and challenge the Old World. An absence of these three precedents sounds failure for other states which imitate the United States.

Requisite, also, to the democratic way of life is a system of public instruction as found in America, correcting the faults to which democracies are prone. In America, ideas quickly penetrate the spirit of the people and win sympathy. Moreover, American institutions ease the burden on the poor; large associations and public education expand the principles of "haute moralité, les idées d'ordre, l'amour du travail." (47)

> Le mal qui tourmente les masses en France y est inconnu, parce qu'au lieu d'impoisonner le breuvage intellectuel destiné au peuple, les esprits éclairés qui se donnent la mission sublime de le conduire, ne présentent à ses lèvres que la coupe de la raison et du bon sens. (47)

Certain forces are responsible for the happy success of the United States. She is favored with immense resources; honor is paid the worker; dishonesty is unprofitable, and therefore almost non-existent.

> Dans un pays, sous une forme de gouvernement où tout homme est pesé à sa juste valeur, où cette valeur seule lui assure une position privée et publique, ce n'est point par de tels moyens qu'on parviendrait à se créer une popularité ou un parti. (48)

Were all peoples so fortunate; had all nations the foundation and spirit of the United States, democratic forms would be universal. Unfortunately, Central America is without the necessary precedents. American democracy and its success, though admirable and laudable, is not the universal solution to the problems of man.

In Les Deux Amériques Eyma presents his credentials as observer and recorder of the American experiment. First, his father's residence in New Orleans has given Eyma a base from which to observe and speak. Secondly, a universal interest in America encouraged and stimulated his interest. Thirdly, the United States has provided a fruitful example for other nations, and France in particular. Finally, Eyma was sent to America for the very purpose of observation and subsequent reporting; hence he saw the country at first hand, and learned the language of the people.

> Je n'ai point entrepris de commenter les institutions politiques de l'Amérique du Nord, ni d'en étudier les rouages.
>
> Ces pages sont une simple étude de moeurs; c'est le dehors et la pratique des institutions; je prends les faits tels qu'ils sont, je constate des résultats, rien de plus. (156)

Les Deux Amériques, then, is not intended to render judgment; it simply reports the observer's superficial impressions. On this basis Eyma moves to his delineation of aspects of American life.

The political process in the United States receives considerable attention.[16] Of first note are the political parties, which oppose one another though divided by no radical principle. Rather, like husband and wife, they are unified by the very process of disagreement. Through constant political agitation the people express their will, needs, and thoughts. And Americans accept this agitation with complete equanimity - unlike the French, who regard each election with a sort of terror - and see in it an essential guarantee of liberty.

As election day approaches, weak or undesirable candidates fall by the wayside, and "il n'y a plus alors que deux partis face à face, que deux candidats en présence." (150) Candidates debate and implore in barrooms, gambling houses, banks, theaters, and steamboats. "Il a recours à tous les moyens, aux banquets, aux meetings, aux journaux." (151) Next come parades, solemn processions, and finally

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[16]Four chapters separate Eyma's political commentary from the first sections of Les Deux Amériques. These four treat the founders of the American republic, education, arts and letters, and commercial and industrial genius. They are transferred verbatim to later volumes (a practice with which we are now familiar), and will later be considered.

the election itself, which produces neither hate nor envy in defeated candidates. Because democracy itself is not threatened by political agitation, and because personal, selfish interests play no part in the ambitions of candidates, calm and equanimity immediately follow the "brouhaha" of elections.

France, Eyma judges, should profit from the example of the American electoral process. Rather than teach universal suffrage, France has

> porté atteinte à ce droit sacré; que nos réunions dans la rue avaient pour mot d'ordre l'émeute; qu'au lieu de discuter les titres des candidats en plein vent ou dans les clubs, nous y sapions l'existence d'une forme sociale qu'une révolution venait de nous donner; que les comités d'élections avait usurpé des pouvoirs que la confiance leur déniait, et précisément dans un intérêt mesquin de coteries et de proscriptions arbitraires; enfin, que nous avions fait du droit d'association politique une conspiration permanente, en élevant dans chaque centre de réunion une sorte de gouvernement illicite à côté du gouvernement de tous; en dressant sans raison, sans réflexion, intempestivement autel contre autel. Là-bas, au contraire, ni les meetings, ni les réunions du dehors ne méconnaissent leur caractère, je dirai leur mission, et ne se compromettent à mettre en péril l'état social non plus que l'ordre public. (154)

Because Eyma suggests that France imitate the United States, he must have seen, in France, the prerequisites necessary to the successful functioning of democracy "à l'américaine."

America as "melting pot" renders the exercise of political rights more solemn. Scores of immigrants undertake life in the United States with small notion of their liberties.

> Seulement les nouveaux venus se façonnent avec une rapidité que j'appellerai providentielle, aux moeurs, aux lois, aux nécessités du pays.
>
> En posant le pied sur le sol américain, il semble qu'ils y soient nés. (155)

The development of the United States seems providential.

Article II of the Constitution provides for presidential elections, Eyma explains. He explicates the function of the electoral college and the president, who is "responsable de la manière dont il exécute les lois que dicte la majorité." (169) The functions of the Secretary of State and the cabinet are delineated, and Eyma again calls to France to heed the American example, thus insuring the broadest liberty and most rapid prosperity through the absolute separation of the legislative, executive, and judiciary powers. Obviously, Eyma admired the American political construct.

Chapter VIII of Les Deux Amériques, entitled "Premières Impressions," reads rather like the section of the same name in Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde. Eyma stresses once again that, in observing America, "Il vous faut un guide sûr, ou vous vous fourvoyez sans ressource." (189) But to the comments of Les Femmes are added an interesting simile and a touch of humor. Eyma compares the New World to an old coquette who hides her wrinkles to disguise her age.

> Il semble s'attacher à faire disparaître du sol tout ce qui pourrait rappeler sa naissance, espérant qu'ainsi il paraîtra toujours nouveau et découvert d'hier. (186)

Hence Americans have erected no monument to Columbus, and "se révoltent même contre leur origine." (187) Only Independence Day is honored; Williams Penn's home is in ruins, but the Pennsylvania state house, the home of the Declaration of Independence, is judiciously preserved. Also, though American life is extremely flexible, Americans

rigorously observe Sunday as a day of rest. In fact, "si l'on pouvait retarder les decès et les naissances qui arrivent le dimanche, on le ferait à coup sûr." (193) From a literary point of view, Eyma's comparison and this touch of humor contribute a pleasant respite from the seriousness of his comments.

"De l'Esprit américain," the ninth chapter of Les Deux Amériques, repeats observations of Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde, but in a more direct and concise manner. The chapter presents political rather than private habits, Eyma states; yet one reflects the other. The American variety within unity is again stressed, as is the great respect paid liberty. Of particular note are the ardent cult of democratic institutions; the love of labor; serious ambition to honestly elevate oneself to high public positions; desire for education; guiding religious principles; availability of fortune and luxury; and the universal penetration of the light of progress.

> Ainsi se réalisent les plus belles conquêtes de l'ordre sur l'anarchie; ainsi s'obtiennent les plus sûrs triomphes de la civilisation sur la barbarie. (200)

The American spirit is tailored to the establishment of the New Eden.

> La Providence, à qui nous attribuons, dans ce fait, un rôle qu'on ne doit point oublier, à crée ce pays pour les hommes qui l'habitent, et les hommes pour le pays qu'ils exploitent. (201)

In Eyma's canon, the American myth is inescapable. It appears again in the chapter entitled "Profile de Moeurs."

Discussing duels and turmoil in America, Eyma writes,

> Il est entré dans les desseins de Dieu, qui a voulu faire des Etats-Unis une oeuvre à part, de leur imposer ces orageuses jeunesses traversées de tempêtes et d'éclairs. Le calme est toujours revenu peu à peu et en son temps. (246)

Though portions of this chapter are repetitive of material which appeared in Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde, some features are fresh. The American is essentially "actif, travailleur, commerçant; désirant toujours beaucoup d'argent, et se préoccupant des moyens d'en gagner." (216) In fact, "aux Etats-Unis on passe toujours pour un sot quand on néglige les moyens de gagner de l'argent." (250) Yet the American assumes a new posture in his leisure time.

> Les instincts intellectuels s'éveillent en lui; il sait alors rêver, aussi bien que qui que ce soit, devant un beau spectacle de la nature, et l'apprécier dans toute sa valeur. (217)

This is a happy inclusion! All Americans are not of the Rosenwallen breed of Le Trône d'Argent.

Eyma waxes eloquent in his description of the Fourth of July in New York.

> Ce jour, dont le soleil levant réchauffa de ses rayons le sol américain pour en faire éclore l'indépendance et la liberté, ce jour si fécond en résultats pour le peuple qui en salua l'aurore, si plein d'exemples et de leçons pour les autres nations, ce jour occupe une place vraiment sacrée dans le coeur de tous les citoyens.
>
> Le souvenir de l'héroïque drame que jouèrent ses aieux est devenu pour ce peuple une religion... Cette conscience de soi-même, ce sentiment de sa valeur, cette experience de sa dignité donnent à tout citoyen l'intelligence exacte de la somme d'actions de grâces qu'il doit a la Liberté, et de la forme dans laquelle il doit lui payer ce tribut. (259-260)

Eyma's tone reveals his love and admiration of this nation and its people. He judges them accordingly.

Les Deux Amériques concludes with "Une Page d'Histoire," which sketches the trials of the United States during the revolution. Republican principles were certain to triumph because based on reason, and because

> il faut qu'ils (Americans) arrivent au but que leur a marqué le Providence...Dieu avait inspiré avec intention au peuple américain l'élan des premiers jours, et que si le peuple était assez insensé pour le compromettre, il était de leur (the leaders) devoir de ne pas laisser inaccompli un décret de la Providence. L'avenir devait leur donner raison! (271)

Before other peoples imitate the United States, they must consider the sacrifice, political faith, and the will-power "nécessaires pour poursuivre cette oeuvre âpre et ouverte aux tempêtes de toutes les passions." (272) Divinely guided, the American people have accomplished a notable, exemplary task.

Eyma translates and presents the Declaration of Independence, with an explanatory preface. Americans did not desire separation from England. Rather, tyranny and oppression forced it upon them. Fifteen months separated the beginning of the Revolution and the Declaration. England fired the first shots; the Declaration called for an end to a war already in progress, a war viewed by Americans as fratricide.

Eyma next translates the American Constitution, the product of Divine guidance. "Une si grande tâche n'arrive

pas au but sans un secours surhumain." (297) Appended to this is a listing of American presidents, their terms of office, and their margin of victory in elections. A translation of Washington's farewell address, illustrating both his civic-mindedness and devotion to his country, characteristically American and requisite to the efficacious functioning of the democratic system, ends the volume.

Les Deux Amériques attempts an objective portrayal of American institutions and the people who sustain them. It emphasizes, by contrast with Central America, the necessity to tailor government to the heritage and temperament of individual nations. It reveals Eyma's love, respect, and admiration for the American experiment.

Eyma's Les Peaux Rouges is a fourteen-chapter study of Indian problems in the United States; evaluation of the methods of the American government in eliminating this problem; and biographies of Indian chiefs substantiating Eyma's conclusions.[17] The major contention of the volume is striking. As opposed to Rousseau, and especially to Chateaubriand and the tradition of the noble savage, Eyma

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[17]The subjects treated in Les Peaux Rouges follow those treated in George Catlin's Manners and Customs of the American Indian. Eyma reviewed and translated sections of Catlin's study ("Les Peaux Rouges par M. Georges Catlin," L'Illustration, V (May 24, 1845), 202-205; (June 7, 1845), 231-234; (June 21,1845), 263-266.) In all probability Eyma drew much information from Catlin.

insists that the Indian is depraved and his civilisation barbaric. The Indian as "noble savage" is sentimental nonsense.

The Far West, the home of the Indian when Eyma wrote, is first described. It was "l'inconnu, le mystère, l'oeuvre et la conquête de l'avenir." (2) Its settlement was a glorious expression of the American spirit which takes possession "aussi promptement que possible de tout sol qui est son bien," (10) and believes that patience, work, and time guarantee success.

Because the West and Far West "sont couverts de forets épaisses et de prairies immenses," (12) the Indians migrated there when chased from their native soil. They were given these lands "pour toujours, disent les traités." But these words are best translated: these are your lands until we take them from you,

> et de vous refouler d'année en année jusqu'aux confins de la mer, où les debris de votre race, s'il en subsiste encore, seront réduits à se noyer ou à se civiliser. (12)

Contrary to the contentions of many, Eyma states, this American attitude is not reprehensible. To know the Indian is to approve the American stance. Rather than conform to civilized life, the Indian attempted to destroy it; therefore "le but forcé de la politique des Américains envers les Indiens est la destruction radicale de ces indigènes." (43) The settlement of the West and the advance of civilization necessitated the elimination of the Indian.

This implies, of course, that the American will to civilize and dominate the land, to forge prosperity from the wilderness, supersedes all things. The end justifies the means. In this case, Eyma accepts this as perfectly reasonable and desirable.[18] True that ambition may have dictated the conquest of the Indians, Eyma states; yet "la question a une origine plus élevée et plus morale, elle par de plus loin." (49)

From Eyma's point of view, the Indian question is one of "la civilisation et la Barbarie...le Christianisme et l'Idolatrie en presence et en lutte." (49) Hence the destruction of the Indian, his forced retreat westward, was justifiable,

> des que l'âpre et unique ardeur du gain fit place aux préoccupations d'une organisation sérieuse et à l'implantation au milieu de ces tribus sauvages des grandes doctrines sociales et chrétiennes. (50)

Indians were offered the choice of war or peace; they chose the former, blindly opposing the advance of civilization. And civilization is the primary value.

> C'est la cause de l'humanité tout entière qui est en question. Prendre parti contre les peuples conquérants chargés de réduire les barbares, c'est se prononcer contre la morale, contre la religion, contre la civilisation. (53)

The American government and people are responsible for the advancement of humanity. Allowing the coexistence of

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[18] Note that, with respect to H.B. Stowe, the American press, and the institution of slavery, the end did not justify the means.

barbarians with civilized institutions "C'est déchoir de sa grandeur, de son rang; c'est abdiquer sa mission." (54)

The responsibilities of the American government and people, their mission as dictated by the American myth, justified the measures taken.

> Ces mesures ont soulevé d'ardentes critiques, et l'on a crié à la persécution comme si un gouvernement pouvait hésiter entre l'indépendance d'un peuple civilisé et l'indépendance de tribus barbares. (55)

Had the Indians shown a desire for Christianity and civilization, the situation would be different! But

> Rien, en tout cas, dans leur mise en pratique, n'a révelé le moindre penchant à s'assimiler les vertus chrétiennes et les conditions sociales qui sont le mot d'ordre de la civilisation morale, religieuse et politique. (56)

The Indian is a child, incapable of governing himself, of producing anything worthwhile. His is depraved by nature, for

> Prenez l'Indien d'origine pure, arrachez-le aux déplorables exemples qu'il avait sous les yeux, élevez-le au sein de la civilisation, il ne perdra aucun des instincts féroces de sa race. (63)

The Indian is a lost cause; the Americans were justified in hastening his demise.

The critics of American Indian policy were motivated by sentimentality and the fascination of the bizarre.

> Ces critiques, je ne crains pas de le dire, ont été inspirées par un accès de sentimentalité bien plutôt que par la raison et la réflexion. (43)

One must remember that travellers tend, by nature, to sentimentality because of the novelty which engulfs them.

> L'étrangeté et la nouveauté du spectacle, aussi bien que l'excentricité des caractères et des hommes qu'il observe, deviennent pour lui le beau idéal...Les erreurs qu'il propage, il y croit fermement; elles dominent ses souvenirs et sa conscience, comme elles ont ébloui ses yeux et son imagination. (66)

A chapter entitled "Caractères Généraux" delineates the Indian character, and substantiates Eyma's conclusions regarding the Indian's essential depravity. Significantly Eyma's criticism is usually based on the Indian's failure to conform to European values and conceptions of honor. Though sympathetic to Central and North American peculiarities, Eyma abandons his own standards of observation and evaluation when treating the Indian. He superimposes his own standards and values upon the Indian, finds a complete lack of correspondence, and hence condemns the Indian. Eyma in no wise considers the Indian in terms of a unique civilization. Rather, the Indian has no culture, no civilization. This suggests that Eyma was unwilling to extend himself beyond certain limits. Western and Christian values were his absolutes; idiosyncracies are acceptable within that framework. Remove it, and the very concept of civilization or culture no longer exists.

Eyma describes Indian women as small, with large and ungraceful features; Indian men as large, vigorous, hirsute. Mentally, "les Indiens ont l'esprit complètement inculte; aussi leurs idées sur toutes choses sont-elles presque toujours fausses." (69) What else can be expected in a society lacking

religion and moral principles? His passions are uncontrolled, undirected, and violent. The Indian is ferocious. His single virtue is courage, and that is utilized only in war. Moreover, he is a hypocrite. Women hold an abject position in Indian "civilisation." They are paid no respect.

> Par contre elles ne remplissent aucun de ces rôles dominateurs que la grâce, la beauté, l'intelligence, le dévouement, assurent aux femmes des pays civilisés et chrétiens. (77)

They are slaves to men; they have no special virtue, not even chastity. From this one must conclude

> que le coeur, l'âme, et l'intelligence de la femme sont rabaissés à un niveau qui ne lui permet aucun de ces élans de dévouement, de pitié, de tendres faiblesses, que lui donnent dans nos sociétés chrétiennes une superiorité si grande sur l'homme. (80)

Eyma thus implies that such a radical departure from Western civilization and concepts constitutes depravity, and hence justifies condemnation.[19]

"La Chasse à l'Homme," the sixth chapter of Les Peaux Rouges, is the story of one Davidson who was raised by Indians, yet retained an instinct for his native white civilisation. His case illustrates not only the gulf between the nature of the Indian and the white, but the essential hatred of the Indian for the white man.

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[19]The chapter which follows is a straight translation of Irving's Rip Van Winkle. Its relationship to Les Peaux Rouges defies reasonable speculation.

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> Toutes les fois qu'en Amérique j'ai parlé de la douceur et de l'aménité des Indiens, on m'a répondu en me citant quelques traits horribles de cruauté de leur part, même envers les gens avec lesquels ils semblent dans les meilleurs rapports. (110)

The murder of Davidson's parents is offered as illustrative of such cruelty.

One has only to observe the Indian to be repelled. To see him is to have "devant les yeux le spectacle d'êtres ignobles, laids, sales, puants." (111) His clothing is "de dégoûtants haillons." (111) Moreover, Eyma insists that nothing remains of the primitive simplicity attributed to the Indian. He drinks, he scalps; he is superstitious. In a word, he is a barbarian.

> C'est là...ces Indiens sur le sort desquels des philanthropes s'apitoient à leurs heures de loisir et de sentimentalité; comme si la civilisation n'avait pas son oeuvre de conquête à poursuivre, en les ramenant sous la loi par des moyens infinement plus moraux que ces actes de barbarie quotidiens qu'on ose appeler le droit sacré de la défense du sol et de la nationalité! (35)

In "L'Epopée d'un Jongleur," Eyma further betrays his relatively provincial standards of judgment. For here he describes Indian burial customs, and finds therein "profound respect" and a "touching cult." This positive judgment seemingly results from the correspondence beteeen Indian and European customs. The cemetery is found in the center of Indian villages; a future life, last judgment, and resurrection of the soul are articles of Indian faith. But especially commendable is the fact that

> Tous les jours les pères, les maris, les femmes, les enfants, courbés sous les sarcophages, le front dans la poussière, prient, pleurent, et se mortifient jusqu'au sang pour apaiser les esprits de la mort. (161)

This is, of course, a solid, sentimental gesture; it is praiseworthy.

"Le Chef Blanc" delineates a number of Indian habits: buffalo hunts, the ceremony of "trois jours," an antilope chase; the relationship of Indians to white traders. The story of a white man, Richard, raised among Indians and made a chief, is threaded miscellaneously through the chapter. Richard discovers he is white and has in fact scalped his own uncle. Yet "la philanthropie larmoyante des amis des Indiens trouvait moyen de colorer d'une excuse ou de nier au besoin." (165)

The familiar story of "John Smith and Pochahontas" occupies Chapter IX. Eyma's rhetoric reveals, once again, the bias with which he judged the Indian. He states that the story is interesting because

> On y trouve cette astuce et cette mauvaise foi que l'on est en droit de reprocher aux Indiens, leur enthousiasme naïf pour les choses les plus simples, leur haine de la race blanche--masquée sous des semblants d'amitié. (209)

Moreover, Pochahontas is an interesting figure.

> Cette figure, mariée sentimentalement à l'énergique caractère du capitaine Smith, respire quelque chose de sympathique qui ne veut pas qu'on la laisse ensevelie dans le linceul de l'oubli. (209)

Pochahontas is as a woman should be: When Smith is condemned to death, she

> s'était jetée aux genoux...implorant à grands cris la grâce du prisonnier, de celui qui avait allumé l'intelligence en son âme.
> Il y avait un peu d l'Héloïse dans le coeur de la jeune sauvage." (222)...elle ouvrit franchement son coeur aux grandeurs du Christianisme. (231)

Completing the ensemble, Pocahontas has an "extérieur attrayant, une douceur de caractère et une beauté mélancolique." (232) In other words, she is a sentimental heroine rather than a depraved Indian. Therein rests her worth and glory.

The biography of the Indian chief Pontiac receives an entire chapter.[20] Pontiac was "en réalité un homme d'une valeur véritable, d'un courage de lion..." (235) He cooperated with the colonists; he somehow escaped the innate depravity of the Indian race. Try as he might, he was incapable of uniting his people--their weakness rendered

> impuissants les efforts de ces hommes supérieurs à leur race...ce sont là des faits qui prouvent jusqu'à l'evidence que les Indiens ne représentent que la barbarie et rien de plus. (266-267)

Pontiac is offered as illustrative of the exception which proves the rule of Indian depravity.

The same contention rules the chapter entitled "Le Roi Philippe," and another entitled "Le Dernier des Mandans." The Indian race has produced some exceptional men, then judged itself barbaric by its failure to recognize and cooperate with them.

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[20] "Pontiac" and "Le Roi Philippe," taken from Les Peaux Rouges, were adapted for Siepmann's French Series for Rapid Reading (London: Macmillan, 1918).

> D'ailleurs il faut bien remarquer que si toute la race indienne avait pu s'élever au niveau de l'intelligence de ces hommes exceptionnels, le rôle des Européens eut changé en Amérique. C'était à coup sûr la guerre au début, mais aussi c'était pour la suite une paix féconde, en ce sens qu'elle eut amené une alliance glorieuse entre les deux races, car ces hommes avaient toutes les qualités nécessaires pour profiter de leur contact avec la civilisation.
>
> Mais il n'en fut rien, et c'est ce que je tiens à constater. (285)

Eyma's comments in "Les Natchez" are especially interesting. The subject of Chateaubriand is, of course, the concern of the chapter. Eyma refers to the accounts of Gayarré, Richebourg, Bienville, and Périer to substantiate the savagery of the Natchez tribe.

> L'histoire de cette tribu, comme de toutes les autres, est un assemblage monstrueux de meurtres, de trahisons, d'incendies, de déprédations. (322)

Eyma's judgment of the Natchez is intended to remedy misconceptions perpetrated by Chateaubriand.

> Un roman célèbre en France, et dont certains épisodes attendrissants ont fait couler bien des larmes, les Natchez de Chateaubriand, ont contribué considérablement à fausser l'opinion publique sur le compte des Indiens et des sauvages.
>
> Les guerres des Français contre la puissante tribu des Natchez dans la Louisiane, réduites aux proportions d'un roman lamoyant où tout était habilement combiné, depuis la donnée principale de la fable jusqu-au prestige du style dans certains passages, ont été représentées sous l'aspect le plus faux et le plus criminel pour les premiers colonisateurs de la Louisiane. Je crois donc qu'il n'est pas sans intérêt de rétablir la vérité à cet égard; et je puise, dans ce but, mes renseignements à des sources très recommendables, entre autres L'Histoire de la Louisiane, par M. Charles Gayarré, un des Américains les plus distingués de la Louisiane, et qui y a occupé les fonctions importantes de secretaire d'Etat. (309-310)

Comments and anecdotes in proof of Eyma's contentions are scattered throughout Les Peaux Rouges. Eyma comments and

utilizes the studies of George Catlin, Joseph Story, Blome, Adair, Boudinot, Grotius, Witt Clinton, Tocqueville, Washington Irving, Gayarré, and Bienville. He describes various Indian tribes, their origins, customs, and current circumstances. In some respects the volume is a mine for a student of Indian affairs.

But from the entirety emerges (indeed, cries out) a startingly prejudicial image of the Indian and his civilization. His savagery has justified his relegation to the very borders of civilization and beyond. The Indian is hopelessly depraved; it is commendable that he was prevented from impeding the advance of Christianity, civilization, and progress, the American mission as dictated by Providence. To plead otherwise is sheer sentimentality.

The Indian was, of course, a familiar and fascinating figure to the French. The American savage was first considered virtuous and wise, nature's child, in accordance with the exoticism which swept France in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Through him one could turn back in civilization and time, lose oneself in solitude, retrace the steps of human development, and explore the origins of human society. The novels of Cooper had stimulated French curiosity. Indians, thrice imported to Paris, had been exhibited and baptized, provoking brochures, press notices, and various accounts. Indian dress abounded in the local color so pleasing to the French. The Indian himself was brave and innocent. In

sum, he was the incarnation of the myth of the good savage.[21]

During the 1830's, however, when reactionary and monarchist tendencies reappeared in France, the chimera of the good savage faded. L'abbé Genty stated that Indian happiness was a myth; Volney reported the horrid condition of the Indian.[22] Les Peaux Rouges is another chapter in the demythologizing of the Indian. Because the Indian was a distinctly American creature; because the French were captivated by him, and fascinated by America, her customs and problems, one can assume that Eyma's study found readers. The very force of Eyma's condemnation of the "good savage" must have left some image, favorable or otherwise, in the reader's mind. The destruction of any myth creates, at the least, a minor impact on the mind of the disillusioned believer.

Eyma's stand regarding the Indian is provincial and revealing. In Les Peaux Rouges he evidences strong and relentless prejudice which in turn reveals his committment to certain absolutes. Mores and customs, idiosyncratic though they may be, are one thing; values and standards another. Any race must operate, at root, upon principles which happen to be European. The absence of such principles justifies condemnation. One can assume, then, that Eyma's acceptance, and indeed his love, of the United States and its culture, rest to some extent upon its European origin and its consequent compliance with w estern standards of value and conduct.

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[21] René Rémond, Les Etats-Unis devant l'opinion française, 1815-1852. II (Paris, 1962), 485.

[22] Margaret M. Gibb, Le Roman de Bas-de-Cuir (Paris, 1927), p. 115.

CHAPTER VI

THE AMERICAN TRAVELOGUES

Between 1849 and 1863, L. Xavier Eyma published numerous articles on the United States, many of which were reprinted in four volumes published in 1860, 1862, and 1876. The articles and volumes gave the French public a mass of information on America: observations, short stories, fleeting impressions, evaluations, criticisms. Perhaps they are best labeled travelogues, or travel jottings. They are heavily impressionistic, frequently disorganized and disunified. They reveal both the United States, and the standards and values which Eyma brought to bear in his evaluation of the American scene. Eyma attempts to probe the surface of American mores and institutions in order to capture the spirit and temper which created them. He notes both faults and virtues, recommending some aspects of American life as worthy models for France. And he reveals, simultaneously, his own bias, yet his love and admiration for America.

Excentricités américaines appeared serially in the journal L'Illustration in 1859, and was later published in a single volume, in 1860.[1] Its intent is explained by Eyma in

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[1]Paris: Michel Lévy, 1860. Serialized in L'Illustration, Journal Universel, XXXIV (October 29, 1859), 314; (November 5, 1859), 330; (December 17,1859), 426-427; (December 24, 1859), 439-440. Works cited are those of Eyma unless otherwise indicated.

"Quelques mots d'explication:"

> Le titre d'un livre ne suffit pas toujours a en expliquer le sens, et les meilleures intentions courent, parfois, le risque d'être mal interpretées.
>
> Dans d'autres ouvrages, j'ai étudié la société américaine dans ce qu'elle a de grand, de fécond, de véritablement fort.
>
> Le présent livre n'est ni la contradiction, ni la critique de ces précédents ouvrages, et je ne voudrais pas que le public crût qu'il implique, de ma part, sévérité excessive, outrages ou calomnies. C'est une autre face de la société américaine que je signale en peignant les excentricités, c'est-à-dire des exceptions.
>
> Tous les pays du monde ont leurs ridicules et leurs excentricités, leurs exceptions qui, parfois, sont des monstruosités. Seulement, aux Etats-Unis, ces côtés particuliers des moeurs ont un cachet spécial qui tient à beaucoup de choses...[2]

The exceptional social conditions; mixture of races; political organization; use and abuse of liberty; variations in customs; multiplicity of religions; and the climate are the "excentricités" which Eyma singles out.

Some of these topics are already familiar; Eyma again stresses, as in Les Deux Amériques, the variety within unity so characteristic of the United States, and the consequent

> nombreuses erreurs commises par tant d'écrivains qui n'ont vu les Etats-Unis qu'au pas de course, et qui ont, ensuite, prétendu généraliser ce qui n'était que particulier, en confondant l'exception avec la règle, l'excentricité avec le caractère commun. (3)

In spite of such variety, however, America is established "sur des bases remarquablement solides." (4) Some writers

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[2] Excentricités, pp. 1-2. Page numbers in parentheses following quotations refer to the work discussed.

have emphasized the exceptional aspects of America to an inordinate degree; "ce procédé...n'est ni juste ni honnête." In previous works, Eyma claims, he has indicated that

> on trouve, en Amérique comme partout, la vertu assise au foyer domestique, l'honneur faisant loi dans les familles, la religion sincèrement pratiquée, la probité réglant les transactions, des femmes selon la morale et la société; des magistrates intègres, des fonctionnaires probes, des électeurs convaincus.
>
> Mais à côté de cela, il y a ce que je peins dans ce livre. (5)

It seems strange that Eyma did not ignore the "excentricités," given his contention that the exceptional has received much attention. Yet he, too, joins the others, fascinated by bizarre aspects of American life.

We recall that in Les Deux Amériques, Eyma defended the American woman; a good wife in spite of her excessive liberty, even though Eyma found the European model preferable. In Excentricités, however, Eyma assumes a negative stance. The extraordinary liberty of women brings frightening results; "les cas de séduction se multiplient d'une façon extraordinaire...un manque de délicatesse, pour ne pas dire un manque de pudeur," (8) marks the male-female relationship in America.

In Rutland, Vermont, Eyma heard a feminist speaker, Julia Branch, equate marriage and slavery. Eyma feels compelled to end "ces absurdes et monstrueuses citations," and attribute such foolishness to education and the great liberty of women "qui permettent à ces extravagances de croître comme des parasites vénéreux sur l'arbre social." (9)

A major problem in the United States is divorce, "une des excentricités les plus sérieuses," and especially threatening and deplorable because divorces "attaquent si directement la moralité publique, les instincts de la famille et le sentiment des joies de la vie domestique." (9) Divorce, in other words, threatens the very foundation of society.

Paralleling divorce mania is marriage mania, a

> rage du mariage. La facilité avec laquelle la loi prête sa sanction à des unions qui semblent monstrueuses est véritablement extraordinaires... Le mariage en Amérique est le but auquel tendent toutes les jeunes filles, des qu'elles peuvent y prétendre, la plupart sans consulter leur goût, ni leur penchant, ni les convenances sociales, pas plus que les rapports d'âge. Elles veulent se marier; il faut donc qu'elles se marient à tout prix, même au prix de leur bonheur, de leur repos, de leur présent, de leur avenir, sauf à recourir plus tard au divorce, à la séparation, à l'adultère, pour se dédommager des mécomptes. (10)

That girls wish to marry is natural; the phenomenal vigor with which American girls pursue this goal is extraordinary.

The American girl selects her own mate, without family consultation. Untold discord has resulted.

> Le bonheur était trop peu visible pour qu'il existât. Je préfère donc, jusqu'à nouvel ordre, les formalités égoïstes et même despotiques qui entourent nos mariages Européens; elles offrent encore plus de gages de sécurité. (14)

American laws encourage this demoralisation of the masses; marriages are so easily contracted that bigamy is a frequent crime, facilitated by the extreme mobility of the people. In sum,

> Tout...dans l'éducation des jeunes filles, dans leurs attitudes, dans leurs moeurs, dans l'insouciance des familles, dans la confiance qu'elles ont en la loi

> et dans l'ignorance où elles sont élevées des principes morales, tout fait des relations sociales des hommes avec elles un objet de provocation de leur part. Elles n'ont pas même dans leur chute l'excuse de la passion; il ne leur reste que le prétexte d'un calcul dont le mariage est le but. (14)

Americans themselves, Eyma states, are concerned over this unfortunate state of affairs, and attribute it to "l'hypocrasie religieuse qui est le vice dominant en Amérique, au lieu que la religion soit le principe régulateur des masses." (15) Eyma accuses Protestantism of contributing to this moral degradation. In predominantly Catholic areas, immorality has been held in check. But Protestantism further encourages a liberty which, in America, is extreme in any case.

Excentricités attacks, also, the American press. "Tout le monde a peur de la presse...et cependant elle est un besoin pour chacun." (18) The press is free to the point of license; it neither influences nor reflects public opinion, but only the hatreds of the editor. (Therefore European translations from the American press must not be used in judgment of the people.) The strictly local circulation of newspapers severely limits the rôle of the press in the formation of public opinion. Articles treat only local matters and public officials. "Il y manque presque toujours cet ordre et cette disposition dans les matières auxquels nous sommes accoutumés en France." (20) Only ads are classified methodically.

> On peut donc dire qu'aux Etats-Unis les journaux ne sont institués que pour les annonces; et cela se conçoit dans un pays où la publicité est pratiquée sur une immense échelle et où le charlatanisme a mille fois plus de chances de succès que le génie lui-même. (21)

Journalists realize their small influence, Eyma states. Upon the slightest provocation, they cancel issues and fill others totally with ads.

> Cette absence assez générale de dignité, non pas de dignité personnelle mais de dignité de journal, que l'on remarque dans la presse et qui afflaiblit incontestablement son autorité, tient à une absence égale de dignité dans la vie politique, que la presse a la prétention de réfléter. (22)

Ads are veritable imaginative creations; they save time, and time is money.

> Puis, la crédulité du public américain est exemplaire; il ne croit, en tout cas, qu'aux choses qui ne craignent pas d'en appeler à la publicité, et surtout à celles qui abusent de la publicité. (25)

In sum, the image of America in Excentricités is unpleasant; not at all in Eyma's characteristic spirit of praise and admiration. In title and preface he has noted "exceptions;" in tone and implication ("la" presse, "la" vie politique) he has generalized. Surely the reader would lose sight of the opening premise of the work, and generalize from Eyma's observations. There are no interjections to recall the "exceptional" nature of Eyma's comments. Following the diatribe on American women and marriage, one seeks in vain some mention of the morality, high principles, religious sincerity and efficacious, though startling, liberty credited to the American of Les Deux Amériques.

Eyma's criticisms of the press lead one to question the abolitionist influence with which the press was credited in Les Peaux Noires.

Two speculations are invited by Excentricités. One, its serial publication in the popular L'Illustration suggests that Eyma's negative comments reached a wider audience than did his positive considerations of Les Deux Amériques and Les Peaux Noires; a popular journal commands a wider audience than do bound volumes. Secondly, Eyma's view of America was more harsh in 1859 than in 1853 and 1857. In 1859 he returned from his second voyage to the United States; perhaps he had undergone unpleasant experiences, possibly associated with the imminent outbreak of the Civil War. His residence in New Orleans makes this quite possible. Because Eyma reassumes a tone of admiration in volumes published after Excentricités, however, it would seem that his personal point of view had not changed. Rather, Eyma may have catered to a public seeking the "excentricités" of American life. The "exceptional" in a foreign culture is obviously, and understandably, most fascinating, and therefore most popular. In any case, the America of Excentricités is not to be admired. In all probability, this "exceptional" America was generalized in the minds of a large audience.

In La Vie dans le Nouveau-Monde, published in two editions in 1862,[3] Eyma returns to a balanced judgment of

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[3]Paris: Poulet-Malassis.

American society. He considers topics which one might well anticipate: crime and society, life in the American "deserts," gold and emigration, and political life.[4] Of special interest and delight is the tale of an American detective, a fine comic creation. Once again, Eyma strives for balance. The New Eden has both faults and virtues; both should be recognized by the French.

Eyma first indicts the French press for exaggerated reporting of American crime.

> Certes l'Amérique n'est pas la terre promise de l'innocence et de la candeur, et elle n'est pas peuplée uniquement d'honnêtes gens. (2)

On the other hand,

> On est plus juste en Amérique pour l'Europe qu'on ne l'est en Europe pour l'Amérique, où l'on ne doute nullement que Paris, sentine de tant de vices, ne soit une ville parfaitement habitable et où les citoyens jouissent de la plus complète sécurité. (15)

One must view American crime in context. The population of the United States is composed of diverse elements; a composite of racial and national passions, distorted by an extreme sense of individual liberty and free of all surveillance by authority. Therefore one must expect vice and corruption.

Police face particular problems in the United States, "surtout quand on sait que, dans ce pays, la police n'a

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[4]The chapter entitled "En Voyage" relates a trip to Martinique and Cuba, and therefore is not germane.

point l'autorité moral qui inspire ici un salutaire effroi." (7) As a result, bandits are especially audacious. The rôle of the police is doubly difficult because evil-doers, especially in the South, tend to organize into secret societies. Often their exploits are so successful as to constitute national epics; criminals become heroes, and children imitate them.[5]

Americans react only to criminal acts of monstrous, earth-shaking proportions. Everyone is so occupied "du soin d'arriver au but avoué de l'existence là-bas" that petty crime is ignored. But major crimes prompt the organization of vigilance committees, which render a justice "terrible, parce qu'elle est arbitraire...on n'échappe jamais à l'arrêt d'un comité de vigilance." (13)

One does find, however, peace and security in the New World. Eyma states,

> J'ai vécu...de la vie du Nouveau-Monde dans tout ce qu'elle a d'excentrique, de sérieux, d'aimable, de sympathique, de hideux, de misérable, de répugnant...je suis revenu du Nouveau-Monde sans avoir été impoisonné par les nègres, sans avoir été pendu par les comités de vigilance, sans avoir été scalpé par les Peaux-Rouges...Ce n'est donc pas un paradoxe de dire que j'ai toujours éprouvé un grand charme à me trouver mêlé à cette vie du Nouveau-Monde. (15-16)

The horrors Eyma escaped indicate the expectations and preconceived notions of the French regarding life in America.

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[5] Perhaps the American criminal was the ancestor of the modern anti-hero.

Eyma tells, in straight narration and dialogue, the tale of a theft in New Orleans, and in the process creates a delightful comic figure, Roden, the "dumb cop" par excellance. Roden's self-image is that of the dashing, clever investigator. The reader's image of him is the contrary, and from the opposition comes comedy. Though Roden is too much the buffoon to be considered typical, his situation allows Eyma to comment on elopement in the United States--an all too frequent happening--and on the position of teachers--"une carrière lucrative" which gives considerable independence, financially and otherwise, to young women.

Roden is vain, sentimental, conceited and pompous. His reports to the chief of police are hilarious; spiced with preposterous details which Roden reads as signs of decadence. Roden says, "Je crois qu'en ces matières il faut être précis." In other words, Eyma spoofs the American detective.

He also spoofs his own sentimental heroes. Roden is caught up with an "angel" whom the reader knows to be a devil. Roden is thus placed in an even more comic light. As he leaves to catch the suspects he says,

> "Ah! Madame, c'est un jour solonnel pour moi; je vaincrai aujourd'hui et j'aurai rendu à vos beaux yeux leur éclat terni par les larmes. Et ce sera mon oeuvre!" (53)

The discrepancy between Roden's vision and reality is extremely amusing.

The dénouement of the tale reinforces Roden's stupidity and comic nature. The "suspects" are in fact a young

couple planning an elopement. Roden pounces on these "criminals," only to discover that they have just married and are about to leave town.

The tale subtly attributes ineffectiveness to the American police. But the mildness of Eyma's satire, and Roden's ridiculousness, draw the reader's attention from the comedy of law enforcement to the comedy of the man. Roden is a delightful creation; his exploits contribute a pleasing variety to the volume.

Chapter III of La Vie dans le Nouveau-Monde opens with an explication of Eyma's opinion of the American Indian, as detailed in Les Peaux Rouges. The subject of the chapter is Billy Bowlegs, "Le Roi des Everglades." Through Billy a portion of American history emerges in flashbacks. Eyma was prompted to write of Billy because he was "à la Nouvelle-Orléans pendant l'été de 1858" when the debris of the Everglades tribe wandered into town, was disarmed, and imprisoned. "De pareils hommes ne peuvent être libres impunément qu'en pleins forêt." (213)

Billy exemplifies Indian depravity. Eyma saw him stretched on the ground, drunk, in the sleep of a beast; on his body were scars from thirty-two wounds. Flashing back to 1812, when Billy was a child, Eyma reports the efforts of Tecumseh to unite Indian tribes in Florida. General Jackson, of a character "ferme, résolu, inébranlable," (229) conquered Pensacola and exiled the Seminoles, among them Billy, the future chief of his tribe. His dishonesty and trickery with

the English and Spanish ultimately aided the American cause. He was a strong, courageous, but depraved man; and, "Ô vanité des puissances!" (256), the drunken animal in the streets of New Orleans is all that remains of his past glory.

The Indian, however, did not prevent the exploration and development of the West.

> Le désert existe encore aux Etats-Unis, le désert à peu près dans toute l'acception du mot; mais ce désert a quelque chose de particulier. (256)

It is the scene of great activity. Caravans move along marked routes; gold fever has brought untold numbers of immigrants; gold has encouraged the development of railroads and industry.

> Les Américains semblent ne plus vouloir qu'il y ait de déserts, et les chemins de fer y font chaque jour des trouées immenses. Si gigantesques que soient les projets, rien n'arrête ces hommes du go ahead. (271)

The ambition and drive of the American people are phenomenal.

"L'Or et l'Emigration" quotes Irving's Sketchbook: the worst of the English visit, and judge, the United States. Expanding Irving's observation, Eyma credits the French with a monopoly on the light and rapid examination of America. They bring to their judgment a caustic spirit, a passion for pleasure, and regret at the absence of Paris and the French language.

Like Irving, Eyma criticizes the "get rich quick" philosophy of many immigrants.

> J'ai vu de braves gens arriver en Amérique avec ces illusions; j'en ai connu plus d'un qui, en étudiant les resources financières de ce pays, ont cru que désirer équivalait à posséder la

fortune, du jour au lendemain. (283)

In America as elsewhere, one must sow in order to reap. And both sowing and reaping, Americans utilize "la génie de l'invention, la force mécanique substitués à la faiblesse humaine." (290) Advances in newspaper presses are illustrative of the continual, mechanical "go ahead" of America, advantageous to both workers and products.[6]

The real American miracle is the assimilation of immigrants, people who first dislike their fellows, but later establish national "colonies" within the cities and regions of the United States. In spite of tremendous national differences among immigrants, the American spirit somehow permeates and unites them.

> C'est là...la face véritablement originale de la société américaine, l'énigme d'un peuple fait de pièces et de morceaux de toutes couleurs d'un côté et d'étoffe uniforme de l'autre. (297)

It would seem that Eyma consciously wrote for a French audience; he includes material and commentary that would especially interest Frenchmen. Comparisons of the French and American electoral processes; statistics and commentary on the place of the French immigrant in American

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[6]Two articles appeared in L'Illustration in 1851, reporting the appearance in America of a machine to fold newspapers, and of a steam-operated press. ("Machine américaine pour le pliage des journaux et des livres," L'Illustration, XVII (January 31-February 7, 1851), 66-67; "Presse à vapeur monstre du journal le New-York Sun," L'Illustration, XVII (March 14-21, 1851), 171-172.)

society suggest this. The French in America are few, and these have been and are being absorbed by other nationalities. "Tout le secret de l'infériorité française aux Etats-Unis est là." (301) The French have failed to rally together; their flag floats nowhere in America; they have succumbed to jealousy and mutual deprecation. And now it is too late--in ten years, Eyma predicts, the French language itself will no longer exist in America, even in Louisiana.

Immigration has profited the United States. It has stimulated trade and the consumption of products, and provided the manpower which has civilized the New World. California is offered as the perfect example of this, though gold alone prompted immigration to that territory.

Eyma is a realist in his approach to the discovery of gold. Not agriculture, or work, or preoccupation with the future motivated the gold-seekers. Rather, the desire for individual fortune pushed them to California. What benefits have resulted from the gold rush?

> Ils sont absorbés par les dépenses, par le luxe, par le vice; car le spectacle qu'a donné sous ce rapport la Californie et que donne aujourd'hui l'Australie implique l'idée d'une société profondément immorale et pervertie. (317)

The discovery of gold, then, profited the immigrants but little. Only the future will benefit, when social organization, supported by a normal state of commerce and agriculture, evolves.

In "La Vie Politique," the final chapter of La Vie dans le Nouveau-Monde, Eyma's penetration of American society,

his avoidance of superficial conclusions, is obvious. American political life involves "blood and guts;" public office brings no gratitude; politicians are not statesmen; Americans should beware of materialism. Both fortune and high position demand sacrifice. Indeed, "rien pour rien" is applicable on many levels other than the financial.

Superior men have devoted their talents and energies to public service, yet have received small recompense. Polk was grey when he left the presidency; Jefferson was forced to sell his lands and library in order to survive.

> L'ingratitude est de tous les temps et de tous les pays; mais elle est singulièrement implacable dans les démocraties, parce qu'elle s'y double d'un sentiment de jalousie né de l'orgueil de soi-même et de l'orgueil de l'égalité. Aux Etats-Unis, cette ingratitude a ce caractère particulier que la population s'accroît, chaque année, par l'agglomeration d'individus parfaitement étranger au passé du pays, à qui les services rendus par les hommes de la génération précédente, si glorieux qu'ils soient, sont tout à fait indifférents. (326-327)

Present public functionaries, Eyma states, share this indifference born of jealousy and the concept of equality. Indifference has bred a certain dishonesty, a tendency toward selfish enrichment in office, because the future promises neither recognition nor support.

> Le peuple américain...n'a aucune reconnaissance, ou du moins cette reconnaissance est médiocre, envers ceux qui donnent leurs soins et leur vie à l'accomplissement de leurs devoirs dans les fonctions publiques...le lendemain de leur sortie du pouvoir ou des emplois publics, l'oubli, le plus souvent l'ingratitude, sont leur unique récompense. (323)

Yet ambition pushes men to seek public office and to attempt herculean tasks. Men exhaust themselves in political competition. Perhaps Eyma would attribute such ambition to the American spirit of "go ahead," to the inexhaustible energy of the men of the New World.

"Politician" and "statesman," however, are not synonymous. The latter is ambitious for the nation, the former is ambitious for himself, for success and material gain, even at the cost of honor and friends. In his hands, politics is a "métier." Men such as Webster, Clay, and Benton were statesmen. But public officials in 1862, when La Vie dans le Nouveau-Monde was published, are politicians.

La Vie dans le Nouveau-Monde closes with a left-handed tribute to America. In spite of corruption in public office, Eyma states, one cannot discredit American institutions. They are incontestably the most beautiful and fruitful yet to rule any people; the proof of their excellence rests in the protection which even vice receives in their shade, without detriment to the institutions themselves. American materialism, however, has overshadowed the nation's social mission. Americans excuse a certain retardation of progress by reference to the slow development of European nations. But this is a specious argument. America has the youth and resources to win the battle of human aspirations. Her two most powerful agents are liberty and democracy. When looking back in time, and studying the social pact made on American soil,

> On trouve dans l'ensemble de ces actes, de ses caractères, de ces lois, de cette probité héroïque, dans tout ce passé oublié, une vigoureuse organisation à laquelle l'avenir qu'elle marquait n'a pas répondu. (349)

America must rise to her future and that of mankind. Moral sentiments must be renewed; equality must be measured in talents and honorable deeds rather than fortune. Hence public service will replace selfish materialism, and a new sort of fortune will result.

The American myth, so prominent in Eyma's work, may be related to the disappointed hopes evident in the closing of La Vie dans le Nouveau-Monde. The myth contains high expectations. Had it not so permeated Eyma's thought, his disappointment would be less. Eyma repeatedly notes American faults. But the futuristic thrust of the American spirit, its providential foundation, is more constantly emphasized. La Vie, because published in 1862 during the Civil War, may well reflect French sentiments aroused by the American conflict. The unity of the United States was threatened; the New Eden was trembling; the American Adam was in trouble. Because of America's divine mission; because the aspirations of mankind depended on the democratic experiment, the outcome of that conflict was of central importance to civilized man. The myth of the good savage had proved fallacious; the American myth itself was now threatened.

Scènes de Moeurs et de Voyages dans le Nouvea-Monde, a rambling collection of observation and commentary framed by a Mississippi steamboat trip, was published in 1862.[7]

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[7]Paris: Poulet-Malassis.

Eyma comments on the sights and sounds, and sometimes the significance, of the passing scene. In the process he re-asserts, in word and reported deed, the necessity to observe America sectionally, as is possible on board a steamboat.

> Les steamboats sont un excellent théâtre pour étudier sous presque toutes ses faces et dans toute sa bigarrure la société américaine. Quiconque passe une semaine à bord d'un steamboat peut y surprendre, sur une échelle plus ou moins réduite, les moeurs, les habitudes, les préjugés, les passions, le fort et le faible, enfin, du monde américain dans la latitude où l'on se trouve. Cela vient de la grande habitude qu'ont les Américains de voyager; si bien que tout ce peuple de passagers s'installe sur un steamboat et s'y met à vivre absolument comme à terre, chacun comme chez soi, et selon le caractère et les lois de l'État auquel il appartient. (30)

People and countryside are examined as he steams down the Mississippi. Characteristically, he at times leaves the framework of the river trip and rambles into topics far afield. Though this weakens the unity of the study, it provides additional information about the United States.

An examination of the structure of one chapter of Scènes de Moeurs will indicate the rambling, almost "stream of consciousness" organization of the whole. The steamboat moves down the Mississippi, stopping at Natchez, and thus providing occasion to comment on Chateaubriand, American forgetfulness of the past, and the qualities which compensate for this forgetfulness. Because the boat moves toward Cairo, Ohio, the embarcation point for trips westward, Eyma can digress on rail transportation and ticket-buying. This in turn excuses the telling of a railroad adventure which took

the author to Sandoval; and Sandovalians have customs and manners which must be reported. Returning to the river trip, Eyma narrates events on board the boat. The passengers are viewed as representative Americans. One in particular, Steven, somehow epitomizes the young American male. He tells Eyma of his various exploits; through him Eyma meets, and digresses on, Enoch Boon and Marguerite Hoyt, of Kentucky, whose adventuresome lives bear repeating because of the American traits they reveal. Returning again to the frame of the steamboat, Eyma tells of river gamblers, success and materialism, and the trials of New World inhabitants. The organization--or more aptly, the digressive nature--of this chapter is typical of the entire study, a collection of odds and ends of Americana.

Several topics considered in Scènes are already familiar: slavery; women, liberty, and marriage patterns; daily work and the intellectual pleasures enjoyed during leisure; parades; elections, political parties and politicians;[8] and ineffective law enforcement. They require no further elaboration here.

In sections of Scènes Eyma's imaginative, literary tendencies and national sentiments dominate, especially in conjunction with Louisiana and Chateaubriand. These sections

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[8]In this study Eyma allows the presence of selfish, ambitious politicians in every country age.

reveal something of Eyma's literary style, and of the source of Eyma's love for, and receptivity to, the United States. If New Orleans is American, can things American be bad? The sight of New Orleans, as the steamboat approaches, captivates Eyma.

> Je ne crois pas qu'il soit donné à l'oeil humain de contempler, en aucune partie du monde, de spectacles beaucoup plus majestueux que celui du port de la Nouvelle-Orléans... (316)

Eyma finds the city itself

> si sombre et si éclatante...pleine de charmes et d'attraits. On la veut fuir, on y reste; on la quitte, on y revient. Elle est un livre vivant, pour nous autres Français, où se lisent de glorieuses pages, oubliées aujourd'hui en France, oubliées là-bas même. (347)

It would seem that romantic nostalgia adds charm to New Orleans and New France.

> Plus haut on retrouve un nom, rien qu'un nom par exemple, qui fait battre le coeur: les Natchez!
>
> Quand j'ai passé devant la colline au pied de laquelle s'agitent les flots du Méschacébé tourmentés par les roues des steamboats, il m'a semble voir se dresser l'ombre de Chateaubriand! Deux fois j'ai descendu aux Natchez. Hélas! qui prendrait pour guide les immortelles pages de l'illustre écrivain ne saurait pas s'il voyage dans la patrie de Céluta et de Chactas, ou dans les steppes de la Siberie.
>
> Nul ne sait dans cette ville, florissante aujourd'hui, qui furent Chactas et Céluta; personne n'y connaît même le nom de Chateaubriand, et sur l'emplacement où s'élevait le fort Rosalie, j'ai vu deux boeufs ruminant leur déjeuner, se regarder le cou tendu! Ce tableau avait quelque chose de navrant.
>
> Le nom de Natchez éveille dans l'esprit de grands souvenirs ou le génie littéraire et la gloire militaire de la France se trouvent également mêlés. Natchez faisait partie de l'ancienne Louisiane française. (8-9)

Associations of the past lend charm, and a pleasing sadness. Natchez is today listed, Eyma reports, as but a cotton market, "C'est tout ce que l'on y dit de Natchez! Ce nom ne réveille aucun autre écho sur les rives du Mississippi."(13) Though Chateaubriand falsified the character of the Natchez tribe,[9] his works offers a certain romantic value - a value which transforms the entire region, or so it would seem.

Eyma was captivated, obviously, by imaginative literature; its images supplemented his vision of the New World. Rip van Winkle, in translation, appears in Scènes, and is praised because "l'esprit s'allie à la fantaisie, et la fantaisie à un grain de douce philosophie." (228) Eyma considers Rip van Winkle one of the finest tales in Irving's Sketchbook. Therefore

> il me semble tout naturel que je dise quelques mots de ce charmant écrivain, un des plus populaires de l'Amérique, et qui mériterait de l'être en France: d'abord parce qu'il avait beaucoup d'esprit, de finesse, de cette finesse, de cet esprit qui procèdent directement de notre littérature, et ensuite parce que Washington Irving aimait beaucoup la France, où il a vécu longtemps. (269-270)

The reasons for interest in Irving are of interest to the student of comparative literature. Irving is praised for his likeness to the French, and for his familiarity with France. This suggests that nations seek the familiar in a foreign literature; they accept that which reflects their own taste, and conversely, may reject that which is truly foreign, and

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[9]See Les Peaux Rouges of Chapter V.

therefore unfamiliar. Eyma comments on several of Irving's works, and finds in them "distinction du style...l'exactitude des faits." (274) The Histoire de la Conquête de Grenade has "quelque chose de la simplicité et la vivacité de Froissart." (275) In other words, Irving's merits are French. Are they perhaps "merits" because of this?

Eyma's sentimentality is evidenced in his treatment of Natchez; it appears again in his comments on Benjamin Franklin and other "great men." Literature and biographies contain valuable lessons.[10]

> On ne saurait, à mon avis, multiplier sous trop de formes ce livre éternellement instructif de la vie des grands hommes, qui offre aux jeunes gens tant de bon conseils et de salutaires exemples. Mais il est une chose à laquelle on n'a pas toujours assez songé, c'est de montrer aux lecteurs de ce livre d'or de l'humanité combien, des leurs plus tendres années, des hommes qui ont conquis par leur gloire l'immortalité de ce monde avaient préparé par leur conduite et leur caractère, par les penchants de leur coeur, par la direction de leur éducation, par les épreuves qu'ils supportèrent, le rôle qu'ils ont été appelés à jouer plus tard. (204)

Franklin's biography is

> une des meilleures leçons qu'on puisse offrir. L'application au travail, l'ardeur pour l'étude, la patience devant les épreuves du sort, l'amour du bien, la charité, l'économie, tous les éléments des grandes vertus et des grands talents. (206)

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[10] In the death notice of Daniel Webster (L'Illustration, XX (November 20, 1852), 327-328.), Eyma indicates his early concern with the instructiveness of biographies. Of Webster he says, "Les générations futures y trouveront un beau modèle à étudier, une belle et noble existence...à imiter."

Franklin embodies all of the admirable and imitable values expressed in Eyma's fiction. The combination of these with Franklin's characterization as a sentimental hero is especially significant. When young Ben learns that family finances cannot support his seminary education,

> L'enfant posa lentement ses lèvres à terre, laissa tomber sa tête sur sa poitrine, et deux larmes montèrent à ses yeux. Il n'avait eu que le temps de sentir l'amour du travail et d'effleurer à peine la science, mais son coeur se gonfla à la pensée qu'il fallait y renoncer. (206)

Ben Franklin was as the heroic man should be, according to Eyma's standards. Would he be acceptable and praiseworthy if he did not satisfy certain preconceived notions? Would he, and American society generally, be rejected and condemned if made in the image of Les Peaux Rouges rather than that of L.X. Eyma? Did Franklin, like the work of Washington Irving, reflect French bourgeois values? It would seem that an observer-traveller cannot escape his own skin.

The trials Franklin sustained are the common lot of the American.

> C'est surtout en étudiant les premières années des hommes illustres de l'Amérique que l'on constate ces efforts anticipés. On le remarque tout naturellement pour les hommes illustres, mais on pourrait en faire l'application à peu près à tous les Américains de toutes les conditions. (205)

Trials have educated all Americans since childhood.

> Il est bien peu d'enfants, d'ailleurs, en Amérique, dont les jeunes années ne soient pas exposées à ces épreuves. Presque tous sont appelés à apprendre la vie par son côté pratique, et à combattre, à l'âge où les nôtres s'amollissent dans les douceurs et les tendresses de la famille,

> les périls les plus sérieux. Garçons ou filles y passent également; ainsi le veut la vie en Amérique. Il faut attribuer en grande partie à ces circonstances le caractère énergique de ce peuple, son mépris des dangers, cette dose incomparable d'audace qui le distingue entre tous les autres peuples. Il est incontestable que l'on fait ainsi de fortes races, bien trempées, énergiques, prêtes toujours à tout, et ne s'étonnant jamais de rien. (195)

The American fabric is woven of the virtues engendered by sacrifice and trial. These virtues happen to be those Eyma prized. Patriotic attitudes are inculcated in early character formation, witness Eyma's fellow-passenger and particular friend, Steven. The primacy of patriotism in Eyma's literary canon has previously been noted, and Steven is patriotic.

> Quel but avait Steven quand il partit pour la guerre? Aucun, sinon de faire la guerre et de payer à son pays la dette de patriotisme qu'il lui devait. Quelle récompense attendait-il? Aucune. C'est là un trait caractéristique des moeurs américaines. (201)

America has no standing army, and needs none.

> Quand la patrie a besoin de bras pour la défendre, il lui suffit de frapper du pied la terre pour qu'il en sorte des soldats. (202)

Military service is considered a "devoir sacré." One might expect that Eyma would laud this "system without system," yet he claims, "le système est bon ou mauvais, peu importe; je rapporte le fait." (202) He withholds his reservations.

Eyma's comments on American funerals, however, contain a certain value judgment. Burials provide occasion for female "coquetterie, de victoire sur une rivale." (143) Women dress for funerals as they would for the theater; and

men "en revanche, y apportent la plus complète négligence de **tenue .**" (143) Such "use" of funerals is blamable by implication.

> On ne saurait montrer moins de respect, moins de convenance même envers les morts, qu'on ne le fait dans ce pays-là.
> Cette irrévérence...est générale à l'Amérique du Nord. (143-144)

Even the Indians were more sensitive to the rites of the dead--one of their few salutary traits. Certainly Eyma's use of "irrévérence" implies disapproval. And one is again tempted to find the source of blame or praise in Eyma's personal and European value system.

Eyma was evidently amused by American musical tastes. A piano is found on every steamboat, and

> il faut voir avec quel inflexible acharnement on torture ce malheureux instrument! Et une fois la première fusée lancée, il n'est plus de doigts et plus de voix qui se reposent du matin au soir. (134)

The true, the only American music is national airs, such as "Yankee Doodle," or "Hail Columbia."

> Un Américain abandonnera tout: une partie de jeu, une partie de plaisir, sa femme, ses enfants, et peut-être même ses affaires, pour courir tout haletant et tout rayonnant de joie et d'orgueil vers un orchestre ou un instrument qui étonnera l'un de ces deux airs. Et c'est à recommencer, puis à recommencer, et puis encore. (134-135)

From a sophisticated, cultured, European viewpoint, this enthusiasm, like that for parades, suggests a certain simplicity and naïveté. However,

> Je ne serais pas un véridique observateur de moeurs si je n'ajoutais à cette critique l'exception en faveur des populations du Sud, qui ont le goût musical beaucoup plus fin et

> beaucoup plus développé que les populations des autres parties de l'Amérique du Nord. (137)

We recall Eyma's preference for the Virginian, with his aristocratic, Old World tastes, and his love for New Orleans. In spite of efforts to be objective and impartial, Eyma can not fend off amusement with American innocence, and preference for those aspects of American life which correspond most closely to European counterparts.

The concept of equality is closely noted, and significantly penetrated, by our observer-traveller. The absence of classes on steamboats reflects the

> institutions du pays, qui n'admettent aucune sorte de distinction entre les individus, sous aucun prétexte...L'Américain est trop fier de sa démocratie et du sentiment de l'égalité... pour qu'aucun consente à accepter à son détriment la ligne de démarcation. (30-32)

Even American dress reflects this concept.

> Le Yankee pur sang s'habille de noir d'un bout à l'autre de l'année; c'est là le signe officiel et caractéristique de l'égalité des hommes entre eux...L'avocat, le marmiton, le membre du Congrès et le cuisinier sont également en habit noir. (144-145)

But Eyma warns against illusions based on superficialities. A very definite aristocracy does exist in the United States,

> et la pire de toutes, l'aristocratie d'argent, S'il existe...des fortunes colossales...il y a à côté de ces richesses acquises au prix du travail et grossies incessament par des héritages, une misère profonde. (146)

The concept of equality is in this sense abused. Yet Americans compensate by

> "la générosité publique...inépuisable...la charité a, en Amérique une comptabilité des plus compliquées et des plus actives." (147-148)

Materialism rests beneath the aristocracy of wealth and organized charity. Profoundly characteristic of the American is his

> but final qui excuse, légitime, et, j'ose à peine répéter le mot admit là-bas, ennoblit toutes les professions et tout les métiers: réussir et faire fortune! (56)

If one's end is wealth, one's standards of judgment are related to wealth. Eyma reports that, when a father sends his son into the world, he

> lui glisse à l'oreille ces mots, qui manquent rarement de pénétrer jusqu'au coeur de l'enfant: Va, mon fils, et gagne de l'argent; honnêtement si tu peux; mais gagne de l'argent. (100-101)

Any means to fortune, then, is justified by Americans. (Where are the virtues of Ben Franklin?) Nonetheless,

> C'est une éclatante justice que je dois rendre, en passant, aux Américains. On peut leur reprocher avec raison d'aimer l'argent par-dessus tout; mais aussi les sentiments de générosité et de charité sont inépuisables dans leurs coeurs. (97)

From Eyma's point of view, the American was an unusual blend of materialism and generosity, of avarice and charity.

Certain American traits seem understandably bizarre to Eyma, the European. Americans on board prop their feet against the rail, "Ce n'est ni joli ni décent, j'en conviens." (103) And it isn't even comfortable! When Eyma tried it, "au bout de cinq minutes, j'avais la nuque rompue, et le sang me sortait par les yeux". (104) Eyma and two others were the only passengers who "ne nous mouchions pas dans nos doigts." (39) Eyma himself was the only man who did

not "chiquer." Westerners never polish their shoes; everyone dresses in dirty black, "d'une saleté...repoussante." To a cultured man, such coarse traits are a bit repulsive, for obvious reasons.

In spite of oddities and idiosyncracies, the American myth exists. "La Providence, avec une prévoyance qu'elle semble n'avoir eue que pour l'Amérique, avait ainsi arrangé les choses." (16) Americans have forgotten their brief past, not to mention the European past. And Eyma reproaches Americans for

> le peu de vénération qu'ils gardent, en général, pour la mémoire des hommes illustres...La tradition, naturellement, tend à s'affaiblir et à s'effacer même. (279)

Yet this is part and parcel of what America essentially is.

> Il faut bien que les Américains rachètent par quelques qualités spéciales ce dédain mercantile des plus grands et des plus poétiques souvenirs, où ils auraient pourtant une belle moisson de gloire à recolter.
> Ces qualités sont réelles, on ne doit pas les méconnaître. Elles se manifestent dans l'énergique volonté avec lequelle ils surmontent des obstacles en apparence insurmontables, pour attendre un but et réaliser un projet qu'ils se sont mis en tête. (14-15)

There is no time for the backward glance; the whole thrust of America is toward the future.

> Il faut bien dire, pour peindre exactement l'Américain, et aussi l'étranger devenu Américain de la veille au lendemain, que ce passé, quel qu'il soit, existe à peine dans le souvenir des populations, et que le présent lui-même y tient une place relativement médiocre; toutes les préoccupations et tous les efforts de l'esprit sont concentrés sur l'avenir. (5-6)

The hope of mankind rests in the American future. Therefore, it would seem, Eyma consents to ignore the strange, contradictory, and even repulsive aspects of American civilization. Comprehension and sympathy are deserved because of the American myth.

> Il faut donc prendre l'Amérique comme elle est, avec ses travers, avec son ingratitude pour le passé, son insouciance du présent, ses préoccupations de l'avenir, et ses moeurs parfois excentriques qui s'adaptent parfaitement encore à leur cadre actuel. (68)

Did Eyma, in fact, approach the United States objectively? Scènes de moeurs et de voyages tempts us to believe not, though certainly he attempted impartiality. Eyma's literary creations evidence his concern for particular values realized in particular individuals, particular types. Divergence from these values, as in the case of Les Peaux Rouges, merits condemnation. One suspects, then, that compliance with them encourages admiration and praise. In Scènes this becomes increasingly evident. Romantic nostalgia rooted in French associations gives New Orleans and Natchez great appeal; Franklin embodies Eyma's values and is a sentimental hero; Americans have laudably withstood abnegation and trials. Yet when Americans step outside the system; when materialistic, uncouth, simplistic, and irreverent, they are subject to blame, or at least a raised eyebrow. Given that Eyma, who loved and admired the United States, was unable to escape his own European framework, one is tempted to conclude that no foreign observer is capable of absolute impartiality.

Indeed, our values are our permanent baggage. Personal and cultural prejudices must be considered, and judgments rectified accordingly. Eyma made the attempt when writing more structured studies, such as Les Deux Amériques. But "stream of consciousness" ramblings and reflections in Scènes invited the invasion of bias. This, in turn, tells something of the function of an organized literary form, of its rôle in forcing thought and sentiment into particular categories, to the exclusion of extraneous, and perhaps detrimental, elements.

Eyma, and many others, were to turn again and again to the United States, with its strangely fascinating, and sometimes repulsive, traits and customs. The New Eden was an inexhaustible source of novelty.

> Ce qui tente sans cesse en Amérique, et ce qui ne permet guère qu'on y demeure en place ou que l'on en reste éternellement éloigné, après l'avoir visitée déjà, c'est que toutes les fois que l'on retourne en arrière pour parcourir de nouveau en souvenir ces vastes contrées, on se trouve avoir toujours oublié de visiter quelques coins intéressants des moeurs et du pays. (2)

La Vie aux Etats-Unis, published in 1876,[11] is essentially a repetition of Scènes de Moeurs et de Voyages. Like its predecessor, it is framed by travels aboard a steamboat. Because of its repetitiveness, it offers little new material for our consideration. Two elements are worthy of mention, however. First, Eyma's perception of the American attitude toward the machine is interesting. Secondly, the poetic, literary Eyma comes forth in a long passage which

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[11] Paris: E. Plon.

merits quotation; it reveals something of the dream and fascination, stimulated by romantic imagination, which bound Eyma to the United States.

Eyma sensed that an almost human relationship existed between man and machine in American society. The machine has a human rôle in the New World.

> Marcher toujours, vers les dernières limites de la force brutale et matérielle ne leur a pas suffi; ils sont parvenus à donner à ces masses l'intelligence humaine, et à tous ces morceaux de fer l'agilité et l'adresse des doigts. Ils ont fait de ces brasiers ardents qui flambent dans les entrailles de la machine comme une âme qui commande à tous les rouages de ce grand corps. (5)

The machine expresses American genius and "go ahead." It is a native expression of the American spirit.

Eyma sometimes retired to the roof of the steamboat to escape other passengers and contemplate the passing scene. He especially enjoyed night reveries, during which he saw

> Quelque chose de fantastique qui frappe à la fois les yeux et l'imagination: cette gross lumière, rouge ou blanche, que l'on voit venir de loin et qui semble vous regarder comme l'oeil de quelque monstre; ce bâtiment, dont on ne définit pas d'abord les proportions, au-dessus duquel se déploie, comme un double panache noir rejeté en arrière, la double colonne de fumée qui s'échappe de ses cheminées; le grondement puissant de la machine, qui semble un souffle de géant; le bruit formidable du sifflet de signal, qui se pérpétue, pour ainsi dire, dans les interminables échos des rives et des forêts; puis les formes du bateau se dessinant peu à peu; puis cette masse énorme et blanche passant rapidement devant vous avec ses centaines de croisées illuminées; et enfin, à l'arrière, cette roue que l'on ne voit pas et qui, dans son mouvement de rotation, soulève et laisse retomber de plus de trente pieds de haut une cascade d'écume en manière de queue d'oiseau. On se laisse, alors, aisément aller à croire que ces bateaux représentent les génies de ces fleuves

> immenses, et leur rencontre produit toujours une impression grandiose et saisissante. (172-173)

One might call this a hymn to the steamboat and its romantic possibilities. As the boat continues on into the night,

> Le silence le plus complèt règne sur les eaux et dans ces bois, et n'est troublé que par le bruit des machines, qui, à force de monotonie, finit par se perdre aussi dans ce solennel silence. (176-177)

Eyma sought not only American traits and character, but also the picturesque and captivating in American nature. He allowed his imagination to ramble pleasurably in the vast expanses of the New World.

Eyma contributed a series of articles to L'Illustration, Journal Universel, between 1848 and 1860. Again, the material is largely repetitive of that contained in the volumes considered in this chapter. In terms of the French image of America, this fact is significant. Because Eyma's impressions appeared not only in book form, but also in a popular journal, one can assume that they reached a wide audience.

Eyma's contributions to L'Illustration began on May 27, 1848, under the general heading of "Souvenirs d'un voyage aux Etats-Unis en 1847. Lettres à M. le Directeur de L'Illustration." The first letter is entitled "La Nouvelle Orléans."[12] In the service of the Ministry of the Marine, and having toured the archipelago of the Antilles and visited

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[12] L'Illustration, XI (May 27, 1848), 203-206.

Havana, Eyma parted for New Orleans. His first impressions are romantic in tone, as one might expect from a thirty-one year old observer-traveller.

> Après onze jours d'une traversée contrariée par les calmes et les vents, nous aperçumes un matin, à quelque distance devant nous, une immense ligne jaune et limoneuse comme tiré au cordeau; tandis que tout autour de nous la mer conservait cette transparence azurée si remarquable dans le golfe du Mexique. Cette ligne était pour ainsi dire le souffle expirant du Mississippi, qui, se ruant violemment dans le golfe par ses trois embouchures, imprime la couleur de ses eaux à la mer, tant que son courant a assez de force pour l'envahir. (203)

New Orleans is a striking spectacle.[13] The river, streets, boutiques, and slave market are described. Eyma presents, in fact, a sort of "tourist guide" to the area. Finally, a romantic description of the environs of New Orleans is offered, in conjunction with a trip to Lake Borgne.

> On traverse des contrées pour ainsi dire nouvelles, où la civilisation n'avait pas encore, je crois, porté sa bêche et son râteau; d'immense forêts où l'on retrouve toute la virginité de ce sol dont M. de Chateaubriand a donné de si magnifiques descriptions, moins les fantaises auxquelles s'est laissé emporter son génie. On rencontre de ces arbres séculaires, étranges, bizarres, dont les racines, jaillissant de terre et se multipliant à l'infini, se sont couvertes à leur tour de branches et de feuilles. Puis, en parcourant des bois entiers de magnolias géants chargés, à leurs cimes, de fleurs énormes, vous apercevez de ces fourres épais, dont l'oeil ne peut percer l'obscurité, dont les pas humains n'oseraient sonder les mystères, que les rayons subtils du soleil n'ont eux-mêmes jamais rechauffés...Tout à coup vous voyez se dérouler devant vous ces immenses prairies sans horizon dont

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[13] Quoted in conjunction with Scènes de Moeurs et de Voyages in this chapter.

> Cooper a donné des descriptions qui m'avaient toujours paru fantastiques...Les beaux romans de Cooper vous reviennent à l'esprit; on croit voir, entendre quelques-uns de ses héros. L'illusion est d'autant plus facile que de toutes parts on est entouré de traces et de debris des anciens Indiens, et dans le silence de mes rêves je reconstruisais l'Amérique dans toute son originalité primitive. (205)

This is the romantic dream, stimulated by literature, of a young man's first voyage to the United States. It gives a romantic notion of the America of 1847.

On March 17, 1849, an article appeared comparing public instruction in the United States and France.[14] At this early date, Eyma was offering the American system as a model for France.

> La République des Etats-Unis est l'exemple que nous offrons à la France; sinon pour le suivre absolument, du moins pour faire son profit de tout ce qui est applicable à ses moeurs, à ses intérêts et à sa civilisation. (42)

The United States and France have the same political, but variant intellectual, needs. France has a glorious literary heritage and numerous traditions to pass to her youth; her system of education must incorporate these. But the governmental funding of education in America merits imitation.

> C'est là, à coup sûr, un grand exemple que les Etats-Unis ont donné au monde en reconnaissant cette dette sacrée des gouvernements envers les citoyens. (42)

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[14] "De l'Instruction publique aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique et en France," L'Illustration, XIII (March 17, 1849), 42-43.

The government has recognized its obligations to the people, and expanded the system of public instruction. The citizenry, in turn, learns democratic responsibilities and contributes to the health of the nation. "Y coopéré, c'est, pour tout le monde, accomplir le premier et le plus saint des devoirs." (42)

Compulsory primary education is especially noteworthy. It is

> "le pain moral du peuple en même temps qu'il est le fondement essentiel de la démocratie, nous ne cesserons de le répéter." (43)

School attendance is compulsory; the content of courses is prescribed, protecting civilization from barbery; a sense of duty has permeated the people. Consequently, all people in the northern states are literate, and possess the knowledge necessary to the functioning of a democracy. "De quel exemple ne doit-il pas être pour La France!" -- this France with such a fine heritage to preserve. Though both public and private schools exist in America, there is no quarrel between them; the universal concern is simply "répandre l'enseignement par toutes les voies possibles." (43)

In a follow-up article, Eyma discusses the rôle of the Sunday school in the United States.[15] Sunday schools are organized to teach morality, and exercise considerable influence. Here, and in all schools, state and federal constitutions are studied; students learn the very basis of their

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[15] L'Illustration, XIII (March 24, 1849), 54-55.

society. France could well imitate this; one should not only open a child's mind, but should inculcate principles.

The life-blood of American education, however, is the home itself. Children are seriously and austerely instructed around the domestic hearth. "C'est bien à cela qu'est due cette maturité précoce qui distingue les Américains." (54)

Local government encourages education in all of its forms. Schools are supervised locally.

> Celle-ci est réellement le coeur de ce grand corps. En bien! là est la cause la plus réelle de l'immense développement qu'a pris l'instruction aux Etats-Unis. (55)

Local control unfortunately creates an uneven emphasis on subject matter. Eyma recommends, nonetheless, that the French decentralize their educational system to a greater extent.

Teachers are the heart of education; the guardians of public morals, responsible before God and society for young minds and hearts. American teachers are more honored than are French. Because their rôle is considered so significant, they are carefully chosen, and prepared for their weighty task atpublic expense.

Laudable, also, is the American public library system. Education has opened minds. The library provides food for their continued nourishment. France should not fear the imitation of beneficial models.

In an article which appeared in 1851, Eyma characteristically probes the surface of commerce and industry to

discover the temperament and spirit which have created American material prosperity.[16] We have already noted Eyma's attention, in later volumes, to the "Go ahead and never mind" of the American; yet in this article Eyma captures the spirit in a particularly concise, succinct manner. He states that he wishes to clarify the physical and moral causes of the American spectacle, thereby justifying the high position America deserves among nations.

American genius is found in causes rather than results; it is her incessant, daily output of labor and ideas. Americans are unquestionably the most audacious, enterprising people in the world. They constantly render dreams palpable, doing all things to the superlative degree. "En Amérique, l'infériorité pèse, l'égalité stimule, la supériorité oblige." (354) The true American career is not public office, but active, productive work, man's nobility and pride. One blushes only at laziness. This is the "go ahead and never mind;" this has won independence, cleared forests, subdued nature, developed industry, and won seemingly impossible battles. The French are encouraged to take this as a model.

Above all else, the American is persistent.[17] He is intent on simplifying projects and hastening development; he

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[16]"Go ahead and no mind! ou le mouvement industriel, commercial et maritime aux Etats-Unis," L'Illustration, XVII (May 29-June 5, 1851), 354-355.

[17]L'Illustration, XVII (June 12-19, 1851), 370-371.

experiments with audacious ideas and constructions. He undertakes only useful projects, always as economically as possible. Success in experimentation constitutes American nobility. The American never doubts, is rarely discouraged, dismisses nothing, tries everything. This spirit has brought the American dream to fruition.

In 1862 and 1863, during the Civil War, Eyma wrote a series of articles entitled "Le Théâtre de la Guerre en Amérique" for Le Courrier du Dimanche. In them, he explicates, in geographical and industrial terms, the military moves and objectives of the Confederate and Yankee forces. He presents, also, estimates of the major figures--men such as MacClellan and Lee--who were directing the American conflict. True to form, Eyma evidences, in these articles, his desire to present the foundations upon which actions and events rest. The articles themselves, coupled with the many others on the Civil War, indicate the French interest in American affairs. Of greater significance, however, is the fact that Eyma was commissioned to report on the Civil War. Evidently he enjoyed some reputation as a student of American affairs; he was thought capable of placing the events of the war in their native, and therefore proper, context. He was a qualified speaker.

It is unnecessary to examine each article separately. Rather, comments relating to the French image of America, and to Eyma as student and perpetrator of that image, will be abstracted. Two aspects of Eyma's considerations become

evident: his effort to explain events in terms of their motive force; his view of great men as incarnations of significant elements of the American experiment.

Given the American character, no single battle of the Civil War would spell the end of the conflict.

> Il faudrait peu connaître le caractère persistant et énergique des deux races d'hommes aujourd'hui en présence les armes à la main, pour s'imaginer qu'une victoire, qui ne sera pas l'anéantissement de l'une des deux armées,--et cela est-il dans l'ordre des choses possibles?--soit faite pour décourager ou le Nord ou le Sud.[18]

Every event of the war must be viewed in terms of American persistence.

Secondly, the geography of each battle spells its import. Thus one must realize that Washington City is naturally fortified; Baltimore opens the borders of Pennsylvania to the Confederates; it is a port, and hence controls the influx of alimentation into Washington.[19] Frankfort, Kentucky, is important commercially because situated on the Ohio, linking the interior to a rich port; the Confederates at Frankfort are a genuine menace to the federal army. Nashville is "le grand dépôt du commerce intérieur," and therefore invaluable to both armies.[20] In other words,

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[18] "Le Théâtre de la Guerre en Amérique," Le Courrier du Dimanche, XL (October 5, 1862), 3.

[19] "Le Théâtre."

[20] "Le Théâtre de la Guerre en Amérique--Le Tennessee," Le Courrier du Dimanche, VL (November 9, 1862), 3.

Eyma's articles follow the movements and battles of the two armies and evaluate their significance in the geographical terms which dictate their effects on the entire conflict. The outcome of individual battles is a question not only of the victor, North or South, but of the location of the victory and the resources thereby brought under control.

Eyma views the whole of the Civil War as an articulation of the strengths and weaknesses of the democratic system.

> Les Américains du Nord, comme ceux du Sud, ont donné au monde le spectacle de toutes les forces et de toutes les faiblesses des gouvernements démocratiques et surtout des gouvernements individuels.[21]

Because the United States has no standing army, and speedy recruitment was necessary when the conflict began, men rose quickly from captains to generals, from soldiers to colonels. Europe has smiled, but these men have shown themselves heroic and militarily talented, proving that a standing army is not indispensable. The Americans have thus "donné le criterium de ce que peuvent le patriotisme et la liberté."[22] The absence of a standing army has certain weaknesses, however. It has provoked defiance on the part of those who should obey;

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[21]"Les Hommes de la Guerre d'Amérique," Le Courrier du Dimanche, XXXXVI (November 16, 1862), 1.

[22]"Les Hommes." In Scènes de Moeurs et de Voyages, Eyma seemed to have some reservations regarding the absence of compulsory conscription. Evidently, successful recruitment during the Civil War resolved the question.

a lack of discipline, unity, contact between soldiers and officers, and reciprocal confidence. Thus public opinion martyrs generals who suffer the smallest reversal; leaders need tremendous strength and resignation to withstand the plaguings of the public.

With this in mind, Eyma presents character sketches of particular generals. MacClellan is said to possess "toutes les qualités qui sont l'apanage d'un esprit élevé et d'un coeur droit."[23] General Butler

> porte sur son masque vulgaire et repoussant la cruauté de son caractère. C'est un homme passionné, sans éducation, sans frein moral, capable de toutes les extremités. Ainsi les jugent les Américains du Nord eux-mêmes.[24]

Halleck is a reputable theoretician and strategist; the name of Beauregard "d'ailleurs, a une allure française qui nous séduit aisément."[25] Many of these men are the product of the best which American democracy offers. Banks, for example, was educated in public schools

> que le bon sens du peuple américain ouvre à toutes les classes de la société...En même temps, le jeune ouvrier travaillait à gagner son pain quotidien, il donnait à son esprit cette instruction qui ne se refuse à personne en Amérique.[26]

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[23]"Les Hommes."

[24]"Les Hommes."

[25]"Les Hommes de la Guerre d'Amérique," Le Courrier du Dimanche, L (December 14, 1862), 2.

[26]"Les Hommes de la Guerre d'Amérique," Le Courrier du Dimanche, XXXVI (September 6, 1863), 4.

From Eyma's point of view, then, these great American men exemplify the strength of the reciprocal ties between government and people. The United States encourages the development of her people; the people contribute, in turn, to the development of the country. Though the Civil War is deplorable, Eyma finds, in its events and leaders, the essence of the American democratic system. Because Eyma found, in the biographies of great men, a source of inspiration and instruction for individuals, one assumes that he found, in the society and institutions which encouraged such character development, models for other nations.

Save in the case of Excentricités, Eyma's travelogues and articles achieve a reasonable balance and penetration of America. His evaluation of the weaknesses in the American system suggests his inability to escape his personal and European standards. He finds most praiseworthy those aspects of Americans and their institutions which coincide with the values expressed in his fiction. Generalizing from this, one assumes that the observer-traveller is never completely objective; values and standards are inescapable, and are utilized in judgments in spite of the best intentions. Eyma, as observer, was the victim of some disappointment in American "failures" because the American myth was central to his vision. Because the American people are charged with a divine mission, their faults and failures were doubly painful; the aspirations of mankind were at stake. Eyma's descriptions

of Louisiana and the American countryside reveal, however, Eyma's romantic, and sometimes nostalgic, bond with America; his love and admiration for this new land of promise.

CHAPTER VII

THE AMERICAN HISTORIES

L. Xavier Eyma was an historian as well as a student of American affairs. He published, in 1861, 1862, and 1863, three historical studies of the United States, each approaching the nation from a different point of view. Légendes, fantômes, et récits du Nouveau-Monde treats the early explorers and adventurers who came to the New World in search of wealth or glory.[1] La République américaine, ses institutions, ses hommes approaches the United States through her great historical figures, beginning with the early colonists and the events shortly preceeding the War of Independence.[2] Les Trente-Quatre Etoiles de l'Union américaine is a history of states and territories, organized geographically and approached in terms of natural resources, climate, and their effects upon population and industry.[3] Much of the material is repetitive of that found in the travelogues and articles published earlier.

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[1]Paris: A. Lecroix, Verboeckhoven, 1863. Works cited are those of Eyma unless otherwise indicated.

[2]Paris: Michel Lévy, 1861.

[3]Paris: Michel Lévy, 1862.

Légendes, fantomes, et récits du Nouveau-Monde is a two-volume study divided into four books: "Les Chevaliers de l'Océan," "Les Espagnols en Amérique," "Le Meschacébé Découvert," and "Les Huguenots." It is a thoroughly researched study; Eyma credits his sources within the text and in footnotes, indicating his prodigious reading in history. He does not use sources uncritically, however, but brings his own judgment to bear in the evaluation of men and events.

Eyma's interests and preoccupations are evident in the direction and emphasis of the work. We have noted his interest in the instructiveness of biographies; Légendes pivots on this preoccupation with great men and their character traits. Though events are important, the men who directed them are Eyma's central concern. Therefore the line between history and legend is somewhat obscured. Heroes decked out in sentimental trappings, and embodying particular values, stand at times between the reader and history. Légendes may be considered a blend of drama and fact, both set in relief against the adventure and mystery associated with exploits in the New World.

A quotation drawn from Eyma's biography of Hendrick Hudson in Légendes gives the clue to the conception and emphasis of the entire work.

> Ah! quel temps d'enthousiasmes généreux! et comme on se sent de respect et d'admiration pour ces âmes désintéressées, pour ces coeurs de feu que

> n'intimidaient point des dangers dont nul ne pouvait ni mesurer la durée, ni apprécier les lieux qui en seraient le théâtre! Tous ces navigateurs des XVIe et XVIIe siècles, qui s'en allaient quérir des mondes, un peu en savants, un peu en curieux, soldats en partie, poètes en quelques points, ambitieux par dessus tout, mais la plupart ambitieux de gloire et de rêves, beaucoup plus que de fortunes, devenant conquérants par hasard, fondateurs de royaumes sans le vouloir,-- ne gardant pour eux que la gloire du succès et donnant les empires à qui les savait désirer,-- tous ces aventuriers, dis-je, ont, dans l'histoire de cette époque, des physionomies à part.
>
> Leur courage étonne, leur ignorance emerveille, leur simplicité fait sourire, leur désintéressement est tout simplement magnifique. Leur vie est une épopée.
>
> Ils chassent des chimères,...et leurs chimères les conduisent à de splendides découvertes, à de grands et solides résultats.
>
> Leurs noms sont restés attachés à ces pays nouveaux, témoignage éternel de gloire que leur ont décerné leurs contemporains dans un élan de fugitive reconnaissance, et c'est à peu près tout ce qu'ils y ont gagné; car ces hommes qui ont continué la patrie européenne dans le Nouveau Monde...moururent presque tous en prison, ou de mort tragique, ou dans la misère, oubliés, conspués![4]

Obviously the emphasis is upon the nature of the adventurers and discoverers, rather than upon their discoveries.

Eyma casts a romantic aura about the discoveries themselves. They are transformed through time and imagination; they take on the proportions and grandeur of a romantic, nostalgic past. For though the adventurers have been neglected by poets; though their great deeds have not been recorded in poetry,

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[4]Légendes, pp. 138-40. Hereafter, page numbers are cited following quotations, and refer to the work discussed.

> tout un continent parle d'eux à la postérité... Ces poèmes qui manquent à la littérature héroique, on les rencontre à chaque pas, sous la forme de fleuves gigantesques, de lacs, de baies profondes, de villes, de forêts. Ce sont les oeuvres, on peut dire, de ces aventuriers, qui semblent avoir véritablement doublé Dieu dans sa création immense. (140)

These passages illustrate the mood of the whole of Légendes.

"Les Chevaliers de l'Océan" treats Vasco Nunez de Balboa, Francis Drake, Hendrick Hudson, Martin Frobisher, and their companions--the followers of Columbus.[5] The biography of Francis Drake, our first concern, contains Eyma's concept of the task of the historian, as opposed to that of the novelist.

> Il est permis au romancier d'analyser les sentiments, les pensées, et les impressions des héros qu'il met en scène. L'historien ou le modeste biographe n'a pas ce droit; il lui faut accepter le drame dans sa brutalité poignante et la raconter sans ces commentaires psychologiques qui rehaussent l'intérêt de la lutte, et ménagent l'émotion du lecteur. (74)

But it is interesting that Eyma seems unable to completely resist the novelist's technique. Though he himself does not supply psychological analysis, he does all in his power to direct the reader toward such analysis. Thus, when Edmund Drake, the father of Francis, is undergoing great hardships,

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[5]Their companions include Alonzo de Ojeda, Encisco, François Pizarre, Pedrarias Davila. Eyma drew his information from the following sources: Pierre Martyr's Décades; Washington Irving's Voyages of the Companions of Columbus; Herrera's Histoire des Indes; Prescott's Conquest of Peru; Charton's Voyageurs anciens et modernes; Maltebrun and Levallée's Géographie universelle; Bancroft's History of the United States.

> Nous ne saurions donc dire dans quel abîme d'amères reflexions put tomber ce malheureux Edmund Drake et quelles angoisses torturèrent son âme,--elles se devinent,--en face du navrant spectacle qu'il avait sous les yeux.
> La faim criait dans ces estomacs creux; des larmes de douleur et d'inquiétude coulaient sur ces joues décharnés. (75)

Through such touches and gestures, Eyma supplies direction for psychological analysis. Indeed, because heroes are sentimental, the reader can easily supply motivation--especially given tears and tortures of the soul for encouragement. Thus Eyma manages to play the historian, as he saw him, without completely abandoning the ship of fiction.

Eyma notes that some see Francis Drake as an illustrious figure in English history; "Ce n'est pas à moi de résoudre ces diverses questions qui ont éveillé des scrupules dans la conscience de plus d'un historien." (71) Drake suffered a frightful, trying youth; sailing to America,

> Le spectacle des solitudes immenses de l'océan eut pour lui un enseignement. Son esprit devina ce que ses yeux ne virent pas tout d'abord, au dela des frontières de ces horizons profonds, inexplorés, grandioses, que la générosité de Dieu avait ouverts à l'ambition et à l'intelligence des hommes. (77)

For some, Drake's discoveries excuse his crimes; for others, nothing can excuse his faults. For Eyma,

> Pour nous, qui ne mesurons ces héros qu'à l'aune de la légende, peu nous importe leurs crimes. Nous ne cherchons que les titres qui leur ont donné des droits à compter parmi les génies qui errent dans les forêts et sur les rivages du Nouveau Monde. (108)

This seemingly implies that Eyma was cataloguing legends, perpetuating myths of character, rather than writing history. In either case he was attempting objectivity, and seemed

unaware of the selection involved in his "objectivity." He reports the conquests rather than the crimes of Drake, and this very process of selection involves a value judgement. The man was greater than his crimes. He, and others of the same ilk , are

> d'hommes exceptionnels, et de héros taillés dans le marbre éternel où se retrouvent tous les types du dévouement et de l'abnegation. (137)

The high position accorded devotion and abnegation in Eyma's philosophy needs no further comment.

Eyma's biography of Hendrick Hudson suggests that men of his sort are, in fact, Christ figures. Hudson withstood all manner of trials, including dessertion by his crew.

> Le rêve était évanoui; les ténèbres de la mort enveloppaient son esprit, le pauvre homme était à son calvaire. Il fléchit sous le poids de sa lourde croix, l'heure du crucifiement n'était pas éloignée. Jamais douleur ne dut être plus immense que celle d'Hudson, jamais agonie plus cruelle.
>
> A la nuit, pendant qu'Hudson pleurait de rage dans sa cabine, des matelots pénétrèrent jusqu'à ce Christ épuisant son éponge de vinaigre, lui lièrent les membres et le traînèrent sur le pont. (153)

Fortunately, a man in the crowd--unknown, and now legendary--took pity on Hudson and helped him escape. But Hudson's forbearance was requisite to the continuation and expansion of his "redemptive" work by other Americans.

> Ce grand fleuve, une des artères de la civilisation moderne, a, sous les efforts intelligents du libre peuple qui habite aujourd'hui ses rives fécondes, centuplé en importance...l'Hudson est devenu véritablement l'artère principale de la richesse, non seulement du pays où coule ce fleuve, mais du monde entier. L'Hudson est, en outre, grâce à la vapeur, la grande rue d'un faubourg de l'Europe! (158-159)

In "Les Espagnols en Amérique," Eyma states that Spain was the largest contributor to the exploration of the New World.[6] Though many Spanish explorers were bandits, one involuntarily respects and admires them. And Eyma refuses to apologize for his sympathies.

> Je m'imaginerais déflorer l'enthousiasme qui m'est resté de mes promenades dans ce pays de fantômes. Conquêtes immenses, empires sans limites, fortunes éblouissantes, tels sont les mots d'ordre qui ont appelé sur tous les coins du Nouveau-Monde ces armées d'aventuriers de haut et de bas étage. (163-164)

In Eyma's fiction we noted the Neo-classical qualities of heroes and heroines; qualities again evident in Eyma's vision of these pirate-adventurers. He states that they seem made of exceptional cloth; they carry their vices and glory with a nobility which expands both immeasurably. They are great saints and great sinners, participating in both good and evil with an admirable intensity characteristic of Neo-classical passion and grandeur.

Ponce de Léon is, of course, the major figure in "Le Rêve," the section dealing with the Spanish discovery of Florida. Eyma's rhetoric almost glorifies the difficulties besetting the conquerors.

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[6]Eyma's sources in this section: Irving's Voyages of the Companions of Columbus; D. Jose Guell y Rente's Légendes américaines; Herrera de Tordesillas' Histoire générale des Indes; Gregorio Garcia's Origen de los Indios; Viera's Histoire des Canaries and Historia del Amiraute; Gayarre's Louisiana, its Colonial History and Romance; Bancroft's History of the United States; and Naufragios de Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca.

> On pourrait croire, aujourd'hui, qu'il entrait dans les desseins de Dieu de rendre plus âpre cette conquête, afin de multiplier les actes d'héroïsme et de fournir ainsi plus de matériaux à l'histoire de cette époque legendaire...Cette terre de la Floride, à la conquête de laquelle l'homme civilisé s'acharnait comme on s'acharne à un obstacle, devait boire bien du sang espagnol, ses fleuves devaient charrier bien des cadavres et ses marais être témoins de bien des misères encores, avant que l'Européen y cueillit les fruits de son ambition et de sa convoitise. (200-201)

The passage has a somewhat gothic ring. But gothic horrors did not forestall progress, Eyma implies. These men forged ahead as though

> le livre de l'expérience n'avait pas de pages sinistres; ils marchaient sans s'en apercevoir, sur les cadavres de leurs prédécesseurs. L'illusion chez eux était indéracinable; elle se fortifiait d'une foi toujours nouvelle dans le succès. (203)

Eyma also envisions the fascination of mystery and the unknown which attracted the explorers of Florida.

> On peut croire que le nom charmant donné à la Floride par Ponce de Léon, lors de sa découverte, fut un motif de réelle réduction pour les chercheurs d'aventures, ou bien que l'inconnu et le mystère qui enveloppaient cette contrée leur communequaient le vertige de l'attraction, car ni l'or ni les pierreries, aucune des moissons de richesses qu'ils espéraient, ne s'y rencontrèrent jamais. (222)

Hernando de Soto went to the New World at the age of twenty, in search of fortune.

> "C'était la seule et véritable route ouverte alors aux gens qui avaient leur état à faire. L'Amérique était le grand tapis vert de cette époque." (227)

Eyma constantly emphasizes the men and motives which led to exploration. Not only gold fever encouraged men like De Soto; one must remember the spirit of the times, the "véritable esprit des croisades." (234) Quoting Bancroft, Eyma notes,

> "Ce n'était pas la cupidité qui le stimulait, il convoitait la gloire en ce monde et le ciel dans l'autre vie." (234)

The Spanish carried to the New World, in their hearts, the germ of the Inquisition and the fierce ardor which was unleashed against the Moors.

> La pensée de convertir les Indiens, de conquérir la gloire terrestre et de mériter le ciel en combattant des peuples considérés comme des ennemis de la foi, entrait pour beaucoup aussi dans cet entrain à courir les aventures du Nouveau Monde. (234)

Eyma was realistic, however. He states that, had conversion of heretics been the sole end of such expeditions, discouragement would never have replaced the initial enthusiasm of these adventurers. Nonetheless, missionary zeal did play a rôle in the complex motives pushing the men forward.

Discussing DeSoto's treatment of the Indians, Eyma justifies cruelty, but not on the basis of Indian depravity as in Les Peaux Rouges. In this instance, rather, he exonerates DeSoto's acts by reference to human nature and the inevitable consequences of war. Not only conquerers mistreat their enemies, Eyma notes. Moreover, war is war, "c'est à dire, la négation de l'humanité." (235) DeSoto himself had not a cruel bone in his body.[7]

The second volume of Légendes opens with "Le Meschacébé Découvert."[8] This, too, is a hymn to the heroism, courage,

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[7] In the section following, Eyma compiles "La Chronique du Canada," of no direct concern here.

[8] Eyma's sources in this section: Père Louis Hennepin's Voyage en un pays plus grand que l'Europe, entre la mer glaciale et le Nouveau Mexique; J.-J.Ampère's Promenade en Amérique; Michel Chevalier's Lettres sur l'Amérique du Nord; a Tonti manuscript which appeared in the Revue Maritime et Coloniale; A. Cochut's Law, son système et son époque.

and audacity which are "aujourd'hui la moisson de l'histoire et de la légende." (11) It concentrates on the efforts of French explorers in the New World; it would seem that Eyma is as much concerned with the glory shed on France through the efforts of these explorers as with the New World itself.

Joliet and Marquette were the first explorers of the Mississippi; not the exploration, but the men, are Eyma's interest. Joliet fluffed his feathers and surveyed his conquest upon reaching the Mississippi; Marquette fell to his knees, thanked God for blessing their enterprise, and begged for the strength to continue. As for the treatment of Indians:

> L'un trafiquait tout le long de sa route, l'autre prêchait la parole de Dieu; Joliet satisfaisant les passions cupides, les appétits grossiers des Indiens, Marquette les émerveillant et les charmant par la simplicité des paraboles évangéliques...(18)

In Arkansas provisions were low and the Indians more hostile.

> Fallait-il continuer? Pour Marquette cela n'était pas douteux; son oeuvre à lui se pouvait accomplir toujours, en tout lieu; peu lui importait la férocité de ces tribus nouvelles; peu lui importait la langue parlée par ceux qu'il se proposait de convertir!...Les privations, les dangers, le martyre même au milieu du desert ne l'épouvantaient pas. Son devoir était de tout braver, de tout souffrir. (18-19)

Joliet's ends, on the other hand, were material. Eyma's diction suggests a curious blend of fact and drama--the fact of exploration, and the drama within the hearts and souls of the explorers.

Eyma drew on numerous sources, but not uncritically. Rather, he frequently exercised his own critical intelligence. He mentions, for example, that though Louis Hennepin claimed to have first reached the mouth of the Mississippi, Joliet

and Marquette were its true explorers.

In Robert Cavalier de la Salle, Eyma's concern with French activity in the New World becomes especially evident. LaSalle was the prototypical patriot-explorer; his objectives:

> Il entendit conquérir, donner un empire riche à la France, assurer sa domination sur cet immense territoire baigné par tant de cours d'eau providentiellement enchaînés les uns aux autres. (31-32)

LaSalle unselfishly desired glory for France, asking God's help in the accomplishment of "cette oeuvre si grande pour son nom et pour la France." (40) In Eyma's vision this is mingled with the great call of the unknown, as

> Ce petit navire tourna sa proue vers l'inconnu, allant braver les tempêtes et les hasards d'une navigation sur des lacs et des fleuves inexplorés encore. (35)

When LaSalle returned to the New World, he could not relocate the Mississippi. And this gives Eyma opportunity to rhetorize on the agonies of soul produced by such frustration.

> On s'imagine aisément le désespoir de ce malheureux. Chercher l'inconnu n'est rien; car la lutte dans la conquête, c'est l'ordinaire de la vie; la déception n'y est que chose naturelle. Mais poursuivre un objet trouvé, touché, dont on a joui, et sentir qu'il vous échappe, comme une chimère; se voir exposé au doute, à la risée, aux plaintes de ceux qui ont assis leur espérances, leurs rêves sur votre succès antérieur, qui vous ont confié leur existence, c'est le comble de la honte et du remords. (75)

Eyma the novelist and Eyma the historian are never completely separated.

Great men like LaSalle maintained their integrity and equilibrium in the face of the difficult conditions of life in the New World. Others succumbed to their environment.

The murder of LaSalle and his companion, DuHaut, instance men's reversion to a savage nature.

> Telles étaient les sanglantes et étranges moeurs des Déserts. A peine différaient-elles de celles des sauvages, dont-il semblait que les aventuriers prissent le caractère et les sanguinaires habitudes en aspirant l'âpre odeur des forêts vierges. (38)

The Iberville family exemplifies the patriotic devotion of some explorers. Six of eleven sons had given their lives for France. The Chevalier d'Iberville was the oldest of those remaining. Not only had he undergone unbelievable hardships and shown himself marvelously brave in battle, but he has a heart of gold; is a sentimental hero. He sheds tears during a battle because

> le regard...venait s'arrêter sur un enfant qui, nonchalamment adossé à l'affut d'un canon, attendait avec calme les ordres de son chef. (99)

If any tears were shed, Eyma would of course discover them!

Iberville rediscovered the Mississippi; he and Bienville continued explorations west to Natchez, where they built

> ce fameux fort Rosalie si célèbre dans le roman de M. de Chateaubriand, et dont il ne reste plus de vestiges aujourd'hui. (110)[9]

Jealousies between Cadillac and Bienville are explained, as are Bienville's problems with the Natchez tribe. And here

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[9]Eyma refers to Chateaubriand whenever possible. This is indicative of French interest in him, and of his irrevocable association with the New World.

Bienville takes on mythical proportions.

> Il savait qu'il n'y avait pour lui que deux alternatives: vaincre ou mourir glorieusement. Bienville se résigna à cette lutte homérique, sauf à tâcher d'obtenir par la ruse et l'audace des résultats que le seul courage permettait à peine d'espérer. (158)

It was Bienville who founded New Orleans,

> aujourd'hui le plus grand entrepôt commercial du sud et de l'ouest...le foyer des idées et des traditions françaises dans ces vastes contrées ou tant de nationalités se sont implantées pour être absorbées par une seule; la source d'une des populations les plus brillantes qui aient occupé le sol du Nouveau Monde. (167)

And Eyma quotes from an unnamed historian of Louisiana who pictures Bienville in contemplation; above him an American eagle turning in immense circles; behind him an old squaw muttering about the Great Spirit's arrival on this "sol qu'elle avait habité durant des siècles d'hivers et d'étés." (168)

Bienville's sentimental and romantically nostalgic extensions are completed by Eyma's rendering of his death.

> Son regard s'animait aux souvenirs de grandeur qui s'éveillaient en lui, au récit de ses glorieux combats et de ses épreuves de misère vaincue. Tout à coup, le noble vieillard s'affaissa, ses yeux se voilèrent de larmes; il cacha son front dans ses deux mains, et se renversa sur son siège en murmurant:--J'ai trop vécu! Bienville était mort. (185)[10]

As though to make Légendes contemporaneous as well as historical, Eyma closes the section on French explorers with an appeal to the past in support of the present.

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[10]This is a death worthy of Byron!

> Les descendants des anciens fils de la France américaine sont aujourd'hui engagés dans une guerre où les plus braves portent des noms qui ne dépareraient pas nos bulletins datés de Sebastopol, de Magenta, de Solferino. Français d'origine, ils le sont restés par le courage et par la vivacité de l'esprit, malgré les fortunes diverses qu'a subi le sol découvert et défriché par leurs ancêtres. Leurs regards et leurs voeux sont tournés vers la France, dont ils espèrent l'appui moral pour être arrachés aux déchirements de la guerre civile et pour jouir définitivement de cette liberté, de cette prospérité, de cette grandeur que le premier consul Bonaparte leur avait prédites lorsqu'il les détacha de la métropole pour les faire entrer dans la famille américaine. (186)

This would imply that Eyma saw France, even in 1863, in the rôle of mother to Louisiana; that he thought her intervention in the Civil War a justifiable possibility.

The final section of Légendes, entitled "Les Haguenots," relates, in short story form, the departure of a group of Protestants for the New World, following the battle of Dreux in 1562. The main characters are typical of Eyma's fiction. Coligni is first seen with "la tête cachée dans ses deux mains...des larmes sillonnaient ses joues." (190) Clorinde, the central figure of the tale, is a sentimental heroine par excellance. She expresses absolute devotion to her foster-father, accompanied by "un bruyant sanglot;" she was alongside her father when he died, sleeping "sur le cadavre" and embracing it "dans un suprême adieu." (201) She "se prit à trembler et à pleurer" (209) when horrid deeds are recounted; she inspires men in battle; she leaps into the melée of a sea mutiny, her blond hair floating in the wind, her body and clothing covered with blood; but "Ce n'était pas

du sang qu'elle avait versé, c'était celui des blessures qu'elle avait pansées." (252) She is fearless but feminine, a sort of Protestant Joan of Arc combined with an original of Florence Nightengale.

Obviously, the tale is laced with melodrama. A tableau of a ship-board mutiny is typical.

> Au moment où ceux-là prononçaient ces paroles de découragement où grondait une sourde colère, un jet de feu éclaira le navire, et Albert put apercevoir Simonnet (the traitor) mêlé à ce groupe, et Clorinde pâle d'émotion luttant en vain contre leur ténacité. (241)

Chapter VIII, the arrival of the Huguenots and Clorinde in the New World, focuses on our primary interest. On May 17, 1563, the exiles arrive at the mouth of the St. Matthew river.

> Ce qui les frappa surtout, ce fut le silence grandiose de cette nature en apparence déserte et abandonnée des hommes. (260)

Here two Indian tribes, the Apalaches and the Coosas, have formed an uneasy, if not explosive, alliance. They look on as the original of the original Thanksgiving is enacted.

> Au pied de cet échafaudage de planches quatre cents personnes agenouillées et recueillies dans l'épanchement de leur foi; à quelques pas plus loin des groupes d'Indiens naïvement émerveilles du spectacle auquel ils assistaient étonnés et presque attendris des larmes qu'ils voyaient couler des yeux. (269)

And so the stage is set for Clorinde's missionary activities in South Carolina, and for the interaction of Indians, Clorinde, and whites.

All manner of difficulties develop among the colonists, between colonists and the Indians, and between the Apalaches

and the Coosas. Finally, the despairing colonists return to France, leaving Clorinde behind in prison. As the ship departs for France, Clorinde rushes, too late, to the shore; "Clorinde porta la main à son coeur, poussa un cri déchirant et tomba évanouie comme morte sur le rivage." (343) Left among the Indians, she adopts some of their customs but continues her evangelical mission, silently enduring both mental and physical tortures. Eventually she unites the Apalaches and the Coosas; and eventually the French return, rescue Clorinde, and depart for Havana.

Eyma converts certain favored Indians into sentimental figures, implying that the characteristics of the sentimental nature are universal human material. He leaves other Indians in the savage rôle as depicted in Les Peaux Rouges. In other words, it would seem that in "Les Huguenots" he approaches Cooper's position regarding the Indian: there are good ones and bad ones, as in any other civilization.

The old Sachem is typical of the good Indian. He is extremely fond of Clorinde.

> L'affection du sauvage pour cette jeune fille n'avait fait que croître...jusqu'à prendre des proportions de respect et de dévouement qu'on n'eût pas soupçonnées dans une âme aussi inculte et aussi peu familière aux sensations raffinées. (280)

Clorinde here functions much like Rose of La Mansarde de Rose; her example elevates others.[11] The presence of such sentiments

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[11] In fact, one character says to Clorinde, "Qu'il soit fait selon ta volonté!" echoing, perhaps, the Our Father. Clorinde is definitely a sainted figure.

in Sachem, an Indian, is notable. Unlike other Indians, he was not utterly depraved; such sentiments are evidently universal.

Tamaviva would seem to be caught between civilization and barbary. She at first treats Clorinde like a sister. But when jealousy takes hold, she reverts to her savage nature. In her face could be seen

> tous ses instincts de sauvage se révéler dans leur énergie et dans leur bassesse. Ses yeux étaient allumés d'une joie féroce; ses narines ouvertes semblaient aspirer l'odeur du sang; sa poitrine haletait; tous ses membres frissonnaient, et une impatience nerveuse agitait le couteau sous ses doigts. Le cou tendu, l'oreille attentive au moindre bruit, elle était prête à frapper. De degré en degré, son état devint une sorte de paroxisme du meurtre. (329-330)

Other characters in Eyma's fiction, however, become like savages when possessed by jealousy, witness Isidor Sirugue of Les Amoureux de la Démoiselle.[12] Tamaviva's "resurrected" savage nature, then, is perhaps but the root of all human nature, rather than solely characteristic of the Indian. Her jealousy, too, may imply that all females are basically monogamous. If so, Eyma was perhaps confusing European mores and Indian nature.

Eyma seems to assume, also, that familial ties are binding in all cultures. When Defourneaux sheds tears for Clorinde, Tamaviva says, "Es-tu donc son père?" (369) And Saturiora, too, is impressed by his tears. Because Eyma puts such words into the mouths of characters, one might assume

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[12]See Chapter II of this study.

that he thought paternity universally sacred. For why else would Tamaviva associate Defourneaux's tears with fatherhood?

Légendes, fantômes, et récits du Nouveau-Monde recounts the earliest history of America's exploration. It is a documented, curious blend of fact and drama. The lives and character of the explorers, an extraordinary breed of men, Neo-classical in the intensity of both their virtues and vices, receive the greatest emphasis, echoing again Eyma's convictions regarding the didactic value of biographies.

La République américaine, a two-volume history published in 1861, is in some respects a summation of all of Eyma's studies of the United States. In the introduction particularly, Eyma concisely and succinctly states the opinions we have encountered in sections of Les Deux Amériques, La Vie aux Etats-Unis, Scènes de moeurs et de voyages, and others. Eyma again presents his qualifications as student of American affairs. He takes his countrymen to task for their rash judgments of the United States. He warns the United States of the danger in straying from her glorious foundations.

From Eyma's point of view, it is never inopportune to write of the United States because her history is "le livre des regrets pour les uns, des espérances pour les autres, des conseils pour tous." (5) He writes La République not to present anything new, but in order to

> fortifier quelques convictions par le spectacle des faits, en nous dégageant de l'influence des

> théories; de montrer où l'imitation servile peut conduire les peuples et de résumer les phases diverses qu'a parcourues la république américaine. Nous croyons donc, qu'on nous pardonne cet aveu, avoir écrit un livre de renseignements et d'enseignement. Ce à quoi nous avons tâché surtout, c'est de séparer la calomni de la juste critique. (6)

Most criticisms of the United States are directed to the social application of institutions which are accepted, if not praised, in theory. Eyma wishes to recall the roots of this great nation to his countrymen and to Americans, in the hope that the segments of American life which have deviated from their source may regain the correct, intended path.

The French press is particularly blameworthy for applying European, and hence irrelevant, standards to this new people. Eyma refutes the negative commentary of the press on recent issues. The French accuse America, Eyma states, of license in the exercise of liberty; yet the French have been involved in three revolutions seeking that same liberty, and "cette liberté n'était donc pas si fort à dédaigner!" (20) Moreover, France has yet to reach her goal "de réaliser le problème social résolu par l'Amérique du Nord." (21) Regarding the charge of American ingratitude toward the Old World, Eyma asks the origin of the steamboat; the source of raw materials used in France; the consumers of European products. "En quoi, par conséquent, l'Amérique serait-elle plus tenu que l'Europe, à faire acte de gratitude?" (22) In other words, Eyma states, the French should seek information about the United States in Tocqueville and Ampère, not in

> les bouquins de barbouilleurs et de barbouilleuses de papier, dans les récits intéressés, sinon intéressants, de certains visiteurs de l'Amérique, qui feraient bien, avant de condemner les Etats-Unis, de raconter leurs propres déconfitures dans ce pays, les déceptions de leurs projets, l'avortement de leurs rêves, les causes de leur expulsion du sein d'une société qui se respecte encore assez, quoi qu'on veuille dire, pour ne point faire longue fête à des aventuriers de bas étage et à des femmes suspectes. (23-24)[13]

Eyma adds that one can be perfectly French and perfectly patriotic while giving America her due. "On peut avoir le coeur et l'âme tout français...et rester cependant juste envers les autres peuples." (26)

The introduction closes with a restatement of American faults, such as an obsession with material ends to the detriment of attention to moral principles, and their rôle in the retardation of America's social mission.

> Au temps de la lutte pour l'indépendance, on ne recontrait que des hommes qui se ruinaient pour la grande cause qu'ils avaient embrassée; aujourd'hui on cite beaucoup d'hommes qui ne visent qu'à s'enricher au détriment de leur pays. Voilà la différence entre le point de départ et le point où l'on est arrivé. (32)

There are various ways in which to envisage the United States, as La République will indicate. Immense resources, love of labor, scrupulous observation of rights and duties, patriotism inspiring personal sacrifice in the general interest, and ardent love and profound need of liberty have all functioned in the fruition of the American experiment. The reader of La République, then, turns to Chapter I with the knowledge

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[13] No doubt Eyma includes Mrs. Trollope, among others.

that Eyma loved and admired America, yet saw her faults as well, and therefore judged himself capable of addressing the American people and their institutions. "C'est pourquoi j'ai la prétention de penser que je saurai dire la verité sur les Etats-Unis. Du moins ai-je résolu d'être impartial." (38)

In La République Eyma writes, at times, in an elevated, literary style which betrays his grandiose conception of America, and his emotions relative to her. A comment on the death of Daniel Webster illustrates this style. Webster died at the moment when

> il se préparait à demander au suffrage de ses concitoyens de l'élever enfin à cette suprême magistrature, modeste et puissante à la fois, qui s'appelle la présidence de l'Union. (145)

In the section of La République from which this quotation is drawn, Eyma notes the relative powerlessness of the American presidency, the meaniality of the tasks entrusted to the first magistrates. Therefore the quotation gives a clue to the play of emotion and imagination in Eyma's vision of America and her institutions. For he has said that, in point of fact, the office of the presidency was neither "suprême" nor "puissante." Yet when associated with the character of an individual, the office would seem to take on the proportions of the great man, and profit therefrom--in Eyma's mind and imagination.

A second element characteristic of La République is its attention to, and inclusion of, primary and secondary

sources. In support of his opinions Eyma uses articles drawn from newspapers; memoires and correspondance of the public figures treated, and a vast array of secondary sources such as Jared Sparks, De Tocqueville, and Chevalier.[14] Eyma brings, then, much more than personal opinion and observation to the study; the prodigious reader and researcher is evident.

In "Les Fondateurs de la République américaine," Eyma is predictably as much concerned with biography as history.[15]

> Le mouvement révolutionnaire de l'Amérique du Nord se distingue par des caractères particuliers, exceptionnels et sans analogie peut-être dans l'histoire, tant par les causes qui l'ont produit que par les hommes qui l'ont commencé, dirigé, et couronné. (101)

From Eyma's point of view, four elements contributed to the absolute uniqueness of the American revolution. First, it created a new people and stirred a world of ideas. Secondly, it met a dearly bought success without changes in customs, language, religion, habits, or even the social conditions of those who undertook the revolution. Thirdly, the colonists

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[14]Sources used in La République include: Jared Sparks, Cornelius de Witt, Lafayette, Marshall, Washington Irving, Story (Commentaires sur la Constitution), J.-J. Ampère, M. de Pradt (L'Europe et l'Amérique en 1822 et 1823), Michel Chevalier, Eaton (Life of Jackson), Kendall (Biography of Jackson), Bradford (History of the Federal Government), and M. de Keratry.

[15]Chapter I, entitled "Coup d'oeil général," is a repetition of the discussion of Central American adoption of democratic institutions, as found in Les Deux Amériques.

were already free, and had guaranteed rights; the same territorial divisions which exist today; prosperity; and democracy. Only right and honor provoked the revolutionary struggle. Hence the fourth distinctive characteristic of the American revolution: its provocation among the elite, rather than among the masses. Because the revolution was not a question of material gain, but rather one of principle, it was of necessity inspired by an elite capable of plumbing and understanding the principles at stake--right and honor. Therefore the American revolution operated in the reverse direction of most.

> Le peuple, en se retirant du mouvement, avait comme ramené à lui le véritable sentiment démocratique de son origine, et laissé les idées de l'aristocratie déposer involontairement des alluvions dans la société...Il fit plus, il compromit, materiellement, le succès de cette insurrection, la plus légale qui ait jamais pris place dans l'histoire. (112)

Eyma obviously thought the American revolution utterly unique, and absolutely justified.

The filtering of the revolutionary movement from the elite to the masses indicates that the leaders were extraordinary men. "Des hommes pareils à ceux-là se rencontrent rarement, il faut le reconnaitre." (114) Moreover, they

> semblaient avoir été crées exprès par la Providence pour mener à bonne fin l'oeuvre difficile qu'ils avaient entreprise... (114)

The American myth unfolds in these exceptional men. In their lives is instructively found

> un panthéon national qu'on place entre les mains des enfants et chaque feuillet renferme un enseignement dont le résultat est appréciable jour par jour. (116)

Franklin gained the American cause in European eyes, and best represents the principles of the early American republic. Men of his ilk were

> providentiellement organisés, et mûris pour le jour où Dieu avait marqué dans ses desseins de leur réserver un rôle. (121)

Such personalities create wonderment and an almost effervescent admiration in Eyma.

> Dieu merci! dans tous les pays on rencontre des hommes vertueux; mais je ne sache pas qu'à aucune époque révolutionnaire on ait trouvé à la tête des affaires, et soufflant la révolte au peuple, des esprits aussi élevés et des coeurs aussi purs à la fois.
>
> Je ne connais dans l'histoire de l'humanité qu'une autre révolution qui ait, comme celle de l'Amérique, enfanté des hommes exceptionnels, c'est la révolution du Christianisme.
>
> Aussi toutes deux ont-elles fondé une religion et une liberté qui seront éternelles. (121)

We remarked previously that Eyma envisioned mankind as progressing toward a greater and greater perfection. It would seem that, following the advent of Christianity, the American revolution was the second step in this path.

Given Eyma's superlative praise of the leaders taken as a group, one can well imagine this approach to individuals such as Washington, whose political biography occupies the next quarter of La République.

> Je ne crois pas qu'il existe dans l'histoire d'aucun peuple une figure qui commande autant la considération et le respect, qui résume mieux toutes ces vertus quell'on caractérise superlativement en y accolant l'épithète d'antiques. (143)

Previous histories, Eyma states, have overlooked Washington's faults, a perfectly excusable oversight,

> surtout lorsque ces attendrissements ne tendent pas à rabaisser, mais à élever, au contraire, le niveau de la conscience humaine. (143)

Eyma, however, deals with his weaknesses, not to debunk him, but in explanation of some of the facts and acts of the revolution. "C'est faire acte de conscience, croyons-nous, dans l'intérêt de l'histoire." (146)

In spite of Washington's faults, Eyma loved him still. Washington clashed with Congress, yet continued in his rôle for fear that a man of narrow ambition attain power and destroy the American cause.

> Ce Brutus de la douleur et de l'humiliation morales, ne s'écarta pas d'une ligne du rôle qu'il s'était condamné à jouer. C'est ainsi qu'il sauva son pays. (168)

Contrasting Washington and Lee, Eyma draws out the character of Washington. American history itself is used as a tool in the delineation of Washington's character.

> Ici...se renouvellent, pour rehausser son caractère et remettre en evidence ses admirables qualités, les luttes avec le Congrès et l'impardonnable incurie de celui-ci. (200)

The revolution was an affair of great men; Eyma's emphasis is upon character rather than events, even should the character be evil. In the process of recounting Arnold's treason, for example, the reader learns as much about the man as the deed, and is told that Arnold was possessed,

> au suprême degré de ce démon du "go ahead," le mot d'ordre de toutes les folies et de toutes les grandes oeuvres des Américains. (240)

In Ethan Allen are found traits typical of the American, "à cette époque comme aujourd'hui." (250) Allen, like all Americans, had a profound antipathy for inaction, and

> la haine de la discipline et le sentiment de l'indépendance joints au besoin de laisser sur toutes choses et en toutes affaires l'empreinte d'une personnalité hardie. (250)

Eyma, then, moves from particular character sketches to generalizations on American character. Structurally, La République is an affair of man against man, each setting the character of the other in relief, against the backdrop of American history, as preordained by a Providence which

> avait décrété la formation dans l'autre plateau de la balance du globe, d'une société différente de l'ancien monde, où devaient germer et se féconder des idées nouvelles, sujet d'études et d'étonnement pour l'Europe, en même temps qu'elles soulèveraient d'amères critiques, des enthousiasmes irréfléchis dans leur ardeur et des espérances indéfinies. (235-236)

Chapters IV and V, entitled "Période d'Epreuves" and "Washington President," bring the American republic out of revolution and into her first years of nationhood. Providence, again, is the guiding force in "une si grande tâche" which "n'arrive pas au but sans un secours surhumain." Eyma first prints the Constitution, amendments, and a list of the signees. The system of presidential elections is explained; Washington's official acts are discussed. And of course, Washington the man, his simplicity, unselfishness, retirement, and preoccupations with America's future are studied and praised. Washington withstood numerous trials, and

> ce qui fit la force de Washington, c'est de n'avoir pas désespéré de la démocratie au milieu même des luttes les plus violentes. (380)

And the new-born nation itself passed through many tests, but survived.

> La situation présente des Etats-Unis, le caractère de leurs moeurs actuelles, privées et publiques, leur étrange énergie dans toutes les entreprises commerciales et industrielles, ne sont que la continuation d'un passé qui ne ressemble à celui d'aucun peuple. (381)

The numerous obstacles surmounted prove

> l'influence bienfaisante des institutions américaines sur les moeurs d'un pays prépare de longue main à la liberté, ou plutot l'accord parfait entre les moeurs et les institutions. (357)

This proves the greatness of the American system.

From Eyma's point of view, the proof of Washington's greatness is not the hommage his country paid him--such is only natural. Rather, his true proportions are revealed in the hommage offered by the French and English. England had fought against him; the French had been at sword-points with him. Yet official mourning was declared in both countries upon his death. Washington was a universal giant.

Volume II of La République américaine opens with "Jefferson et son Epoque." Jefferson is the second giant of the American revolutionary period. The epoch has taken on mythological proportions among the American people, and the men of the period have become demi-gods, Eyma states.

> A peine ose-t-on en Amérique croire à des faiblesses de leur part, emettre le moindre doute sur leur génie, rechercher des fautes, des erreurs ou des hésitations dans leurs conduite. (6)

The more contemporaneous the figure, the more subject is he to criticism, until public functionaries of Eyma's day receive no gratitude whatsoever. The men of the revolutionary period, however, are the American untouchables.

The fact that Jefferson was French in character and temperament is, of course, of consequence to Eyma.

> Jefferson s'imprégna bientôt de l'esprit français; il y avait du goût d'ailleurs...Oui, il est alors tout à fait Français par l'élégance de ses manières, par la vivacité de son intelligence; mais il est Français du XVIIIe siècle par l'indépendance de son esprit et par son mariage avec la philosophie du temps; il est frondeur, révolutionnaire, sceptique, épicurien; il procède du Dictionnaire philosophique. (18-19)[16]

This Jefferson, so French from Eyma's point of view, developed differences with Washington and founded definitively the republic as republic. Jefferson's rise to the presidency is termed an unbloody revolution.[17] Through the medium of his presidency Eyma marks the salient, but somewhat unhappy, characteristics of this most elevated public office: poor pay; initiative resulting in little direct action; the constant obligation to flatter public taste.

> voilà à peu près à quoi se réduit la puissance de ce chef d'une grande république où le premier électeur est plus maître que le premier magistrat élu. (44)

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[16]Here Eyma quotes Jefferson's Memoires which heap lavish praise on France. Eyma credits Jefferson with a rôle in the first emotions which stirred the French revolution.

[17]Here, as in other volumes, Eyma discusses American political agitation.

Some biographers, Eyma notes, criticize Jefferson for his rupture with Washington. Yet Jefferson acted in good faith; the monarchical tendencies of Washington were a partial denial of the original spirit of the revolution. Others criticize Jefferson for his lack of belief in Christianity or any religion.

> Son impiété était flagrante, et, avec cela, Jefferson avait des idées très élevées et très saintes en morale; sa conviction dans l'immortalité de l'âme était profonde. (48-49)

Eyma states that such a contradiction is common to many men, and hence shows himself tolerant of this "idiosyncrasy" of Jefferson.

> Cette contradiction entre l'impiété flagrante de Jefferson et la hauteur de ses vues en morale est une des plus étranges singularités de l'esprit humain. (51)

Jefferson was a true "philosophe."

In "Monroe et sa Doctrine" another characteristic of the American presidency is revealed: its appeal, by default, to men of secondary merit. Truly superior men, such as Clay, Calhoun, Webster and Cass, refuse to submit to the popular vote. The demands of the presidency call only for common men of good sense and upright character.

> C'est assez pour qu'un homme quelque peu intelligent mène à bonne fin la tâche qui lui incombe; et l'application de ces deux qualités aux devoirs de sa charge suffit quelquefois à l'illustrer sans qu'il s'en doute même. (54)

To the good fortune of the United States, however, superior men have come forward in times of particular stress. So it was with Washington, Jefferson, and Jackson.

> Chacune de ces trois élections marque-t-elle une époque spéciale dans la vie politique et administrative de la république américaine du Nord. (55)

The single outstanding feature of Monroe's administration, Eyma states, was the Monroe Doctrine, and this was largely influenced by Jefferson, as were all events of the time.

> Avec Monroe comme avec Madison, ce fut encore Jefferson qui gouverna l'opinion publique. On peut donc dire que l'influence de celui-ci se prolongea au delà du terme de son double mandat; elle dura le temps de son opposition à la politique de Washington, les huits années de sa propre présidence, et les seize années des deux présidences de Madison et de Monroe. C'est en quoi il ne faut pas hésiter à considérer Jefferson comme...le véritable fondateur de la République américaine. (80-81)

Perhaps with his audience in mind, Eyma details Lafayette's visit of 1824 to the United States. The passages describing Lafayette's emotions upon revisiting the United States carry a certain sentimental nostalgia.

> Le général alla revoir ce pays qu'il avait vu, quarante-sept ans auparavant, en proie aux désolations de la guerre; il le retrouvait plein de force et d'avenir et en pleine prospérité. Lafayette dut éprouver, en posant le pied sur le sol des Etats-Unis, la joie que ressent un père à embrasser un fils dont il s'est séparé enfant et qu'il rencontre homme, cherchant dans ses traits, dans ses gestes, dans sa parole quelque chose de sa voix, de ses mouvements et de sa physionomie de jadis, pieusement conservés dans ses souvenirs, mais dont l'âge n'a plus rien laissé. (82)

Eyma reprints the invitation of Congress to Lafayette, and his reply; and details Lafayette's visit to Mount Vernon, and his departure from the United States.

> Le jour où Lafayette quitta Washington-City, toutes les affaires furent suspendues, et la population lui prodigua les marques de la plus vive sympathie. (87)

Eyma seemingly wanted to indicate the ties which bound, through historical associations, the French and American republics.

General Jackson, "un des hommes les plus éminents qui aient jamais paru sur la scène politique d'aucun pays," (89) characterizes an entire era of American political life: something of turmoil, spontaneity, preconceived ideas which stood firm even against law, inflexible will, burning temper, and disdain for all obstacles, even legitimate, which stood between himself and his goals. He was immensely popular during a period when

> la peuple américain éprouvait comme le besoin d'émotions. On eût dit que le calme et la placidité du gouvernement fédéral commençait de lui être insupportables. (92)

Thus Eyma reads the national pulse in the expansive figures elected by popular majority. The character of Jackson justifies the title of the chapter, "Le Général Jackson et la Dictature." From the character emerged dictatorial acts, such as the loading of Congress with Republicans to assure the success of all government measures. Jackson demanded absolute devotion from others; his system prompted certain classes of men to seek public position, regardless of merit; public employees operated under a system of rotation. And the results of this are still evident.

> La moralité, la capacité et la respectabilité également absentes de presque toutes les fonctions publiques aux Etats-Unis, sont le résultat du court passage des fonctionnaires dans leurs emplois. (135)

Jackson caused great agitation, and hence considerable movement of ideas. Nonetheless,

> ces luttes dont la Constitution et les institutions américaines sont heureusement sorties intactes, les ont fortifiées, en prouvant combien il est difficile de les entamer. (144)

However, it is good that men of Jackson's sort, with arbitrary ideas, are not often in power. For if they were,

> ils ne se passerait pas beaucoup d'années avant que la liberté fut perdue sans retour et que le peuple tombat sous le despotisme. (144)

In Webster, Calhoun, and Clay, Eyma finds striking examples of

> l'étrange résignation du peuple américain à sacrifier, au moment décisif de la lutte électorale, ses hommes d'Etat les plus illustres à des competiteurs d'un ordre inférieur quand il s'agit d'assurer le triomphe d'un parti. (146)

In the eyes of the American citizenry, these men were at fault for representing "d'une manière trop éclatante, trop complète, trop absolue, certaines idées et certains principes." (146) Moreover, they represent the three American "races," the Yankee, the Westman, and the Virginian.[18] So typical was each of his race that he was incapable of sacrificing his individuality to the success of the party.

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[18] Eyma here delineates and characterizes the three, as in Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde.

Appropriate to the date of publication of La République, Eyma discusses the slavery issue from various points of view: that of the Constitution, the Republican party, the two wings of the Democratic party, and the implications of all upon the doctrine of States' Rights. The issue, Eyma states, is elaborated and elucidated in America without threat to the existence of the government.[19] And therein is one of the marvels of the United States.

> Quand on a vu de près et les abus qu'il ne faut pas craindre à signaler, et la grandeur de ces institutions dont le jeu étonne et émerveille, on excuse même les abus de la liberté incapables d'en arrêter l'élan et les bienfaits, et on admire les sources prodigieuses de force et de puissance où s'alimentent de telles institutions qui ni les passions des partis politiques, ni les intérêts de latitudes ne peuvent ébranler sur leurs bases, et que tous les partis, quels que soient les intérêts qui les guident, s'étudient, au contraire, à raffermir.
>
> C'est là un grand enseignement, quoi qu'en disent certains contempteurs ignorants ou de mauvaise foi. (183-184)

What would Webster, Calhoun, and Clay do were they living when La République appeared? The United States is undergoing a period of trial, Eyma states.

> A mesure que le pays grandit, le pouvoir menace de se rapétisser, les moeurs publiques s'écartent de leur ancien niveau; partout se manifestent une tendance à la décadence. (185)

The government has "toutes nos sympathies, malgré ses fautes et ses écarts," (186) but events of "un caractère déplorable" are taking place. Corruption is rampant, even in the government. Moreover, America ignores, to an unreasonable degree, the opinions of other nations. For

> l'ensemble des nations qui forment par le fait un corps restreint, une sorte de société condensée par la synthèse, exercent également un contrôle sérieux et peut-être jaloux, les uns sur les autres, une surveillance active dont le résultat est de flétrir celles qui manquent à leurs devoirs et d'exalter très haut celles qui les accomplissent...Ni celui qui fait fi de l'opinion publique, ni celui qui se livre à elle poings et pieds liés ne suit le vrai chemin de l'indépendance d'esprit, de la raison, du libre arbitre humain. (190)

The United States, more than any other nation, has for some time

> abusé ou affecté d'abuser le plus, d'un mépris quelquefois cynique pour de 'qu' en dira-t-on' des peuples...La pente où le gouvernement de Washington entraîne, chaque jour, la nation américaine est une pente fatale; c'est celle où un peuple perd son prestige, lambeau par lambeau; où entretenu d'illusions d'abord, il se trouve tout à coup isolé, et où, enfin, en acceptant par défi ce rôle, il rompt soudainement les derniers liens qui le rattachent encore au respect de l'opinion publique, et lui font jeter sa dignité par dessus les moulins. (192-193)

The root of the problem, from Eyma's point of view, is the exaggerated sense of liberty so rampant in America,

> une morgue d'indépendance personnelle qui n'a rien de commun ni avec l'indépendance de la conscience ni avec la liberté. Ce sentiment est exagéré et part d'un principe vrai, mais mal interprété...La logique de ce sentiment est que de peur d'être gouverné, le peuple américain ne veut même pas être administré. (194-195)

The tremendous influx of immigrants; the scattering of the original population; the absence of a national party capable of dominating the North and the South, have always threatened the unity of America. The original citizens, now diffused throughout the continent, would have preserved the "religion du passé," the traditions of Washington and Jefferson.

But the bulk of the present population is stranger to this past.

> Peu lui importe les vertus de Washington; la patriotisme de Jefferson et des autres. Rien ne le rattache à eux, pas même l'ascendance des familles. C'est là le vice, c'est là le malheur. (201)

Eyma obviously values the weight of the past and traditions, carried to new generations through the lives of great men, and utilized in the formation of a nation's future.

The American people are "en ce moment malade de liberté." The administration in Washington, or in state capitols, is of no concern to the people if liberty isn't curtailed. In order to remedy this,

> il s'agit donc de réveiller dans le peuple américain le sentiment de l'unité, la conscience du devoir général. Pour cela, il faut que la moralité s'établisse au sein du pouvoir. (202)

Eyma next considers "L'Etat Intellectuel et Moral des Etats-Unis." Education has been the key to the development of the United States, the vanguard of civilization and prosperity.

> Le plus grand danger que coure la diffusion des lumières dans les masses est le préjugé mis en avant par Jean-Jacques Rousseau que l'état sauvage est l'état de nature; 'l'état de nature pour l'homme, dit Chateaubriand, est la civilisation, parce que nous sommes des êtres sociables; pensants, perfectibles.'...La liberté demeure ou revient avec les lumières. Le monde se régénère par la science, les lettres, les arts. (208-209)[20]

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[20]Eyma's comments on education are repetitive of those which appeared in the articles in L'Illustration (see Chapter VI of this study) and in Les Deux Amériques.

No other society has faced such obstacles: a mixture of nationalities, and consequently diverse passions, prejudices, races and religions. Education has infused a sense of unity into these masses and produced "ce miracle social" (233) which is America. For "plus le niveau de son intelligence s'élève, plus l'homme s'affranchit des passions et des préjugés." (234)

Education has influenced not only the body politic and moral of the United States, but has encouraged business and industry, Eyma states in "Génie Industriel et Commercial des Etats-Unis."[21] It has introduced

> toutes les classes aux besoins matériels du pays. C'est une sorte de niveau qui s'établit entre elles, assez élevé, cependant, pour que les plus forts esprits n'aient pas à descendre et que les plus humbles au contraire se fassent un point de dignité d'y pouvoir atteindre. (247

Manual labor is esteemed; all of the spirit, heart, and soul of Americans are given to industry and commerce. And the spirit which provokes wondrous accomplishments is the "go ahead and never mind!" so characteristic of the American.

> Avec le Go Ahead, qui personnifie en lui l'audace dans l'entreprise, et le Never Mind, qui représente le courage dans l'adversité et l'insouciance du péril, l'Américain du Nord accomplit des prodiges. (253)

Because time is money in America, the people have doubled and tripled time and life industrially, by shortening

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[21] Prior to this section Eyma considers arts and letters in the United States. The next chapter of this study will take up this topic.

distances, multiplying communications, and augmenting manpower through the use of machines,

> en suppléant les populations insuffisantes par des hommes de fer à qui l'on donnait du feu pour âme et pour intelligence la vapeur. (259)

American industry and commerce depend on steam and telegraphy.

Eyma is fascinated by the American system of credit, "ce système si cher aux Américains et tant critiqué en Europe." (265) He delineates the origins of American credit.

> Il leur était nécessaire de courir un peu les aventures sur le champ économique et financier, comme ils les avaient courus sur les champs de bataille, sauf à régulariser, plus tarp (sic) cette ardeur. Mais ce qui n'était sans doute qu'un expedient au début, devint par la force des choses un système, et le système a pris racine dans le pays, tout en profitant, mais pas autant peut-être, qu'on l'aurait pu souhaiter, des leçons de l'experience. (267)

To encourage the development and industrialization of such large land masses, money and credit must be readily available; risk must be taken by both people and government. Americans operate on the principle that "réprouver la faillite serait décourager l'esprit d'enterprise," (281) and from such a philosophy has arisen a disunified, loose, but effective system of finance.

La République américaine closes with an appendix treating the Civil War, and revealing its importance to Eyma.

> Les Etats-Unis d'Amérique donnent, en ce moment, au monde un spectacle affligeant pour ceux qui aiment les libres institutions à l'ombre desquelles le peuple américain a accompli de si hautes destinées. Dans la conviction profonde où nous sommes, que le pacte fédéral ne sera point rompu, même apres la secousse qu'il vient de recevoir, nous tirons de ces

> épreuves désolantes un double enseignement et une double consolation, à savoir: que les institutions démocratiques de l'Union se fortifieront dans ces épreuves, et que le sujet de ces discordes regrettables, c'est à dire l'esclavage, entrera dans sa phase d'agonie, sinon d'extinction immédiate. (289)

Lincoln's election signaled the conflict to come; it indicated that slavery would not take a further step in America. "C'est déjà une grande victoire." (292) Eyma stands solidly against slavery; "le rôle raisonnable appartient incontestablement au Nord dans ce conflit." (290) The American Constitution allows slavery, by default, he states, but "Est-ce à dire que la Constitution soit parfaite, et qu'on ne doive pas la modifier?" (297) Slavery is a question of geography, and is preserved "au nom d'un principe économique." (303) Slave owners themselves aren't necessarily partisans of the institution, but

> C'est en effet une question d'économie politique d'une part, d'autre part une question de salut social pour huit ou dix millions de citoyens américains. (304)

The final paragraphs of the appendix reaffirm Eyma's deep feelings for the United States.

> Quel que soit le dénouement qui sorte de cette querelle, si l'Union résiste à cette dangereuse épreuve, nous nous réjouirons moins de voir triompher nos espérances que de voir se perpétuer un peuple dont nous aimons les institutions; si, au contraire, la séparation s'opère, je conserverai la conscience d'avoir écrit un livre où seront consignés les plus grand succès de la démocratie.
>
> Au pis aller, que cette séparation s'opère; au Nord comme au Sud, dans les deux républiques divorcées, le même amour pour la liberté politique, le même esprit d'égalité, les mêmes sentiments qui auront fait pendant trois quarts d'un siècle leur force commune, subsisteront dans l'une et dans l'autre. (344)

La République, then, views America through the medium of her giant historical figures. In them is found a magnification of the spirit which has created such prosperity in the New World. In them, too, are the foundations of the Republic, the principles upon which the American experiment is based. And in the spirit and principles which they represent are found the basis not only of contemporary problems, but of proper solutions to them. The past reveals and is relevant to the present.

Les Trente-Quatre Etoiles de l'Union américaine, another two-volume history of the United States, appeared in 1862. Its subtitle, "Histoire des Etats et des Territoires," indicates its principle of organization: the study moves geographically, state by state or territory by territory, considering the origins and first inhabitants of each; natural resources and geographical importance. Frequently Eyma probes statistics and economic facts in search of the sources of the temper and prosperity of the New World. L'Union, like La République, utilizes a great number of secondary sources.[22]

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[22]Sources include the following: Mémoires et Correspondances de Jefferson; Bancroft's Histoire des Etats-Unis (translation of Mlle. Gatti de Gamond); Mazzei's Recherches historiques et politiques sur les Etats-Unis; P. Lorain's Origine et Fondations des Etats-Unis; Burk's Histoire de la Virginie; Prescott's Histoire du règne de de Philippe II (translation of G. Renson and P. Ithier); F. Gorges' Histoire de la Nouvelle Angleterre; Robbins' Les Pères de la Nouvelle Angleterre; Clarkson's Memoirs of the Private and Public Life of William Penn; Flint's Geography, and many others.

The study is extremely well organized, and illuminating. Eyma attributes current circumstances to historical and geographical fact, hence contributing depth to the reader's knowledge of the United States. Volume I is divided into four books: "Questions Diverses," including considerations of the flag, progress, political influence, and cotton, slavery, and emigration; "Fondation," dealing with the original colonists; "Les Etats de la Nouvelle Angleterre;" and "Les Etats du Centre." Volume II, divided into five books, treats "Un Coin du Sud;" "La Nouvelle France;" "Le Sud;" "L'Ouest et Le Far-West;" and "Les Evénements Contemporains." L'Union covers, then, the entire expanse of the nation, considering geography, resources, industry, history, character, and the influence of one section upon another. For good measure, elements of international concern, and related to resources and industry, are briefly viewed.

A citation from the end of L'Union indicates the intent of the work.

> Le lecteur a pu suivre dans les pages qui précèdent la progression rapide et florissante de cette république qui, de treize colonies réunies en un groupe d'Etats, après la conquête de leur indépendance, a porté à trente-quatre le nombre de ses associés politiques;--qui, du chiffre de 4 millions, a vu sa population s'élever à près de 33 millions d'habitants. (II, 293)

Eyma conceived the work

> sous l'inspiration des déplorables événements qui se passent en Amérique. Le titre suffit a le prouver; et bien que ce titre semble un anachronisme, j'ai tenu à le conserver, moins comme un protestation, que comme l'expression d'un sincère regret. J'aurais

> voulu la perpétuité de l'Union, comme l'ont désirée ceux même qui l'ont brisée, mais à qui la force des événements a commandé d'accepter ce que la raison humaine a été impuissante à empêcher, dès que les exigences politiques, les antipathies d'intérêts, le salut social et le respect du droit eurent parlé. (v)

When writing La République, Eyma states, there was hope of a reconciliation between the North and South. But "L'espoir que nous exprimions, alors, sur la conservation des liens de l'Union est dissipé." (vii) The South has every constitutional right to withdraw from the Union; the North may choose to accept the South on its own terms, with slavery, or face the existence of two nations within the former Union. The North cannot legally and justifiably impose its will upon the South. Lincoln has erred in

> persister aveuglement dans une résistance qui justifiait parfaitement les résolutions extrêmes et énergiques du Sud. (xii)

The reader wonders if Eyma has changed the position he held in La République, where he stated that "le rôle raisonnable appartient incontestablement au Nord." But in the introduction to L'Union, Eyma distinguishes between the approval of slavery and Constitutional rights.

> Ici ce n'est pas la cause de l'esclavage que je défends; c'est celle du bon sens, d'abord, et aussi celle du respect des lois...aucune loi de salut n'a jamais autorisé la violation d'une constitution pour le maintien de laquelle on combat! Jamais le bon sens n'admettra qu'on puisse violer une constitution au respect de laquelle on prétend rappeler des adversaires! M. Lincoln, en abolissant l'esclavage, reconnait de fait la dislocation de l'Union, et délie les Etats du Sud de toute soumission au pacte fédéral; il entreprend purement et simplement la guerre contre une république qu'il tende de conquérir. (xx)

Eyma, then, was not pro-slavery in September of 1861, when this introduction was written, but was against the "aggression" of the North against the South.

Eyma judged, too, that Europe had erred in her policy of nonintervention in the American conflict. This policy was based on a misconception of the cause of the Civil War.

> On a cru, ai-je dit, que ce conflit avait pour cause unique l'esclavage, et sous l'empire du sentiment tres vif d'horreur qu'inspire en Europe cette institution, on a sympathisé, tout d'abord, avec le Nord; pensant que le mieux qu'on put faire était de montrer une indifférence parfaite en cette occasion. (xvii)

Certainly the slavery issue contributed to the conflict. Congress' refusal to consider any of the South's compromise propositions, however, is proof that much more than slavery was involved. Europe should have assumed an American point of view and sought the opposed interests at the root of the conflict. Had she done so, and acted upon her findings,

> L'Europe très grandement engagée et beaucoup plus engagée qu'elle ne le crut; d'abord, dans ce conflit, avait, tout en maintenant la stricte neutralité qu'elle a observée, offert sa médiation bienveillante, à coup sûr on eût évité de faire couler tout le sang qui a déjà rougi le sol de l'Union, sans compter celui qui le rougira encore, avant que la querelle soit vidée. La voix de l'Angleterre et celle de la France eussent été écoutées en Amérique avec le respect qu'elles méritent, et la paix fut sortie de ce généreux arbritage qu'il n'est peut-être pas trop tard pour tenter, en arrivant toutefois sur le terrain où a été transportée la question: le terrain de la séparation. (xiii-xiv)

Eyma indicates that the reserve of the governments of England and France was dictated by respect for public opinion which

was anti-slavery and saw slavery as the sole cause of the American conflict. The misunderstanding

> coûtera cher à l'Europe. Si les sympathies et les antipathies jouent un grand rôle dans les sentiments et dans les jugements réciproques des peuples, les principes du droit, et les intérêts matériels si fort appréciés de notre temps, méritaient bien qu'on en tint compte. On ne l'a pas fait; l'entraînement l'a emporté sur ce qu'on appelle en termes généraux la politique. C'est un malheur dont l'Europe commence à porter la peine. (xvii-xviii)

The true cause of the rupture between the North and the South, Eyma states, is

> Une question de prédominance, une prétention de suprématie de la part du Nord, un point de vue d'égoïsme qui annulait le but déclaré du pacte social des Etats-Unis... (xxii)

For geographical reasons, the North became industrial and the South remained agricultural, creating an "abîme économique entre les deux latitudes." (xxvi) It is this gulf which is the cause of the Civil War.

Nonetheless, Eyma had great hopes for America. He pledges himself against slavery because it is morally wrong, and opposed by generous souls and friends of liberty. Yet he pledges himself for the liberty of the South to operate as she sees fit.

> L'ancienne Union sera dissoute; mais le peuple américain ne périra pas. Il y aura deux républiques... l'une sans esclaves, l'autre avec des esclaves, avec cette différence que le Nord aura de moins qu'auparavant une influence autorisée sur le Sud pour l'amener progressivement à abolir l'esclavage; ce à quoi le Sud était parfaitement résigné...ni la liberté, ni la démocratie n'auront sombré dans cette grande tempête. (xxxvi)...Pour de telles nations, les plus violentes tempêtes sont de salutaires épreuves qui les fortifient, de solennels enseignements qui éclairent leur esprit, élèvent leur âme et affermissent leur moralité. (xxxviii)

Eyma again considers the institution of slavery in the segment of the work devoted to the South. In accordance with the intent of L'Union, he treats the influence of geography upon economics, and economics upon politics. In the southern states the maintenance of slavery relates to "une double question d'économie politique et de salut public." (65) Southern plantations are large, and hence require a large labor force. And because Americans have a strong sentiment of independance and desire for private ownership,

> l'esclave seul peut se plier à être un serviteur dans toute l'acception du mot, comme sa nature seule peut résister aux épreuves du rude climat sous lequel il accomplit son labeur. (65-66)

Therefore slavery, though condemned in principle, is indispensable to the culture and prosperity of the South--a prosperity from which the North profits, also.

Moreover, the Negro, if freed, must be educated into a new way of life, a sense of his own dignity and economic responsibilities. The Negro does not seek his own betterment because he is uneducated.

> L'esclave dans les latitudes du Sud ne représente pas uniquement l'idée de propriété, mais aussi l'idée du développement industriel de tout un pays, et qu'il importe dans ce cas de perpétuer son abaissement. On ne possède pas un esclave pour le plaisir de posséder un homme sur qui on a, sinon le droit absolu de vie ou de mort, du moins le droit de douceur et de cruauté, mais parce que dans cet homme on possède un agent des forces générales, un instrument de travail et de fortune. (68)

Slavery and the economy of the South are inextricably related. The elimination of the institution would require a revamping of southern economy. "Le Sud peut-il devenir

industriel?" considers this problem. Eyma judges that southerners would willingly operate their cotton economy by other than human labor.

> L'esprit essentiellement commercial des Américains leur fera d'un côté comme de l'autre, passer par dessus ces barrières de prohibition mutuelle et d'antagonisme. Tant que le Sud, malgré ses rancunes contre le Nord trouvera à s'y approvisionner à meilleur compte que partout ailleurs d'objets manufacturés, il les puisera dans les fabriques du Nord à qui il importera fort peu que le coton soit cultivé par des bras esclaves ou par des bras libres, pourvu que leurs usines soit amplement alimentées. (I, 83)

Yet nature has dictated the rôle of North and South. Northern states, less fertile in land resources, are condemned "à devenir des centres manufacturiers; comme il est logique que la région du sud soit essentiellement productive. (84) North and South are mutually dependent.

If the South wishes to industrialize, "il faudrait que l'émigration leur apportât un plus large contingent de population." (97) But certain forces militate against this, especially the antipathy of emigrants for slaves. Secondly, land divisions in the South necessarily place great power and prosperity in the hands of the few, and

> l'émigrant se soucie peu en Amérique de travailler pour le compte d'autrui; il ne s'y résigne qu'à la dernière extrémité ou pour entrer en matière si j'osais dire. (97)

Thirdly, the climate of the South is unpleasant. And finally, political intolerance has stopped the small emigration that did exist.

> Le Sud n'est donc pour l'émigrant qu'une terre d'attente; sa terre promise est l'Ouest, quand il a un capital devant lui, et la Nouvelle Angleterre quand il ne possède que des bras industrieux. (99)

It would seem, then, that Eyma did not foresee an industrialized South, and hence a solution to the slavery problem in a renovation of the southern economy. But his approach to, and penetration of, the geography and economics of the Civil War are very enlightening.

Indeed, an intelligent and perceptive handling of facts and figures, economic and geographic, characterizes the entire study. Eyma seldom supplies isolated bits of information. Rather, he relates statistics, events, and all details to a larger whole, placing them in significant relation to some broad spectrum of American life. For example, L'Union includes a considerable number of statistics, but never for their own sake. They are much larger than themselves.

> La statistique joue un grand rôle aux Etats-Unis. Il est difficile qu'il en soit autrement dans un pays sans cesse en enfantement de progrès...La statistique est forcément un côté de l'histoire de la grande République américaine; elle n'y est pas un simple jeu de chiffres et de calculs; elle a des pages qui résument toute la vie de ce pays; elle confirme au verso les faits annotés au recto du feuillet. Tout se résume et tout se découvre dans ces chiffres; aussi bien la politique que le commerce du peuple américain; aussi bien **ses tendances sociales que** le mouvement industriel qui le pousse en avant, et l'avenir des Etats-Unis s'explique par comparaison avec son passé, avec des chiffres autant qu'avec des mots, comme l'importance relative de certains des Etats et de certains des villes de ce vaste pays. Tout se constate par calculs approximatifs.
>
> C'est pourquoi, dans les premières pages de ce livre, le lecteur trouvera autant de chiffres et de calculs que la nature du sujet lui-même nous contraint à y en mettre. (I, 47-48)

Federal income figures measure, states Eyma, the tremendous economic growth and industrial progress of the United States.

> Si nous insistons ici, sur ces questions de détail, c'est qu'elles prouvent les forces vives de ce pays, et que nous y trouvons un argument pour établir les puissantes bases sur lesquelles est assise sa prospérité. (17)

Details of geography are utilized in the same manner. They are of some interest in themselves, and yet their major import rests in the explanations of power and prosperity which they provide. The Northwest, for example, is blessed with rich soil and numerous lakes and streams which permit lively commercial relations with the rest of the Union. And

> relié au Nord par les lacs, et au Sud par les fleuves qui sont comme des grandes routes communes, l'Ouest a un intérêt puissant à ce que le Nord et le Sud demeurent unis. Il sera le trait d'union naturel entre eux; et plus grande sera son influence sur les destinées politiques des Etats-Unis, plus efficace sera son intervention dans les différends entre le Nord et le Sud. (43-44)

Eyma relies, at least to some extent, upon a geographical and climatic interpretation of history. Obviously, geography and climate, in so far as they govern natural resources and hence prosperity, affect the historical progress or retardation of regions. In the case of the United States, however, they have played yet another rôle. They have brought particular immigrants, particular nationalities, into certain territories.

> Chacun d'eux, selon son tempérament, a montré une préférence marquée pour telle ou telle latitude de cette portion de l'Amérique, et y a laissé des traces de son caractère.
>
> Les Hollandais et les Anglais ont choisi le Nord, les Français et les Espagnols le Sud. (107)

Generally these colonizers have left the mark of their temperaments upon the regions they originally inhabited.

The pilgrims, for example, imprinted upon the New World "l'inflexible austérité, je devrais dire le despotisme des pratiques religieuses," and "l'esprit communal." (146) The New Englander was and is characterized by an "industrie fécond en ressources" which has prompted him to

> tracer des routes, à batir des villes, à construire des navires, à fonder des banques, à enseigner l'art de faire fortune et celui de garder cette fortune, mais à la condition qu'on écouterait sa prédication évangélique. (151)

Thus Eyma establishes a chain of cause and effect rooted in geography and climate. Geography and climate attracted particular nationalities to a region; nationalities in turn stamped their temper and spirit on the region; this in turn affected the material growth and prosperity of the area, the economic twists and turns to which different States are subject.

In L'Union Eyma again betrays his strong concern with types and characters. The pilgrim is portrayed as a strong man with a strong back, a big heart, and a Bible in his hand. The people of Connecticut are known "pour la moralité de ses habitudes, et il est véritablement puritain dans la plus sévère acception du mot." (211) Eyma is constantly interested in character, and attempts to type it for each State and territory. Nor does Eyma abandon his interest in the large, expansive figures of American history. For example, talk of Pennsylvania excuses praise of William Penn as

> cet homme éminent, doué d'une grandeur extraordinaire d'esprit d'une conception vaste, remarquable par l'universalité de son savoir, connaissant bien les hommes, familier avec les littératures et les gouvernements; parlant plusieurs langues, connaissant bien les formes et les combinaisons politiques de la France... (I, 292-293)

Eyma devotes three chapters of L'Union to "La Nouvelle France." In "Vieux Souvenirs" he relates the exploration, settlement, divisions and redivisions of New France.[23] But particularly in the segment devoted to the Mississippi and Louisiana, his penchant for Franco-American historical relations appears.

> La ville de Natchez joue un rôle important dans l'histoire de la Louisiane, et le nom dont elle a été baptisée est populaire en France, plus peut-être que le nom d'aucune autre ville d'Amérique. Il est donc juste de trouver place ici pour les faits qui ont provoqué cette popularité dont, aujourd'hui, on ne se doute pas à Natchez. (128)

Of Louisiana Eyma writes,

> nous ne répétons pas, malgré même les souvenirs que réveille ce nom, ce que nous avons dit de la grandeur et la décadence de la France en Amérique, et des diverses transformations que subit la Louisiane dont le sort se trouva lié à celui de la colonie tout entière. (II, 140)

The rôle of France in the New World is naturally of special interest to a French historian of America. In fact, Eyma notes the association of the two countries whenever possible, witness the following.

> Le Michigan est un des vieux souvenirs de la France sur le continent de l'Amérique du Nord. Voisin du

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[23] Much material in this section is repetitive of that found in Légendes, Fantômes, et Récits du Nouveau-Monde relative to Bienville et Iberville.

> Canada, c'est sur son territoire, jadis habité par la grande et célèbre tribu des Hurons, que les fondateurs de la Nouvelle France posèrent le pied pour franchir ensuite cette immense étendue de terres et de fleuves qui les conduisit à l'embouchure du Mississippi. Des premières conquêtes de la France sur la nature dans ce pays, il ne reste plus que des souvenirs. (II, 273)

It would seem that Eyma takes special pleasure in delineating outstanding national figures of French descent. So it is with General Beauregard,

> un Créole de la Louisiane, et par conséquent d'origine française. Il a toutes les qualités de sa race, restée comme un type éminemment distingué dans le Sud. Le général en est un des échantillons les plus remarquables au physique comme au moral. (II, 333)[24]

Somehow the French origin of such men sheds a bit of glory on France.

Finally, Eyma's literary penchants are very evident in L'Union. The work opens on a symbolic note.

> Le titre de cet ouvrage est le drapeau américain lui-même. On connait ce drapeau...on sait que chacune des étoiles qu'il porte dans ses plis, représente l'un des États de la grande confédération républicaine de l'Amérique du Nord. Trente-quatre étoiles y brillent présentement. D'autres constellations attendent le moment, probablement tres prochain, où elles se fixeront à ce firmament flottant aux quatre vents du monde...
>
> Jusque dans leur drapeau, cet emblème sacré, ce morceau du coeur de la nation, les Américains du Nord avaient montré leur esprit d'indépendance, oubliant le sentiment d'union qui a fait leur force. (I, 7-8)

Eyma expressly utilizes the flag as symbol of the unique nature of the United States, her variety within unity. His

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[24] Eyma's correspondance indicates that he knew Beauregard personally.

diction gives the flag a poetic quality.

Eyma's rhetoric on superior men betrays his idealism, his captivation with great figures, and the effects of poetic imagination on style and subject.

> Les hommes d'un ordre supérieur, appelés à jouer à l'égard des peuples le rôle du saveur providentiel, ne peuvent pas avoir les mêmes destinées que le commun. Il leur faut subir de longues épreuves, qui, d'ailleurs, fortifient leur coeur, bronzent leur intelligence, et leur apprennent le dur métier de la patience et de la confiance en leur propre valeur. C'est pourquoi il est toujours permis de bien augurer d'un homme qui doué d'une âme fière, d'une forte intelligence, se montre tout d'abord soumis, humble, résigné aux accès de haine et d'envie qu'il ameute autour de lui...quand son heure sera venue,les timides lui tendront les bras, les ambitieux courberont le genou devant lui. (I, 122-123)

Eyma transforms great men into Christ figures, endowing them with mythological, poetic proportions.

Eyma poetically envisions the sight which greeted the first colonists. Could their eyes penetrate

> à travers ces terres inconnues et attendire des bords de l'Atlantique aux côtes du Pacifique... Le Far-West a été comme ces horizons que dessine en pleine mer à l'oeil du voyageur, la jonction illusoire du ciel avec les flots, et qui semblent marquer le terme du voyage. A mesure que le navire s'en approche, cet horizon s'éloigne; on se trouve au point où le regard s'arrêtait tout à l'heure comme à la limite extrême du monde... derrière ces brouillards insondables, se dresse tout à coup la terre qu'on poursuit, et le mystère disparaît. Ainsi en a-t-il été du Far-West en Amérique: il a reculé devant la civilisation, à chaque pas que faisait celle-ci. (II, 173-174)

The simile lends a certain romantic grandeur to the American continent.

A literary, romantic nostalgia pervades certain passages of the work. In the case of the Western states,

> Leur passé véritable est inconnu, nul monument sauf les ruines de Chillicotte, n'existe pour le raconter; il s'est éteint avec les tribus indiennes, qui elles-mêmes l'ignoraient; ou plutôt ce passé perdu dans les forêts vierges de l'Ouest a disparu avec ces forêts qui ont été éventrées par la hache du pionnier, la charrue du laboureur, et la locomotive, comme les fleuves, autres confidents du passé de ces mystérieuses regions se sont ouverts devant le steamboat, ce symbole ailé de la civilisation américaine.
>
> Les génies de ces forêts et de ces fleuves se sont enfuis au bruit des sifflets de la vapeur, et les traces de leurs pas sur le sol de l'Ouest ont été à jamais effacées. (II, 291)

Happily, and yet sadly, the innocence and virginity of the American continent have evaporated before the foreward thrust of the American people. And this innocence and virginity is enhanced, if not created, by a poetic, romantic imagination with a creative, literary penchant.

It is interesting to consider Eyma's histories in light of his conception of the historian's task. In a biographical notice on William Prescott, Eyma states,

> La conduite du présent, si elle ne dépend pas absolument du passé, car il faut faire dans la comparaison une large place à l'esprit des temps, la conduite du présent, disons-nous, dépend, en effet, dans une certaine mesure, de cette connaissance du passé. Il s'ensuit que tout historien, pour être utile à ses citoyens, doit être un philosophe. Le récit ne suffit plus; il importe que l'enseignement l'accompagne. C'est d'ailleurs là le trait caractéristique des écoles historiques contemporaines.[25]

Certainly Eyma attempted to explain his contemporary America in terms of the nation's past; to account for institutions

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[25]"Notice Biographique sur William Prescott," Essais de Biographie et de Critique by William Prescott, II (Paris, Firmin Didot, 1864), 294.

and customs by reference to the American heritage; to find in the past a cure for the failings of the present; to seek lessons and inspiration in the lives and character of great historical figures. He approves, moreover, of the historian's influence on the reader through an implicitely expressed feeling for his subject. He praises Prescott for this.

> Il obtient ce résultat précieux par une très grande circonspection et une très grande impartialité dans la manière de présenter les événements, par un soin poussé jusqu'au scrupule dans le choix des faits qu'il apporte à l'appui de sa discussion, par un tact rare à distinguer les preuves des présomptions.[26]

Eyma's diction and rhetoric reveal his enthousiasm for his subject, his feeling for the United States. He praises Prescott for his "enthousiasme pour les grands côtés du coeur humain;"[27] the same can be said of Eyma. But

> La qualité dominante d'un historien doit être l'art du récit, sans lequel il peut être un savant, mais non complètement un historien. Prescott possède cet art à un haut degré; il sait grouper les faits avec l'habilité d'un dramaturge...[28]

Eyma, too, possessed this "dominant quality." In both Légendes and La République we noted a curious blend of fact and drama which lend an added dimension to historical events. Eyma, then, wrote his histories of the United States in the correct and required manner, given the rôle of the historian.

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[26]"Notice," p. 295.

[27]"Notice," p. 301.

[28]"Notice," p. 310.

Eyma's histories are written, in fact, in the nineteenth-century historical tradition. Eyma is, once again, the imitator rather than the innovator, working within an accepted tradition. Romantic historical thinking glorified nations, but "the historical writings of the Romanticists frequently became little more than a collection of biographies."[29] Individuals were glamorous to them, and biography was readily adapted to literary flights. Historians operated on what might be called a "great man" theory. Laws, institutions, literature and government were attributed to the "genius" of a nation; national character was the product of the art, literature, laws and institutions of the people.[30]

The Romantic school of history in France began with Chateaubriand, whose writings, though unhistorical, were accepted as factual. Exemplary of the school are Michaud, who in his History of the Crusades explains the sentiments out of which the crusades grew, and recalls the heroism they evoked; and Barante, who felt that historians fail because they insist on judging the past in terms of the standards of their own time. Barante brought people to life, and allowed the reader to draw his own conclusions. "'I have tried to restore to history the interest that the historical novel has borrowed from it.'"[31]

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[29] H.E. Barnes, A History of Historical Writing (Norman, 1938), p. 179.

[30] Barnes, p. 180.

[31] Quoted in G.P. Gooch, History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century (London, New York, 1952), p. 167.

When history is treated as romantic art, individual experience strongly and primarily influences history; therefore human character must be portrayed and evaluated. Sir Walter Scott taught historians that bygone ages had been filled with living men whom history must take into account. Ideally, the representative man was the incarnation of the People, representing national ideals and acting in the name of the people. He also represented progress, great moral principles, and ideal virtues. He had a certain loftiness, a grandeur which isolated him from the rest of humanity. He was schooled in simplicity, moderate passions, responsibility, reticence, suffering, and endurance. George Bancroft and others believed that

> history was the unfolding of a vast Providential plan, and the laws of the moral world were the links between the ages...the historian had a didactic as well as artistic duty to arrange apparently disconnected events in their proper order.[32]

The proper subject of history was an interesting narrative on a grand theme

> in which a varied group of remarkable, vigorous characters acted heroically on the largest possible stage. The grand theme involved the origins of a nation (preferably, in some way, America), the progress of Liberty in her battle against absolutism, the conquest of a continent, or all of these. It included, if possible, some "poetic"--that is, melancholy--incidents. The scenery had to include something of the picturesque, and as much of the sublime as possible.[33]

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[32]David Levin, History as Romantic Art (Stanford, 1959), p. 26.

[33]Levin, p. 11.

Eyma's histories of the United States incorporate all of these elements. Like his fellow historians, he was concerned with national "genius" and its effects upon people and institutions. His histories are laced with biographies which amply illustrate the "great man" theory. He insists on the application of contemporary, native standards in judgments of people and events. He frequently evokes the picturesque and sublime in his rhetoric. And the rôle of providence is seldom, if ever, absent from his evaluations of the New Eden. In sum, Eyma's histories are representative of the dominant trends in nineteenth-century historical writing. And small wonder, given the abundance of sources upon which he based his studies. Eyma was obviously an astute student, a prodigious reader, of history.

Légendes, La République, and L'Union each saw but one edition. In the case of the latter two, this isn't surprising; the progress and resolution of the Civil War immediately dated much of their material. In terms of the French image of America and Eyma's contribution to that image, the conjunction of the publication of these works with the Civil War is significant. For just as the "deplorable events" in America prompted Eyma to write these histories, so the same events stimulated interest in America, and therefore in works relative to her. Of even greater import, however, are the repetitions of information, in the histories, from one another and from the travelogues. Repeated information on education, women, travel, politics, slavery, and

great national figures suggests that Eyma's comments may have reached a fairly wide cross-section of the French reading public. The histories, by their very nature, would appeal to serious students of American affairs. The travelogues, such as Scènes de Moeurs and La Vie aux Etats-Unis, would appeal to the merely curious, if not to others. Further, much of the same information appeared in the popular journal, L'Illustration, reaching yet a third audience. Significantly, all audiences - the scholarly, the curious, and the journal devotée - were in many instances receiving the same information and image, in adapted form. One might say that there was a bit of Eyma for everyone. It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that Eyma's America influenced, in part, the image of America held by a diverse segment of the French public.

CHAPTER VIII

AMERICAN ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE

The artistic and intellectual life of the United States was of concern to L. Xavier Eyma, as one might expect, given his historical and literary background and inclinations. In keeping with all of his commentary, Eyma sought not only surface manifestations of creative and intellectual vitality in America, but attempted to evaluate failures and sterility in terms of the nation's origins, and the demands imposed upon her in the creation of the New Eden. Eyma's commentary on literature and the arts is relatively brief. His interest in American cultural life was intense, but his comments were necessarily abbreviated; artistic activity had not flowered in America.

The extent of his interest in American letters is indicated by his translations of Washington Irving and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Though the progress of the arts in America was retarded, the new nation had produced works of merit, valuable to the New and the Old World alike. Eyma would seem to do France a service by calling to her attention, and making available to her, the best of American literature. In the process, he reveals something of himself, and something of French taste and expectations.

Eyma's most extensive comments on "L'Etat Intellectuel et Moral des Etats-Unis" are found in Les Deux Amériques, and repeated in La Republique américaine, ses institutions, ses hommes.[1] Eyma first notes that education has enhanced and strengthened American political life, but has operated less profitably in the development of the arts. Europe, however, has been unduly ignorant of artistic developments in the New World;

> la renommée d'aucune oeuvre saillante n'a traversé l'Atlantique, et bien que des travaux considérables en matière politique ou d'économie sociale, en philosophie, en controverse religieuse aient souvent joué un grand rôle et souvent agité les esprits en Amérique, on peut affirmer qu'ils sont restés, pour la plupart, presqu'inconnus en Europe, et surtout en France. Quelques livres de littérature, et notamment des romans, puis des ouvrages historiques ont triomphé, grâce à leur éclat, de l'indifférence, et projeté chez nous leurs vives lueurs; mais cette heureuse exception n'en laisse pas moins la littérature américaine dans l'ombre. (236)

Eyma's comments and translations would remedy, to some small extent, this dearth of knowledge.

The causes of ignorance of American arts and letters inhere first of all in the nation herself.

> Les Américains n'ont pas, à proprement dire, une littérature à eux. Ce n'est, pourtant, ni l'intelligence des masses, ni l'absence d'instruction,

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[1] Les Deux Amériques (Paris: Giraud, 1853); La Republique américaine, Ses Institutions, Ses Hommes (Paris: Michel Lévy 1861) pp. 236-246. Works cited are those of Eyma unless otherwise indicated. Page numbers following quotations refer to the work under discussion. In this instance, quotations are drawn from La République.

> ni le goût et le respect pour les arts qui leur ont manqué. Ce fait tient à des causes sérieuses, d'un ordre élevé, et qui remontent à la fondation même des colonies anglaises dans cette partie du Nouveau-Monde. (237)

Utilizing Tocqueville's De la Démocratie en Amérique, Eyma types the first colonists: men of a single social class; more intelligent that the European masses; well educated. Their goal, the end of their enterprise, became their most salient characteristic: the sacrifice of the comforts of the mother country in pursuit of an ideal and the realization of an idea.

> Cette idée était tout entière renfermée dans ces deux principes dont ils recherchaient les bienfaits et le triomphe: la liberté religieuse et la démocratie. (238)

The total energy and ardeur of these men was channeled into religion; "pour faire triompher cette idée, toute leur gloire dans le présent, toute leur foi dans l'avenir." (238) Unfortunately, the first colonists, though having suffered intolerance, became intolerant of those outside their creed; as a result,

> toute l'intelligence de ce petit peuple s'écoula par cette voie; et, des l'origine, les livres de religion et de philosophie batailleuse furent les seuls que produisit l'Amérique. (238)

The intellectual movement in America was centered in these controversies, producing remarkable writers who merited but a passing glory. Even in his day, Eyma states, the best intellects are exhausted in these sterile battles. He cites Jonathan Edwards, Newmann, Eliot, Cotton Mather, Jonathan

Mayhew, Samuel Johnson, and Dr. Hopkins as theological minds of the first order; and Styles, Ballamy, Dwight, and Dr. Chalmers

> qui, s'il avait eu...l'ambition d'être un écrivain purement littéraire, aurait atteint aux plus hautes destinées. (239)

Among modern philosophers Eyma gives first rank to Alexanders, Albert Barnes, George Bush, Samuel Farmer Jarvis, Andrew Norton, Henry Tappan, and James Marsh.

Fanaticism and admiration, for either the past or present, catalyze creativity. In America, however, these two agents have been channeled into a religious idea, "non plus théorique (ce qui aurait pu créer la poésie), mais essentiellement pratique et militante." (240) Only the present and the future interest Americans; and dreams fail to generate literature because they are directed toward purely material ends.

English origins are another deterent to the development of arts and letters in America. Those who have the leisure for study and scholarship need but turn to England for satisfaction; for they share both the same language and an enthusiasm for great English literary figures. A shared language

> est encore aujourd'hui, l'obstacle le plus grave contre l'établissement d'une littérature originale aux Etats-Unis.
>
> Les premiers écrivains qui y sont nés ont eu pour modèles des écrivains anglais, et ils n'avaient pas la ressource, comme en Europe on l'a fait pour l'antiquité, d'innover dans leurs imitations, au moyen de la forme, de la langue et même des moeurs. (240)

Americans will always be English in their literary tendencies.

> Et plus ils s'élèveront par l'élégance, par le style, par le choix des sujets, par toutes les qualités enfin de l'écrivain, plus ils se rapprocheront de la littérature anglaise et moins ils parviendront à fonder une littérature originale. (240-241)

Eyma's predictions for an indigenous American literature are certainly not optimistic! He implies, it would seem, that English literature had fully realized the potential of the language, leaving American writers no room for improvement or superiority.

Because the American idiom is a corruption of the native tongue, men of letters separate themselves from the commonly spoken and written English of Americans, and thereby

> ils condamnent eux-mêmes l'oeuvre qu'ils voudraient créer. La meilleure preuve en est dans cette préoccupation qui les domine tous, du jugement que porteront sur eux les critiques de l'Angleterre. Ils écrivent plus pour leur ancienne métropole que pour leur propre pays. (241)

What, then, is left the American author as American? Because he can only hope to imitate and equal the style and elegance of English men of letters, it would seem that originality is possible only in an indigenous subject-matter. Yet Eyma indicates that American society militates against this possibility. An imaginative literature, he states, is impossible in the United States.

> La constitution de la société américaine, société froide, austère, uniforme, où les élans dramatiques manquent, où tout est simple, où rien n'est extérieur, arrête l'écrivain et ne peut pas inspirer le poète. (241)

As remarked previously, Eyma judges that even love, "cet éternel élément de tous les drames," (241) as a literary theme is obviated by the absence of class distinctions resulting in intermarriages among classes.

Only Cooper, Eyma continues, has absorbed the elements which were able to "servir cette cause sans espoir." (242) And Cooper is the

> Homère et le Thucydide de l'Amérique. Rien, ou presque rien, ne restait plus à glaner, après lui, des sujets nationaux. Il n'a crée que des imitateurs. (242)

In a sense, the limitation Eyma here places on national subjects is surprising. Eyma was fascinated and captivated by the variety in American nature and the extraordinary in American life. He indicated that one could return to America again and again, always discovering some unsuspected corner, some enchanting custom. And yet he felt that Cooper had exhausted America's indigenous literary possibilities. This seeming contradiction may indicate a lack of imagination on Eyma's part, a prejudice with respect to subjects properly literary.

Washington Irving follows Cooper in the ranks of American men of letters. Eyma praises Irving for his "esprit fin et délicat" (242) and his use of the "brillant et de fantaisie." But America did not inspire Irving; rather, "presque toutes lui viennent du dehors," save some "chroniques melées de fantastique." (242) In other words, Irving was not distinctively American from Eyma's point of view.

Both Cooper and Irving,

> qui tiennent à coup sûr la tête de la littérature américaine, se rapprochent, en tout cas, par la forme, par le style, de la littérature anglaise. Ils ne sont qu'un écho, tout en étant un son, si je puis m'exprimer ainsi. (242)

Eyma, then, measures American literary figures against English, and finds the former but an echo of the latter.

America has, however, produced some few distinguished men of letters: Brockden Brown, who has some originality because of his "esprit morose et chagrin qui vivait dans un monde idéal et tout à fait à lui;" Simms, "écrivain vraiment distingué;" Kennedy, whose talent is much like Irving's; Dana, who wrote mainly of travel; Paulding, "un écrivain humoriste et original;" and Poe, "esprit éminent." (242) Among women Eyma notes Miss Sedgwick and her A New England Tale, Redwood, Clarence, and Hope Leslie, all "très lus et très goûtés;" Mrs. Chili, who united grace and imagination;[2] and, of course, Mrs. Beecher Stowe "dont le nom a acquis une popularité européenne." (242)

The authors whom Eyma singles out as representative literary figures reveal something of Eyma, and something of the fortunes of a foreign literature in a receiving nation. What do we know, today, of Simms, Kennedy, Dana, Sedgwick, or Chili? What place do they hold in the spectrum of American

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[2]Mrs. Chili's absolute obscurity is substantiated by her absence from The Oxford Companion to American Literature.

literature? These are figures of minor literary importance, yet known to Eyma and found worthy of his notice. Because Eyma happened to be aware of these writers, he introduced them, at least by name, to his French audience. These writers represented, to some extent, American literature to Eyma's readers. Their conception, then, of American letters was limited by the happenstance of Eyma's knowledge and comments. American literature in France is not American literature in America; by necessity, its dislocation from the broader spectrum of American letters creates potential distortions and misconceptions.

Eyma's selection of these figures is understandable in terms of his conception of literature, as drawn from his own works of fiction. The Dana whom he mentions is no doubt Richard Henry Dana (1815-1882), whose Two Years Before the Mast won immediate popularity. Eyma's own sea experience, and his association with the Ministry of the Marine, may have attracted him to Dana's works. Much of Eyma's own fiction dealing with "aventuriers et corsaires" indicates his a priori interest in sea stories. William Gilmore Simms (1806-1870) made his reputation with romances of the frontier and South Carolina history. He dealt also with Spanish backgrounds. His two great themes, the frontier and the Revolution, earned him the title of the Southern Cooper. In him, then, Eyma found history and indigenous subject-matter; the attraction was natural to Eyma the historian and admirer of America. James Kirke Paulding (1778-1860)

was stimulated by Irving's History of New York, and consequently wrote The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan. Because Eyma was pleased by Irving's History, he would find Paulding's work of interest, also. Moreover, Paulding was a Jeffersonian in his social creed, and attempted to deal with all phases of American life; on both counts, Eyma would find him compatible. Catherine Maria Sedgwick (1789-1867) depicted the simple domestic virtues of the American home. She, like Eyma, considered these to be the safeguard of the American republic. A New England Tale and Redwood illustrate her moral beliefs; Hope Leslie treats the early colonists and Indian captivities and massacres; Clarence depicts two sorts of girls, one adventurous and the other sensible.[3] We have noted Eyma's interest in moral beliefs, the early colonists, Indians, and human conduct. Miss Sedgwick's works would obviously receive his approval. Eyma's own literary taste; his conception of literature as didactic; and his strong interest in American history may have dictated his selection of meritorious, and therefore notable, American literary figures. In the rôle of intermediary, Eyma and his personal taste and preconceptions bore an indirect influence on French knowledge of American literature.

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[3]Information on these authors is drawn from J.D.Hart, ed. The Oxford Companion to American Literature (New York, 1956).

Eyma judges that Americans have found "une veine glorieuse" in historical studies, "le trait littéraire saillant des Etats-Unis." (242-243) American historians are noted and popular in Europe, Eyma states; and justly so.

> L'Europe a sans doute des rivaux, mais non pas des supérieurs à opposer aux Prescott, aux Bancroft, aux Motley, aux Sparks, aux Ticknor, aux Everett, aux Marshall. Toutes les formes élevées que la science, l'esprit de critique et d'analyse, la philosophie, peuvent revêtir pour se produire au monde, ces éminents historiens les ont prises. L'histoire reste donc, quant à présent, le titre glorieux des Américains dans les speculations intellectuelles et littéraires. (243)

Eyma's bibliography in La République and L'Union indicates that he spoke knowledgably; his sources indicate his genuine admiration and knowledge of American historians.

Poetry and drama fare poorly in American, Eyma states.

> Il faut dire que ces deux branches de la littérature d'où sortent d'ordinaire les oeuvres qui caractérisent une époque n'ont même pas fourni d'essais assez heureux pour qu'on puisse en marquer les traces. (243)

Passion is necessary to drama; reveries and the aspirations of the soul arise in poetry. Unfortunately,

> la constitution de la société ne permet pas la passion; les rêves et toutes les molles langueurs de l'âme y sont comme interdites. Je ferai une exception en faveur de M. Longfellow qui dans tous les pays eut été un grand poète. (243)

The didactic element in Longfellow's poetry may have won Eyma's approval and praise.

Where poetry does not exist, painting, sculpture, and music cannot thrive.

> La poésie peut dans un siècle s'amoindrir chez les écrivains, elle se réfugie alors dans les arts; mais là où elle est impossible, les arts ne peuvent non plus la découvrir. (244)

American has produced painters and sculptors, Eyma states, but they all lack

> ce souffle créateur, cette inspiration puissante qui imprègnent la toile et le marbre du signe de la force. (244)

In Washington, "ce gigantesque corps sans âme, oeuvre d'une architecture batarde," (244) statues and paintings abound. Yet "Ce sont des tentatives, des essais sans résultat, incapables d'éveiller aucun écho pour l'avenir." (244) Eyma cites, for the sake of completeness, Greenough, West, and Leslie; yet his ultimate evaluation is devastating.

> Je ne crois pas que jamais en Amérique naisse une école de peinture ou de sculpture qui marque dans l'histoire des arts. (244)

As for music: "la stérilité est complète."

In architecture, Americans know only imitations of the Greek and Gothic. Catholic churches are generally of Gothic design and "d'un bout à l'autre de l'Union se ressemblent." (244) Their distinctive characteristic is the ugly red brick with which they are constructed, from top to bottom. The Greek orders are used in all other monuments, religious or otherwise. "Qui en a vu un les a vus tous; ils ne diffèrent entre eux que par les proportions qui sont généralement colossales." (245) However, Eyma finds old buildings to be of value and interest, implying that Americans would do well to seek native expression in architecture, as in the other arts.

> Ces constructions, qui datent d'avant l'indépendance, ont un caractère tout à fait particulier, et sont bien supérieures à toutes les pâles imitations du Parthénon et autres temples grecs dont l'ère de la liberté a doté les Etats-Unis. (245)

In closing his considerations of the cultural and intellectual side of American life, Eyma emphasizes that neither the government nor the American people has retarded the progress of the arts. Rather, the social mission of the United States has necessarily distracted her from artistic concerns.

> Or les arts sont un besoin pour les nations arrivées à l'apogée de la civilisation, et qui peuvent, même au milieu des troubles et des désordres passagers, les voir fleurir et prospérer encore; mais ils seraient une entrave pour celles qui doivent chaque jour travailler à répandre cette civilisation; qui ont devant elles et tout autour d'elles, des déserts à peupler, des nations nouvelles à initier aux bienfaits d'une liberté régulière.
>
> La moindre halte dans ce travail incessant pourrait ramener la barbarie sur ce sol dont la destinée est si grande dans l'avenir; mais à la condition que le peuple américain, calme devant les populations déjà aguerries et initiées aux mystères de la démocratie, se tiendra toujours sur le qui-vive vis-à-vis des populations neuves et dont la turbulence a besoin d'être surveillée. (245-256)

The creation and stabilization of the New Eden properly takes precedence over artistic consideration; the arts are the flower of an established civilization. Yet even a developed and matured America will create a native literature only with great difficulty, if at all, given her English origins and shared language.

Eyma, like his compatriots, was fascinated by James Fenimore Cooper. Writing Cooper's death notice for L'Illustration, Eyma calls him

> le célèbre romancier, celui qu'on a appelé le Walter Scott américain, et dont tout le monde a lu les oeuvres si pleines d'intérêt, d'action et de pittoresque.[4]

Having recounted Cooper's early life, Eyma notes that The Spy gave "une impulsion extraordinaire à la littérature américaine," but does not elaborate. He praises The Pilot as "à coup sûr une des oeuvres d'imagination les plus remarquables des temps modernes," and written in competition with Scott's Pirate. In Europe, Cooper's reputation was as widespread as that of Scott. The weakness of Cooper's last works, Eyma states, does not dim his other beautiful compositions wherein imagination, character, and sociology play dominant rôles. Significantly, Eyma the European, with aristocratic tastes and hence a love of the Virginian "race", praises Cooper the man for his exquisite manners, his high character, and his finesse and distinction of mind, all of which promoted and eased his introduction into aristocratic European salons.

> En résumé, Cooper est une des gloires littéraires de ce siècle, et il occupe un rang important non-seulement dans la littérature un peu stérile de son pays, mais encore dans la littérature d'imagination de tous les pays. (224)

Eyma found in Cooper the same strengths as did other Frenchmen. Cooper the man, because fairly sophisticated, was acceptable in French circles. Cooper the novelist was reminiscent of Sir Walter Scott, of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, of Chateaubriand. Cooper shared with these French literary

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[4] XVIII (October 2-9, 1851), 223-224.

figures a common undertone of sadness; yet he maintained originality in his treatment of nature, viewed with a certain distant respect as opposed to the sensual quality evoked by the French. His novels represented the American realization of the "rêve exotique" with a simple, positive, practical allure.[5] Cooper, in other words, blended with the French literary tradition of his time, and filled a need which French literature and civilization had failed to satisfy. It is not extraordinary, therefore, that Eyma found him pleasing.

On February 3, 1849, in L'Illustration, appeared Eyma's translation of Washington Irving's "L'Art de Fabriquer les Livres," drawn from the Sketchbook.[6] We remember that Eyma praised Irving's "French" characteristics in Scènes de moeurs et de voyages. In a preface to "L'Art de Fabriquer les Livres," Eyma compares Irving to Cooper and attempts to account for Irving's lesser success in France.

> Washington Irving a moins d'imagination que l'auteur des Mohicans, il a moins de cet extérieur qui charme et séduit la masse des lecteurs. (358)

The "extérieur" which seduced the French was no doubt the American setting, the local color found in Cooper. Irving, on the other hand, drew his inspiration from outside the United States. From Eyma's point of view, Irving's talent offers definite compensations.

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[5] See Margaret Gibb, Le Roman de Bas-de-Cuir (Paris, 1927).

[6] Washington Irving, "L'Art de Fabriquer les Livres," translation of L. Xavier Eyma, L'Illustration, XII (February 3, 1849).

> Il possède incontestablement des qualités bien supérieures...Finesse d'esprit, observation sûre, philosophie douce mais un peu railleuse, style élégant, simple, varié et facile, tels sont les caractères principaux de cet écrivain. Homme de fantaisie, mais de fantaisie sage, s'il est possible de le dire, et craintif en quelque sorte dans cette voie où l'imagination peut tout oser; cherchant au bout du fantastique même, la raison et des leçons pour l'humanité. (358)

Small wonder, then, that Eyma admired Irving, especially given the lessons which Eyma found in his work! Irving's efforts meet the didactic ends of literature.

Irving and Eyma share yet another common interest: that of adventure. Eyma calls Irving a

> voyageur intrépide et passionnément épris du mouvement et du renouvellement des sites, des panoramas, des moeurs et des caractères des peuples, comme il le dit lui-même, ses oeuvres sont la plupart le reflet d'impressions puisées hors de son pays natal; il ne semble pas qu'il ait rien écrit dans le silence du cabinet. (358)

This might have been written, of course, of Eyma himself.

The titles which Eyma brings to his readers' attention are Les Contes de l'Allambrah, l'Album de Geffrey Crayon, Voyages dans les Montagnes Rocheuses; Knickerbocker History of New York, "une histoire moitié pittoresque, moitié fantastique...où la verve abonde, où l'esprit déborde;" Salmigondis, "où le style de Sterne, la manière d'Hoffman, la délicatesse d'Addison et la sensibilité de Goldsmith se confondent;" l'Histoire de Christophe Colomb, "grandes et belles pages," Bracebridge Hall, "étude complète et spirituelle des moeurs anglaises;" and the Chronique de la Conquête de Grenade. Most popular of all in England and

America, Eyma notes, is the Album de Geffrey Crayon, from which "L'Art de Fabriquer les Livres" is drawn. In it, Irving seeks revenge against English criticism and sarcasm.

> Ces pages ont quelque chose de si bien applicable à nos littérateurs d'aujourd'hui, en France, et nous leur avons trouvé un air d'apropos et d'actualité si évident, que nous nous sommes donné le plaisir de nous faire l'écho de cette satire de bon goût, et pleine de convenance en même temps que d'esprit. (359)

In "L'Art," then, Eyma found instruction for the French. Because it deals, in humorous fashion, with plagiarism from the old authors, one assumes that Eyma saw a need, in France, for a renewal of the sources of literature. Irving's style, simplicity, imagination and didacticism pleased Eyma. Coupled with a lesson applicable to Eyma's contemporaries, small wonder that he chose to translate "L'Art de Fabriquer les Livres."

In a death notice on Irving, Eyma draws further attention to "le plus charmant à coup sûr et le plus justement populaire de tous leurs (Americans') écrivains."[7] Here Eyma lists Contes d'un Voyageur; the Money-Diggers; Astoria, the Rocky Mountains, and Légendes de la Conquête de l'Espagne, "et nombre d'autres volumes que les lecteurs de goût de tous les pays trouvaient trop rares." (435) Eyma enjoyed the work of Irving on two counts: for its style, and for its subject-matter. Eyma the traveler, Eyma the historian, and Eyma the student of America who would certainly be fascinated by such titles as Tales of a Traveller and Astoria.

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[7] L'Illustration, XXXIV (December 24,1859), 435.

Eyma also translated Irving's Rip van Winkle, The Spectre Bridegroom, and The Conquest of Grenada. Translations of Rip van Winkle appeared in Les Peaux Rouges, in Scènes de moeurs et de Voyages, and in Les Deux Amériques. The relationship of Irving's story to Eyma's studies is at best vague, and at worst suggests that Eyma used the story as filler. But that Eyma chose to translate Rip is understandable. His interest in both fantasy and history would attract him to the story. And Eyma judged the whole of the History of New York an "oeuvre de satire et d'esprit... pages immortelles."[8] Such a work deserved the attention of French readers. The Spectre Bridegroom was included in Les Deux Manoirs.[9] Eyma doesn't credit the work to Irving. But his choice of it for translation is consonant with our knowledge of Eyma and French literature. Eyma himself used gothic elements in his work, and Germany as a romantic, gothic setting was in vogue in France. Therefore The Spectre Bridegroom would appeal to both Eyma and the French public. Finally, Eyma did a full-volume translation of Irving's Conquest of Grenada, and for equally obvious reasons.[10] Fascination with early civilizations, their splendor and

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[8] L'Illustration, p. 435.

[9] Paris: Lécrivain et Toubon, 1860).

[10] Washington Irving, La Conquête de Grenade. trans. L. Xavier Eyma (Paris, 1865).

decadence, abounded in mid-nineteenth-century France. Eyma himself was influenced by the "rêve exotique," and by the allure of historical primitivism. Naturally, then, The Conquest, emphasizing the barbarity of Christian conquerors, the prejudice and ignorance of the court, and the heroism of Moorish leaders, mingled with exotic descriptions of the Alhambra and the dress and dreams of the Moors, would captivate Eyma and suggest the profitable presentation of such a work to a French public avid of romantic history.

Eyma turned his attentions to the philosophical, Transcendental aspect of American letters in his translations of Emerson's Essai sur la Nature[11] and Lois de la Vie.[12] In an introduction to Essai sur la Nature entitled "Etude sur la vie et les oeuvres d'Emerson," Eyma indicates that Emerson has not received the deserved attention of Europeans.

> Voici un écrivain dont la réputation en Amérique a acquis de très grandes proportions, et qui est encore à peine connu de ce côté-ci de l'Atlantique. (i)

Mssrs. Hedouin and Montégut have noted him, but his name is still obscure in France. This is not surprising, Eyma states, given the "inconcevable étourderie" (ii) of which certain newspapers are guilty relative to the more popular Washington Irving.

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[11] Ralph Waldo Emerson, Essai sur la nature, trans. L. Xavier Eyma (Paris: A. Lacroix, Verboeckhoven, 1865).

[12] _____, Lois de la Vie, trans. L. Xavier Eyma (Paris: A. Lacroix, Verboeckhoven, N.d.)

> Emerson est, il faut le dire, l'antipode de Washington Irving. Autant celui-ci est clair, limpide, accessible à tous les esprits, autant l'auteur des Representative Men est, dans la sphère élevée où il se meut, obscur, étrange parfois, intraduisible d'une langue dans l'autre.
>
> Original évidemment, mais de plus ayant étudie à l'être; éffleurant les hauteurs où planent seuls les hommes de génie, y touchant souvent et souvent s'en éloignant; souverainement dédaigneux des sentiers battus, prodigieusement savant, mais tirant de la science qu'il possède le parti qui lui convient, c'est à dire n'en faisant aucun cas, à l'occasion; préoccupé toujours de l'idée mère de son oeuvre, mais insouciant de la forme, de la méthode, des détails; diffus et concis; ayant beaucoup de la bonhomie de notre Montaigne; éloquent, satirique, simple et ampoulé, grondeur et indulgent; excentrique et raisonnable, rêveur et pratique tout à la fois; affectant un grand mépris pour les foules, les voulant éclairées, cependant, et y travaillant par ses prédications; sceptique et croyant; panthéiste et déiste en même temps; ayant une horreur énergique de tous préjugés, de toutes superstitutions; poussant l'homme à l'adoration de l'esprit et rejetant le culte de la matière qu'il considère comme l'esclave de l'intelligence; ayant une foi profonde dans les forces, dans les ressources et dans la volonté de l'homme, et, conséquemment, n'admettant ni l'ascetisme, ni cette abdication qu'on appelle le désespoir; admirateur passionné de la nature, la comprenant, la décrivant avec l'enthousiasme d'un poète, la profondeur d'un philosophe, la précision d'un savant doublé d'un critique impitoyable; confiant dans les destinées et dans les efforts de l'humanité; entrevoyant pour elle un autre but que celui que semble lui marquer la composition de nos sociétés; recherchant son expression dans quelques-uns de ses représentants, héros, poètes, écrivains, hommes d'Etat --tel sont les traits principaux du génie d'Emerson. (v-vii)

Eyma, too, was an admirer of nature; had philosophical tendencies; was confident of human progress; saw other than material ends for mankind; and found man's best possibilities incarnated in the lives of representative men. His alliance with Emerson is therefore predictable.

Eyma evidently studied Emerson diligently, for he lived, as translator,

> dans l'intimité de sa pensée, et assez longtemps pour avoir pénétré les profondeurs et même les obscurités de son grand esprit. (vii)

Emerson's stylistics created some difficulties in translation. Emerson himself is partly to blame for this, Eyma states.

> Où Emerson est le moins accessible à la traduction, c'est où il est le moins maître de sa pensée; c'est lorsque, par le fait des singuliers caprices de son génie, il faiblit à vouloir trop s'élever, comme ces fils qui en s'allongeant deviennent si tenus, qu'aucune force ne leur reste plus, ou comme ces eaux qui en s'épandant couvrent des surfaces immenses, sans avoir de profondeur. (vii)

Because of this very obscurity, and hence difficulty of translation and comprehension, Emerson is little known in France.

> On comprenne comment un écrivain de cette sorte, n'ait pas eu la chance, en France du moins, de conquérir du premier coup les sympathies et peut-être même l'attention du public. (viii)

Emerson's sincerity and genius, however, compensate for his obscurity once the reader is immersed in him. When he demonstrates nature; conducts psychological analyses; dissects modern society and its miseries, the style, idea, and form seize the reader and one forgets the difficulties encountered <u>en route</u>.

> On est frappé d'admiration, de stupeur même en face de cette éloquence, de cette fécondité de son esprit, de sa merveilleuse souplesse.
>
> Il y a du vertige dans la sympathie dont on se prend pour un tel génie, si incomplet qu'il soit. (ix)

Following an account of Emerson's life, Eyma explains Emerson's philosophical position; his rejection of all past masters, theological and philosophical, in order

to open new and vaste paths of criticism and meditation. Perhaps proper to a man of the New World, Emerson felt that the men of the present century should create their own unique vision of God and their own religion, poetry, and philosophy, rather than accept that of their ancestors and tradition. Emerson created no system, but rather assumed "points of view" on all things.

> Cela prouve, à la rigueur, l'étendue de son esprit. S'il s'était concentré dans son point de départ qui avait la religion pour objet, Emerson aurait, sans doute, établi un système; mais il y aurait perdu ce caractère de 'chercheur' qui a été essentiellement le sien. (xii)

Emerson's guiding principle, Eyma states, is the search for God and Nature in Man. The search concludes in an impersonal God existing only in conscious beings.

Eyma provides a typically sentimental physical description of Emerson. Emerson's physical traits and genius correspond.

> Sa physionomie est expressive; sa chevelure abondante ne parvient pas à couvrir son front, fort large d'une tempe à l'autre, quoique peu élevé; ses sourcils sont bien arqués, fins aux extrémités, fournis à la racine du nez, ses yeux sont très ouverts, doux, francs, rêveurs; sa bouche est épaisse et fendue, comme celle de tous les orateurs; son nez est fort et long. L'ensemble de la tête représente bien le type de l'Américain de la Nouvelle Angleterre...Ces traits sont empreints d'une grande douceur et en même temps on y sent l'énergie de la volonté, car tous les contrastes existent dans la nature morale, comme dans la nature physique d'Emerson; autour de son front, règne je ne sais quelle auréole d'indépendance; dans le rictus de sa lèvre se glisse un dédain très accusé du <u>qu'en dira-t-on</u>; les preuves du travail et de la patience sillonnent tout son visage; ses regards ont des rayons absorbants; on devine qu'ils voient et qu'ils embrassent tout. Dans tout son être on relève une confiance profonde en soi quelque chose qui impose le respect en décelant une conviction sereine. (xv-xvi)

As for Emerson's character: good will is its foundation. He is never bitter toward his adversaries, Eyma states; he is never embarrassed to deny what others affirm; he exercises his right of individual thought and opinion. Above all, he seeks and articulates his own vision of truth, be it pleasant or otherwise. And he seeks it to the detriment of his own repose, and of all previous ideas. When he discovers truth in tradition, however, "c'est même avec joie qu'il l'annonce." (xvii)

Emerson is not, Eyma claims, a purist or a writer in a strict literary sense; he has neither the grace nor the elegance of Washington Irving.

> Son style a quelque chose de brutal et de heurté; pourvu qu'ils rendent sa pensée, il s'inquiète peu du choix des mots, et c'est précisément, lorsque la langue n'est pas maniable sous sa plume, qu'il arrive à ces obscurités profondes qui nous désespèrent par moment. Toute pensée bien exprimée est définitivement claire; quand l'expression fait defaut, la pensée en souffre, du moins dans sa communication au lecteur ou à l'auditeur. Mais nous devons reconnaître que quand l'expression vient à Emerson, le penseur s'élève à des hauteurs considérables, et comme je l'ai dit déjà, il atteint à une éloquence entraînante. (xvii-xviii)

Eyma does not excuse Emerson's obscurity by reference to the elevation of his thought, however.

> De l'inintelligible à l'absurde, il n'y a qu'un pas; quiconque ne vise pas à être intelligible court risque de passer pour absurde. (xviii)

Emerson does not deal consciously in paradox. Rather, he is sincere and assured, and juggles neither words nor ideas. Because he is so preoccupied with ideas,

> il dédaigne l'effort intellectuel dont tout écrivain a besoin, surtout dans la langue critique et philosophique que parle Emerson, pour mettre l'expression au niveau de la pensée. (xix)

Therefore the reader cannot be blamed for communication failures, and Eyma feels no scruples in accusing Emerson of unnecessary obscurity. "Le coupable, c'est lui," (xix) especially in view of the clarity of which he is capable in certain passages. In sum, however, "Emerson est une physionomie extrêmement originale et digne de fixer l'attention des lecteurs indépendants." (xix)

Continuing the introduction, Eyma lists, among Emerson's works, the Méthode de la Nature, l'Homme Réformateur, the three Conférences, Essais, Réformateurs de la Nouvelle Angleterre, l'Emancipation des Noirs dans les Indes Occidentales, and La Jeune Amérique. Eyma, then, knew Emerson's canon; and Representative Men, he notes, had already been translated into French. Why did Eyma choose to translate Nature and The Conduct of Life from among Emerson's works? Perhaps Nature was chosen because it is seminal to an understanding of Emerson. Eyma states that he immersed himself in Emerson's thought; that Emerson's independent thinking, and his guiding principle (seeking God in nature and man) are his major distinctions. It is in Nature that these characteristic principles of Transcendentalism are expressed. To know Nature is to know the foundations of Emerson's thought, as Eyma was no doubt aware. In The Conduct of Life Emerson develops his principal ethical ideas in nine

essays: "Fate," "Power," "Wealth," "Culture," "Behavior," "Worship," "Considerations by the Way," "Beauty," and "Illusions." Eyma's attraction to such essays, and to ethical considerations, hardly need comment. The rhetoric of Eyma's fiction and his philosophical expositions of American destiny amply substantiate reasons for an interest in Emerson's works. Consequently, Eyma would assume them to be valuable for his compatriots.

Eyma, then, found a certain sterility in American cultural and intellectual life, relieved occasionally by noteworthy writers. The development of the arts in the United States is hampered by America's origins and the consequent sharing of the English language. American artists can only follow in the footsteps of their English counterparts. An indigenous subject-matter is desirable, yet Eyma assumes that Cooper exhausted native materials. It would seem, then, that Eyma's predictions for American literature were dim. The New World, furthermore, had given small attention to literature and the fine arts because of her mission: the carving of civilization from the wilderness. The arts are the flower of civilization; American energies are concentrated, of necessity, in material goals. Finally, the American concept of equality obviates, from Eyma's point of view, many fertile artistic themes.

There are, however, American literary figures who merit French attention, and hence translation. Cooper is of primary import; Washington Irving deserves greater attention,

as Eyma's translations would indicate. And Ralph Waldo Emerson has been unjustly ignored, a circumstance which Eyma's translations attempt to remedy.

The authors whom Eyma lists, and the works he chose to translate, reveal something of Eyma, and something of the fate of a foreign literature in a receiving nation. Eyma translated works which met his preconceived notions of the didactic function of literature; catered to his taste for the gothic, adventure, and a blend of history and fantasy, of fact and drama. Eyma chose to translate, in other words, American works which reflected his own tastes and concepts. One might say, then, that the translator's tastes and concepts determined the image of American literature which his readers received. The French saw the American literature of Eyma, rather than American literature per se. And any literature, insofar as it is taken from context and its broad national spectrum, is distorted to some degree, and the object of misconceptions.

Eyma's selectivity tells us something, too, of the needs and tastes of France, and their influence on Eyma, who was conditioned by his culture. He sought, in American literature, the elements which the French generally sought. In France, American literature had long been judged by Irving and Cooper. Irving's Sketchbook was first translated in 1822; translations of other of his works followed rapidly. Because Irving chose European subjects, the French thought him deceptive, thereby indicating their desire for indigenous

American materials. Cooper's fame rested precisely on his originality. The reception of The Spy, published anonymously in France in 1822, reveals a strong French prejudice regarding the possibilities of artistic merit in America; no one would believe The Spy to be the work of an American.[13] In praising Cooper and in translating Irving, then, Eyma blazed no new trails. The venture was utterly safe; his attraction to these figures may have been culturally, and commercially, determined.

Moreover, the reasons advanced for the sterility of American art were already familiar to the French. An American literature was judged an impossibility by most critics because of the inherent contradiction between a mercantile spirit and artistic activities. Philarète Chasles claimed that America's diversity of population and lack of common soul; English as the national tongue; a multiplicity of sects; and excessive prosperity all militated against an indigenous literature. In America, all was subordinated to utility; and the tyranny of popular opinion, added to the democratic concept of equality, hampered artistic development.[14] Eyma's penetration of America's problems was not original.

The two major French critics of American literature were Philarète Chasles and Emile Montégut. Montegut introduced

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[13] See René Rémond, Les Etats-Unis devant l'opinion française, 1815-1852 (Paris, 1962), Part II.

[14] Rémond, p. 301 f.

between 1850 and 1860, Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Poe, Melville, Halliburton, H. B. Stowe, and others to the French through La Revue des Deux Mondes. He wavers between admiration and blame, sympathy and severity, as did his contemporaries, and Eyma himself. The real problem, it would seem, was French inability to envisage a literature other than the tried and familiar; salons fixed taste.[15] Eyma was influenced by this taste, and introduced no new American literary figures to the French. In fact, Hawthorne and Melville are a conspicuous absence from his considerations of American literature. Eyma, once again, did not innovate, but rather re-emphasized and reinforced the French status quo with respect to American literature. He fed an existent taste and need which had formed, in part, his own literary tastes, and hence his evaluation of American arts and letters.

Most of Eyma's commentary on the United States is, in fact, part and parcel of an expansive stream of American studies which were flooding France from 1830 to 1852. Both the United States and France experienced considerable and simultaneous political change in and about 1830. Jackson's rise to the presidency shortly preceded the Constitutional Monarchy of Louis-Philippe in France. Politics invaded the French market place; French liberals invoked American democracy as a model. Many saw democracy as the logical consequence of

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[15] Rémond, p. 301 f.

current political movement. Therefore the French felt the need to study the true functioning of American democracy; its innovations in penal forms; in economics; in inventions such as the steamboat, canals, and railways. This felt need generated the works of Michel Chevalier, Tocqueville, Gustave de Beaumont, and Jean-Jacques Ampère. These now-familiar figures were joined by Achille Murat, Jacques de Saint-Victor, the Countess Merlin, Xavier Marmier, and others; and French translations of Miss Martineau and Mrs. Trollope.[16]

None of these writers came to the United States to contemplate nature and the American countryside. Rather, they wished to discover the "new" America, this classless society, this advancing people.

> Ainsi s'ébauche le type américain. L'ardeur au travail et le besoin de mouvement, l'ingéniosité technique, une habilité commerciale souvent peu scrupuleuse, une avidité passionnée à l'affût des spéculations, une fierté nationale extrême, le mépris des arts et des lettres, tels sont les caractères qui sont constamment notés, tantôt condemnés, tantôt expliqués et excusés, sinon loués.[17]

Obviously, Eyma's works belong in this stream of French commentary on America. Many, like Eyma, opposed the Virginian to the Yankee; and the more perspicacious, like Eyma, delineated a third type, the Westman.

Eyma's work participates, too, in a second irruption of French interest in America, that of 1852 to 1861. During

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[16]Simon Jeune, De F. T. Graindorge à A. O. Barnabooth (Paris, 1963), pp. 6-8).

[17]Jeune, p. 8.

this period, travelers to America, more numerous than between 1820 and 1852, became especially interested in details of mores, daily life, methods of travel, mechanical inventions. In this stream, Eyma's work, especially Excentricités américaines and Les Femmes du Nouveau-Monde, joins that of Oscar Comettant, A. Bellegarrigue, Alfred d'Alembert, and Marie de Grandfort. These writers emphasized the liberty of American women and their respected position; their education, assurance, and flirtatiousness. They discussed the American taste for travel; American hotels; and especially business customs, speculation, and showy publicity. In other words, Eyma and others were casting the American in types.[18]

After 1850, the exoticism of the American Far West took hold in France. Simultaneously, a rash of studies of the American Indian appeared. Alongside Eyma's Peaux Rouges were the works of Mayne Reid, Friederick Gerstäcker, Elie Berthet, Paul Féval, and Gustave Aimard. Following the Civil War, the Negro again appeared on the French literary scene. And the American type which Eyma and many others created had common tendencies:

> un orgueil de race et une extrême confiance en soi, un vif intérêt pour toutes les questions matérielles, une énergie indomptable et un dévorant besoin d'activité, quelque chose enfin d'excessif et d'un peu fou qui prête à rire d'eux, ou au moins à sourire même quand ils

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[18] Jeune, pp. 18-22.

> agissent en héros. Somme toute cet Américain n'est pas un être tout à fait normal. Parfois admirable, souvent grotesque, il désoriente toujours un peu la société du Vieux Monde et bouscule sa hiérarchie des valeurs.[19]

The appearance and abundance of American studies in France from 1820 forward indicate a strong French interest in the United States. Such works were filling a need, were satisfying French curiosity. Eyma's works were part of the desired antidote; one can safely assume that his comments found an audience. The fact that Eyma treated the same topics as did other travellers suggests, first of all, that these were the aspects of American life which most picqued French interest; and secondly, that because such topics were of interest, Eyma was read. Eyma, therefore, played a rôle in the formation and transformation of the French image of America. His considerations of American arts and letters, carried in two volumes participating in this strong current in France, would indicate that his concept of American cultural life reached many of his contemporaries.

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[19]Jeune, p. 32.

CONCLUSION

The work of L. Xavier Eyma was a factor in the shaping of the mid-nineteenth-century image of America and American literature. Eyma's influence is substantiated on several grounds. The presence of traditional elements, and the lack of obscurity in Eyma's work make it acceptable as well as accessible to a wide public. The sheer bulk of Eyma's American fiction and studies, in combination with second and third editions of some, would indicate at least some popularity, and certainly a considerable availability. The French public was avid of materials on precisely those aspects of American life treated by Eyma, suggesting that his work, because responding to a need and desire, was read. Eyma's correspondence with men such as Tocqueville and Chevalier suggests that men of this stature were aware of his American studies.[1] Because Eyma's comments are repeated in scholarly histories, light travelogues, novels and short fiction, and in journal articles, it is highly probable that they appealed to a variety of tastes and interests, and therefore reached a wide and varied audience. Because Eyma

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[1]Bibliothèque Nationale: "Nouvelles acquisitions françaises" collection, no. 21.014.

was commissioned to report on the Civil War, it is likely that his knowledge and penetration of American affairs were known and respected. And finally, critical commentary on Eyma's work indicates that he appealed to both popular and critical tastes, and was read. Upon the publication of La République américaine and Les Trente-quatre Etoiles de l'Union américaine, a critic wrote, in Le Courrier du Dimanche, that

> c'est un ouvrage indispensable à tous ceux qui suivent avec quelque intérêt les événements américains, et la lecture de ces intéressants volumes, en même temps qu'elle donne la clé des événements actuels, éclaire le public sur les forces qui aideront le peuple américain à se relever après les violences même de la guerre désastreuse qu'il soutient. L'ouvrage de M. Xavier Eyma, sous ce rapport, est doublement instructif et intéressant.[2]

Cuvillier-Fleury wrote, in 1863, that Eyma

> connaît les rues de New-York mieux que celles de Paris. Suivez-le donc dans sa course aventureuse. Il est un guide sûr en dépit de cette forme romanesque qu'il mêle parfois...à ses récits. L'imagination chez lui est la très-humble servante de la réalité. Elle ne vient, là quand y vient, que pour donner un tour piquant à des impressions véritables.[3]

Barbey d'Aurevilly, though picqued by American attitudes and success, reviews La République américaine and says of Eyma:

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[2]Anon., Le Courrier du Dimanche, XXXXVI (November 16, 1862), 7.

[3]Cuvillier-Fleury, Historiens, Poètes, et Romanciers, II (Paris, 1863), 266.

> Xavier Eyma, qui a vécu en Amérique et de l'Amérique, car toute sa littérature est américaine, Xavier Eyma, qui a été un romancier américain avant d'être un historien américain, est certainement de sentiments, de volonté, de goût, d'admiration hautement et incessament exprimée dans ce livre même, un apologiste très renseigné et très convaincu des choses et des hommes de l'Amérique.[4]

In 1876 La Revue Politique et Littéraire reviewed La Vie aux Etats-Unis.

> Ce sont les impressions d'un voyageur qui regarde... conclusions favorables...reconnaissent les énergiques qualités de cette race agitée, exhuberante, qui manque de grâce;...cette liberté, parfois voisine de la license, est féconde en grands résultats.[5]

"E.G." was displeased with Scènes de Moeurs et de voyages, but concludes that "le livre de M. Eyma, s'il n'est pas de mieux faits, il est du moins intéressant."[6] The Revue du Monde Catholique praised the same study as

> tout plein de charme et de variété...qui dénotent dans l'auteur de l'esprit et de la facilité... parfaitement inoffensif, le livre de M. Eyma peut être laissé aux mains de tout le monde.[7]

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[4]J. Barbey d'Aurevilly, Les Oeuvres et Les Hommes. X (Paris, 1888), 378.

[5]Maxime Gaucher, "Causerie Littéraire," La Revue Politique et Littéraire, XXXXII (April 15, 1876), 378.

[6]E. G. in Revue Critique des Livres Nouveau, V (August, 1862), 336.

[7]A. Vaillant, "Bulletin Bibliographique," La Revue du Monde Catholique, III (May 10, 1862), 34.

The same journal reviewed Les Poches de mon parrain; Légendes, fantômes, et récits du Nouveau-Monde; and La Vie dans le Nouveau-Monde.[8] Eyma's American studies are reviewed, also, in the Revue Britannique,[9] and in Le Correspondant.[10] Eyma, in other words, received the critical attention of his contemporaries. His critical reception, added to the several other factors supporting the availability and popularity of his works, invites the conclusion that Eyma's comments reached a wide audience.

Eyma's entire concept of America is dominated by two myths: that of the American Adam, and that of the "great man." America is the New Eden, the land of promise, providentially sustained and directed. In certain customs, such as parades and national airs, Eyma perceived a naïveté and innocence which he considered characteristic. In accordance with the myth of the American Adam, American innocence has confronted experience--trials, suffering, and the chaos of the wilderness--and achieved a transcendent innocence, proving both the providential design and the guaranteed success of the

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[8] A. Vaillant, "Bulletin Bibliographique," La Revue du Monde Catholique, III (July 10, 1862), 73; III (January 10, 1864), 489-490.

[9] Anon., Revue Britannique, (April, 1876), p. 570.

[10] P. Douhaire, "'La Vie aux Etats-Unis'," Le Correspondant, CIII (ns.67) (April-June, 1876), 334-341.

democratic experiment.[11] America, as the cradle of the hopes and aspirations of the whole of mankind, has a divine mission; failure cannot be countenanced. The success of the American experiment concerns all men.

The American myth is embodied in representative men such as Washington and Jefferson. Their virtues, aspirations, and values represent those of the nation. History, from Eyma's point of view, is propelled and dominated by great men. Eyma was centrally concerned, not with events themselves, but with the men who caused and directed them. Predictably, his works, in approaching American institutions, probed the surface in search of the spirit and temper which animated them. Such was the pattern of French observers of America; Eyma's considerations were culturally determined in part. Eyma's concerns and values were, of course, French. His interests were largely those of his contemporaries. Like other historians of the period, Eyma gave mythical proportions to great men. And predictably, those sections of America associated with France and French history were invested with a certain romantic grandeur and nostalgia, reinforcing a vision of America as the land of dream and promise.

Eyma's values are consistent throughout his literary canon, both fictional and factual. The heroes and heroines of his novels and tales embody imitable bourgeois values. They are devoted to family, labor, honor, and the Christian

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[11] See R.W.B. Lewis, The American Adam (Chicago, 1955), on the American myth and American innocence.

virtues. Their innocence confronts experience in plot situations tailored to the display of virtue. Characters are both romantic and sentimental; Neo-classical and bourgeois. Gothic horror and melodrama enhance their courageousness, their virtue, and their intensity. In sum, Eyma's fiction is a potpourri of the French literary tradition.

Eyma's fiction, in rhetoric and characterization, supports those values he lauds in the American people. Eyma's esthetics demanded a didactic literature. Biographies, too, serve a didactic end; American history is a source of lessons and example for other nations. Eyma's works consistently point to the same end: instruction, and the consequent inculcation of values.

Eyma, the man, is revealed to some extent in the values and concerns of his fiction and studies. He was seemingly conservative and bourgeois, yet retained a certain enthusiasm and thirst for life and experience. Eyma obviously admired the United States, and tempered his comments accordingly. His imagination, spurred on by romantic nostalgia, contributed a certain grandeur and retrospective melancholy to some of his observations. Because convinced of America's divine mission, and of the reality of the myth of the American Adam, he reprimanded the New World in a spirit of hope and expectation. Because Eyma saw great potential and the hope of mankind in the American people, he criticized their faults, much as a father reprimands a child for the child's own good. He firmly believed in the perfectibility of man, whose future

resides in the success or failure of the democratic experiment. Eyma made every effort to deliver objective, impartial judgments based on a penetration of the thrust and spirit of the New World. He saw no conflict between French patriotism and praise of America; rather, he urged France to imitate America in accordance with French needs and traditions. And Eyma was obviously a prodigious reader, and a scholar; he utilized numerous sources in his studies.

Certain generalizations emerge from Eyma's treatment of the New World. First, in spite of a sincere desire for objectivity, Eyma brought preconceived notions and his own cultural standards to bear in his evaluation of American people and institutions. Secondly, he sought the extraordinary in American culture. Because perspicacious and sensitive, he penetrated the surface of customs and mores, yet tended to praise the familiar and acceptable, and blame the idiosyncratic insofar as it deviated from his own norms. Thirdly, Eyma's choice of literary form affected the image of America he presented. From the dramatization inherent in the novel and short fiction, nuances and attitudes emerge, and are imperceptibly impressed on the reader's mind. In tightly organized historical studies, prejudices and opinions are directly stated, and are therefore open to rejection or acceptance. In the loosely-knit, impressionistic, travelogue form, more personal prejudice appears, suggesting that form and structure controlled thought and forced a certain objectivity upon the writer. Fourth, Eyma was attracted to art and

literature which satisfied his preconceived and culturally-inherited notions of the nature of art and literature. Fifth, Eyma's proximity, in time and space, to American culture affected his judgment of that culture. The retrospective glance, allowing penetration, reflection, and perhaps mellowing, modified his evaluations. Finally, factors completely unrelated to America provoked Eyma's initial interest in her. His works satisfied domestic French needs and desires completely unrelated to America. Numerous variables, often seemingly extraneous, encouraged Eyma's American studies, and hence his presentation of an image of America--an image which partially formed, reinforced, and perpetuated the French image of America in the mid-nineteenth century.

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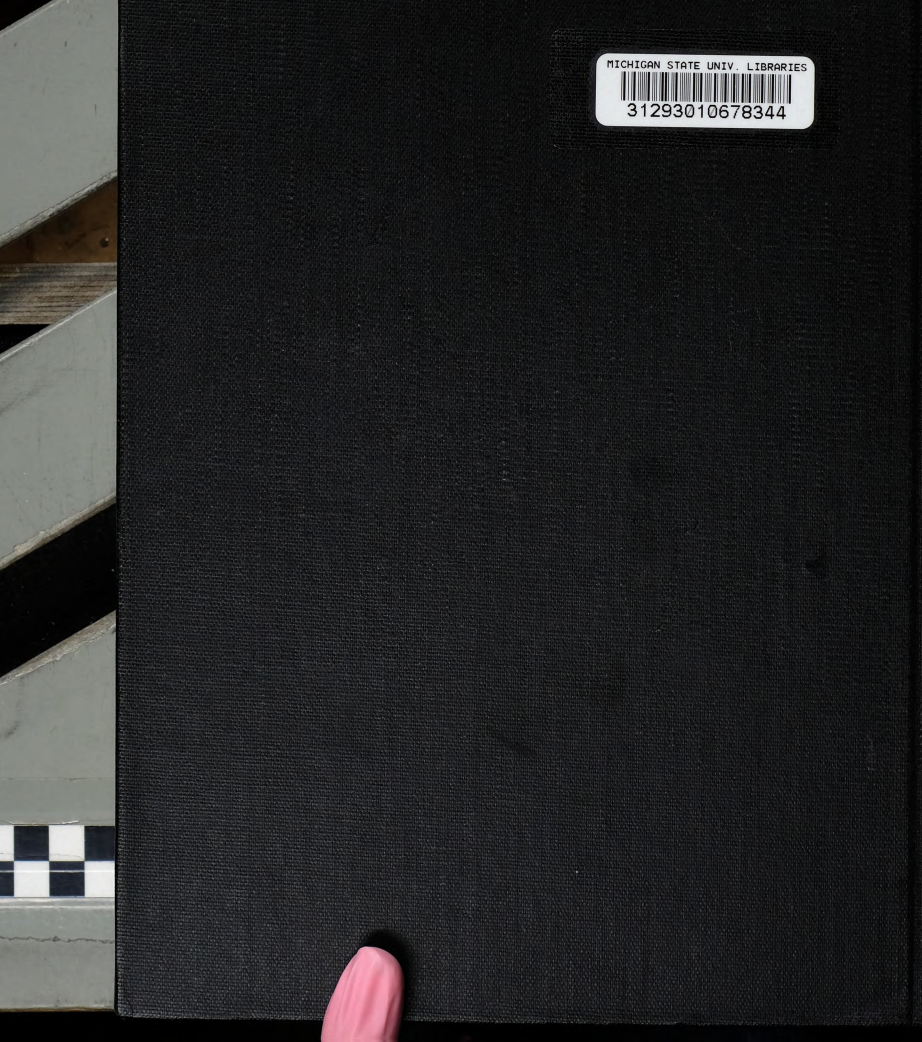
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