

The Civic Art of Francis Davis Millet

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## ABSTRACT

The Civic Art of Francis Davis Millet

Eliza Adams Butler

This dissertation explores the important but long forgotten career of the American artist Francis Davis Millet (1848-1912) and in the process calls into question certain common understandings of turn-of-the-century American civic art. Through an examination of Millet's civic art, including mural painting, illustration, and parades, I argue that Millet attempted to use the works he created for large audiences to help viewers navigate a common modern experience: the cultural diversity they encountered all around them. While many artists making civic art during this period focused on allegorical scenes and emphasized whiteness, Millet's images taught audiences about cultural diversity and even reflected a certain cultural sensitivity in their careful rendering of nonwhite subjects. In doing so, Millet employed the rhetoric of empiricism and engaged with his subject matter in a manner understood by his audience to be under the purview of science. This, I argue, aligned his project to the hierarchical understanding of "culture" and "evolution" presented by the anthropological community at the time, which argued for the superiority of white over non-white groups. In this way, though Millet attempted to move away from all-white subject matter and used global themes relevant to a modern moment, the underlying message he promoted served to reinforce notions of Anglo American hegemony.

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For JDH

## Introduction

When Frank Millet (figure 1), the internationally renowned painter, writer, and art activist, died on the Titanic at age 63, he was commemorated with a remarkable number of projects: a portrait plaque was erected at Harvard University; a chair was established in Millet's name at the American Academy in Rome; a public monument was constructed to Millet and Archibald Butt,<sup>1</sup> his companion on the Titanic, in front of the White House (figure 2); articles were published in numerous publications; and memorial meetings were held by a number of arts groups. At one such meeting, organized for the annual conference of the American Federation of the Arts, Secretary of State Elihu Root said of Millet in his opening remarks:

It is known to all of us that in this place and at this hour Francis Millet was to have contributed to the meeting of the National Federation of Arts a lecture upon the Art of Design. Instead, the shadow of appalling tragedy has fallen upon us. Instead, there is silence never to be broken, absence that will know no return, a sense of loss irretrievable, and the need for readjustment to a world without our friend and teacher.<sup>2</sup>

At the same meeting, Massachusetts senator Henry Cabot Lodge praised Millet for the work he had done in his lifetime:

Behind the fun and laughter, the humor and the wit, back of the intelligence and the knowledge, one was always clearly conscious of the strong, brave man, the man of force and character. These, in happy combination, were the qualities which not only grappled his friends to him, but which enabled him to do such valuable and effective work in laboring for a public cause. He could convince, persuade and lead. He could make other men do what he desired without any sense of

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<sup>1</sup> It has been argued that Millet, who was married with three children, had a sexual relationship with Butt and other male companions, such as Charles Warren Stoddard, throughout his adult life. For more see: Jonathan Ned Katz, *Love Stories: Sex Between Men Before Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> Elihu Root, in *Francis Davis Millet Memorial Meeting*, ed. Glenn Brown (Washington, D.C.: American Federation of Arts, 1912): 7.

compulsion. Thus did he serve high purposes and achieve results of use and value to the world.<sup>3</sup>

While certainly the fact that Millet perished in the Titanic disaster made his untimely death that much more surprising and sensational, it should not detract from the deep affection and gratitude these important men felt for the painter. Indeed, those who came out to celebrate Millet were not just fellow American Renaissance artists. Charles Lang Freer, Henry Clay Frick, and Seth Low, friends of Millet's during his lifetime, were three of more than a dozen prominent members of society who gave money to the Butt-Millet memorial, built by Daniel Chester French—a fundraising effort begun by President Taft himself and run by his personal secretary. At Millet's memorial meeting, Lodge and Root, along with railroad regulator and historian Charles Francis Adams, Jr., architect Cass Gilbert, and paleontologist and Smithsonian secretary Charles D. Walcott, gave talks. Those who celebrated Millet were some of the most influential figures in a variety of circles and professions in early-twentieth-century America. They were the men who ran the major corporate, governmental, and intellectual groups of the country. That they felt such a tremendous sense of loss when Millet died suggests his importance within both the cultural and political spheres.

Millet lived an exceptionally productive life. He was celebrated for his work as an artist, writer, public servant, committee organizer, and adventurer.<sup>4</sup> By 1912, Millet was recognized on both sides of the Atlantic as a successful painter, with works held in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Tate Gallery. His mural paintings decorated the interiors of banks, capitols, courthouses, a customhouse,

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<sup>3</sup> Henry Cabot Lodge, in *ibid.*, 16.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

and a post office. Millet was famous around the world as a war reporter, publishing articles and books on his experiences as a journalist during the Russo-Turkish War—his service for which earned him two military crosses and two war medals—as well as the Spanish-American War. He served on the planning committees and juries of four World’s Fairs. He was a member of a variety of art clubs and circles in both the United States and England (where he spent many summers in the 1880s and 1890s). And he traveled extensively throughout Europe, Asia, and the far corners of the United States, writing and illustrating books about his journeys as he went.

Despite Millet’s fame before and at the time of his death, he has largely been forgotten over the past century. His paintings have been seen as conservative and old-fashioned, and were therefore ignored and sometimes ridiculed by art critics of the twentieth century who favored abstraction. However, Millet deserves our attention. His life sheds new light on the role of the artist in American society at the turn of the century. He was a painter, collaborator, and organizer, and he used those roles to push boundaries.

Indeed, while Millet was celebrated for his prolific career and his unwavering support for the promotion of American art, he was also singled out for the groundbreaking nature of his work. According to critic Leila Mechlin, writing about the Baltimore Custom House murals (figure 4.1): “If the art of this age is to survive it must reflect, if unconsciously, the spirit of our time though built on tradition. This, it appears, Mr. Millet has realized. He has ventured a new thought and happily.”<sup>5</sup> While Mechlin understood the significance of generating works within a traditional framework (of realism and history painting), she believed that contemporary art still must offer “a new

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<sup>5</sup> Leila Mechlin, “The Ships of All Ages in F. D. Millet’s Mural Decorations in the Baltimore Custom House,” *Craftsman* (January 1 1909), 433.

thought.” For her, Millet was the only artist doing this on a large and public scale. Meanwhile, writer and critic Sylvester Baxter argued a similar point about the same work: “[Millet’s] masterpiece is his monumental work for the Baltimore Custom House—a consummate development of a unique departure from the conventional traditions and one of the great achievements in decorative art on this continent.”<sup>6</sup> Baxter agreed with Mechlin that this new age called for new types of painting and that Millet’s work answered that call.

In fact, much of Millet’s oeuvre did not actually deal with traditional subject matter, as later critics have since suggested. Millet himself famously remarked that his Baltimore Custom House murals would be something different “from the customary representation: a group of young women in their nighties presenting a Pianola to the city of New York.”<sup>7</sup> In his mural paintings, rather than picturing images of angels or important historical events—the standard Beaux-Arts fare—much of Millet’s work portrayed scenes and objects of modern technologies and distinct cultural differences.

Take, for example, Millet’s frieze *Mail Delivery*, executed in 1911 for the Postmaster’s Office in Arnold Brunner’s Cleveland Federal Building (figure 3)—a work celebrated for its “unusual” subject matter and described as a “remarkable series of paintings.”<sup>8</sup> Depicting the history of mail delivery “from the days of the reindeer and dog sled to those of the fast mail trains and ocean liners,”<sup>9</sup> the subjects of the panels included

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<sup>6</sup> Sylvester Baxter, “Francis Davis Millet: An Appreciation of the Man,” *Art and Progress* 3 (July 1912): 640.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> “Nation Changes Quarters Here,” *Cleveland Plains Dealer*, January 8, 1911 and C. M. Price, “The Late Francis Davis Millet: Notes on the Decorative Panels in the Cleveland Post Office,” *International Studio* 48 (1912): xxxvi.

<sup>9</sup> “Cleveland Selected Artists,” *New-York Tribune*, July 16, 1909, 6.

a mail coach from the American West, a camel in “Arabia,” a mail truck in Washington, D.C., ski post in Sweden, and dog-sled post in Alaska. In his “City Delivery, India” panel (figure 4), three *dak* runners quickly dash across a city street. Famous in India for their speed and efficiency, *dak walas* carried mail from one location to another by foot. Next to this panel is “Mail Transfer, Broadway, England” (figure 5). Here a man drives a horse-drawn coach down a dirt road, quickly passing by a group of half-timber houses. The town is rural and quaint, and the coach feels similarly old-fashioned. Both “City Delivery” and “Mail Transfer” have picturesque qualities and both are nods to the past. The *dak walas* had been around for centuries, but few remained in the present day. The coach, meanwhile, was still being used all over the world, but was quickly being supplemented by faster methods. While the coach was more advanced than the runners on foot, they were both understood as part of trajectory that would culminate, later in the series, with balloon post and airplane post (figure 6). By painting Indian mail delivery next to English examples, or canoe post just below balloon post, Millet drew viewers’ attention to the similarities and differences between distinct historical and cultural practices, emphasizing development over time.

While it is surprising to see an image of India painted on the walls of an American Beaux-Arts building in and of itself, it is even more so when compared to the other murals painted in the same Federal Building. Images by Edwin Howland Blashfield (figure 7), Will Low, and Frederic Crowninshield, decorating courtrooms and other private offices, feature allegories and historical portraits. Stylistically, the images are all similar to Millet’s. All four artists paint in a naturalistic mode and pay careful attention to detail. Their function was also the same: to inspire audiences and elevate their standards

of taste. However, Millet's contemporary subject matter and his emphasis on different (including nonwhite) cultural groups made his work stand out and feel at odds with the rest of the decoration.

Millet's frieze was not an anomaly for the artist, and was similar to the majority of the civic works he created in his lifetime. While many of Millet's easel paintings depicted scenes from classical or colonial history, his large-scale works focused on images of cultural evolution. Like *Mail Delivery*, other examples traced the development of a technology, object, or process across cultures and throughout history. In this way, Millet's civic art highlighted "primitive" cultures and cultural diversity more generally. Traditional Indian post and modern-day balloon post were compared on equal terms. Both subjects were carefully researched and rendered with detail. That Millet's paintings presented nonwhite groups with an eye toward cultural sensitivity made his work unusual and innovative.

While Millet's murals were undoubtedly distinct, they were still very much tied to a nineteenth-century understanding of cultural difference. The subjects of Millet's murals were always presented in a hierarchical sequence with nonwhite cultures at the bottom and Anglo American ones at the top. Though these cycles highlighted difference and gave voice to nonwhite groups, they did so in an attempt to promote Anglo American power. Indeed, given that Millet chose to depict American supremacy in a global context, it is clear that Millet's message was deeply rooted in imperialist thinking. Emphasizing America's dominant position amongst all countries of the world, the goal was to remind viewers that America was no longer a minor player on the world stage but was on par with major foreign powers.

Millet's interest in world cultures began at Harvard, where he graduated with honors in Modern Languages. Millet, born and raised by a local doctor and schoolteacher just outside of Boston, attended Harvard at an interesting time in its history. When he arrived as a freshman in 1865, the board was being reorganized to include more alumni in the management of the university. Many Americans were frustrated with collegial education, as it emphasized a classical curriculum and rarely dealt with subjects useful for life in an industrial era. By the time Millet graduated in 1869, not only had the thirty-five-year-old Charles William Eliot been named president but alumni board officers had already begun overhauling the curriculum. (Eliot would revolutionize liberal-arts education during his forty-year term.) While Harvard was one of the few institutions to have a Modern Languages department in this period, its curriculum was made even more relevant to the contemporary moment while Millet was there. Under Professor James Russell Lowell, Millet's education focused on French, Spanish, and Italian language study. However, instead of studying language through etymology, Lowell recommended rigorous reading and travel so that one might immerse himself in the "sounds" of language.<sup>10</sup>

During Millet's childhood and his time at Harvard, Millet rarely traveled. In the early 1870s, however, when Millet left to study art at the Antwerp Academy, he began a lifetime of globetrotting. After working briefly with a local printmaker, Millet moved to Belgium to study art in 1871. While living in Antwerp, Millet took advantage of his summer holidays and winter breaks to travel to nearby cities and countries, gaining extensive knowledge about Northern European cultural practices. Upon graduation, he

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<sup>10</sup> C. David Heymann, *American Aristocracy: The Lives and Times of James Russell, Amy, and Robert Lowell* (New York: Dodd, Mead, c1980): 107.



moved to Vienna, where he served as secretary to Adams at the Vienna Exposition. After Vienna, he took the Grand Tour, as many American artists and intellectuals did, around Europe. Making stops in Hungary, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Rome, Capri, Switzerland, and Germany, he settled in Venice for a number of months. In 1877, he worked as a war correspondent during the Russo-Turkish War, and spent time living with the Cossacks. He returned to France in 1878, serving as a member of the Fine Arts Jury of the Paris Exposition. In 1881, he made a trip for Harper & Brothers through Denmark, Sweden, and North Germany. Four years later, he traveled across the United States and also spent time in Mexico. In 1891, Millet took an extensive voyage down the Danube River in a canoe with his friends Alfred Parsons and Poultney Bigelow. Next, Millet made a trip through Algeria, Tunisia, Tripoli, and Sicily, then the Philippines in 1898. On his trip home, he stopped in Japan, China, Java, the Straights, Burma, and India. In 1905, he made a voyage through Yellowstone Park, Alaska, and British Columbia. In 1908, for his work on the Tokyo Exposition, he traveled extensively through Japan and China and made a special visit to Seoul, Korea. In the last year of his life, he spent many months traveling back and forth between Washington, D.C., and the American Academy in Rome. While other American artists lived cosmopolitan lifestyles in this period, few, if any, traveled as frequently or to as many countries as Millet did.

When visiting or living in these foreign locales, Millet often attempted to befriend members of the local population. As a Modern Language major, he spoke many languages, and could therefore converse with people from a diverse set of countries.<sup>11</sup> He

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<sup>11</sup> H. Barbara Weinberg, "The Career of Francis Davis Millet," *Archives of American Art Journal* 17:1 (1977): 3. Millet continued to study new languages throughout his life time. He wrote to his friend Edwin Howland Blashfield, months before his death in 1912, "I

collected objects and costumes from places he visited, and displayed them in his home or wore them during costume parties. Millet studied the architecture, costumes, customs, and, especially, people that he saw in these diverse countries. His sketchbooks are filled with studies of faces and bodies representing a variety of types from each place he visited. He drew costumes from different angles, paying careful attention to drapery folds. Upon returning home from his trips, he worked many of his sketches and notes into paintings, illustrations, and short stories.

Millet saw himself as a cultural intermediary, presenting foreign peoples to American audiences in a way that was carefully studied and thereby, according to him, true to life and accurate. Millet's close friend and fellow Antwerp Academy alum George Maynard painted a portrait of Millet in 1878 (figure 8), right after Millet returned from his trip covering the Russo-Turkish War. In this painting, titled *War Correspondent*, Millet's status as a cultural intermediary is made clear. Here, he is clad in clothes that he had bought or been gifted in Russia, as well as in his two war medals. The fur-lined coat and whip had been given to him by soldiers whom he befriended during his time there. Against his glowing white skin and delicate Anglo Saxon features, the costume is clearly not his native dress. In this portrait, Millet maintains his status as part of the dominant cultural group; however, by wearing the accessories of his Russian friends, he asserts his knowledge of another ethnic type.

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believe ... the brief distraction of studying a new language, Arabic, gave me a mental side track that was restful and absorbing twice a week, and at night the puzzle of the language sent me to sleep with my mind free from the sordid cares of the day and the worriment of anxious situations." "At Sea," January 17, 1912, Blashfield papers, New-York Historical Society.

This dissertation investigates why Millet emphasized cultural difference in the art he created for a large-scale audience, at a time when so many American artists were focused on Beaux-Art themes. Why did Millet deem classical and allegorical subject matter appropriate for his easel painting but ineffective for civic art? Moreover, how did Millet understand cultural difference? And how did different modes of representation and different audiences affect his depiction of cultural difference? For that matter, how did the subject of cultural difference allow Millet to make his civic art do what he wanted it to do for his audience?

I investigate these issues through an examination of Millet's art produced for a wide audience, including mural painting, illustration, and performance. By focusing on these works, I contextualize an artist often understood as traditional within a broader framework. In this dissertation, I argue that, although Millet had the same goals as many of his Beaux-Arts-trained friends and colleagues, he employed different tools and therefore created a type of civic art that was unusual. Like his peers, Millet hoped to inspire American audiences and teach them about the importance of art. However, he found traditional subject matter outdated and even hackneyed. Instead of depicting classically garbed angels, he painted the experience of modern life. Instead of focusing on singular events or historical actors, he emphasized "culture" through representations of carefully studied objects. His work catered to the lived, everyday experiences of his audience.

Because of this, Millet's subject matter focused not just on national but international themes. Working at a time when America was reorienting its relationship with and role in the world, a change that was much debated by its citizens, Millet's work

presented American culture in comparison to others around the globe. He did this through the depiction of evolutions, which, by placing Anglo American developments as the culmination, reassured audiences that Anglo Saxon culture would maintain its forward-moving course.

In this way, Millet's work reflects a new way to represent American imperialism. Rather than ignoring nonwhite or foreign groups, Millet sought instead to juxtapose foreign practices with Anglo American ones. He brought viewers' attention to distinctions between cultures in order to teach viewers about difference. He reminded audiences about American supremacy by comparing American-made objects to foreign-made examples. Cultural sensitivity was therefore just a tool employed by the artist to make his point more clear. By emphasizing distinctness and accurate representations of foreign people and objects, he reinforced Anglo American hegemony and promoted America as a major force on the world's stage.

### **Civic Art**

There was little public painting in America at the start of Millet's career. Indeed at the end of the nineteenth century, the state of art appreciation in general was dismal in the United States. Artists returning home from training and living abroad found their American audiences not so much absent of taste but, rather, completely lacking in interest.<sup>12</sup> The majority of Americans enjoyed popular entertainments such as photography and stereographs, cartoons and illustrations in widely circulated magazines, and mass spectacles like side shows and circuses (media that Millet would be inspired by

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<sup>12</sup> Bailey Van Hook, *Angels of Art: Women and Art in American Society, 1876-1914* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, c1996): 49-52.

in his own work). Academic painting, however, was less appealing. Millet's close friend Augustus Saint Gaudens found, in 1870, the "dislike [of art] common to young men of my age."<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, the critic George W. Sheldon described the situation at length:

To such aspiring artists the new environment is often peculiarly uncongenial. The stimulus of an art-atmosphere, as Parisians understand the phrase, is denied them. Buyers do not frequent their studios. Neither the methods nor the aims of art are understood by the general public, and even the critics themselves are at variance on questions of theory and practice. What the late Matthew Arnold used to call the literary influence of academies—the advantage accruing from the presence of a recognized authority in matters of taste—does not exist: there is in this country no institution corresponding to the French Academy, and there never has been. Nor have we that serious and higher instruction of the people, which according to M. Renan, is an effect of the advanced culture of certain classes, and the absence of which, if the same critic may be believed, is expedited by intellectual mediocrity, vulgarity of manners, a superficial spirit, and a lack of general intelligence.<sup>14</sup>

Millet shared these beliefs. According to the painter, "the problem in America is that there is no art atmosphere." Millet defined "art atmosphere" as "a state of public mind ... which is stimulating and encouraging to the production of art."<sup>15</sup> He argued, in a speech to students at Yale University in 1904, that the "art atmosphere" problem was twofold. First, Americans were too quick to follow trends:

We are, as you know, a hysterical nation, more hysterical in many ways than the French. A catch phrase will elect or defeat a president; we worship the hero of the hour with fervor almost ferocious in its intensity; a novelty is irresistible, it may be bicycling, it may be golf, it may be bridge, but when it comes among us we rush after it with an enthusiasm which is as overpowering as it is ephemeral. This is one of our national characteristics and art is no exception to the rule. At one time we would look at nothing but Richardsonian architecture, at another so-called Queen

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<sup>13</sup> Augustus Saint Gaudens quoted in *ibid*, 50.

<sup>14</sup> George William Sheldon, *Recent Ideals of American Art* (D. Appleton & Company, 1888), 21–22.

<sup>15</sup> Frank Millet, "The American Federation of Arts," *The Washington Society of the Fine Arts, Continental Hall*, May 4, 1910, 2, Francis Davis Millet and Millet Family Papers. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, New York, New York.

Anne was the rage and again Colonial, and each fashion has been followed for a time with persistent eagerness.<sup>16</sup>

According to Millet, jumping from one style to the next meant that Americans never developed a solid foundation for “good taste.” Secondly, agreeing with Sheldon, Millet argued that no one was educating the American public about art and architecture. Without state-run academies or national collections, as they had in Europe, Americans had no way of knowing what was worth appreciating.

Millet was part of a growing movement of artists and architects who hoped to encourage an interest in art through civic works. From their time at the *École des Beaux-Arts* and other European academies, they conceded that, if government sponsorship was not a given, it was the job of the professional artist to bring art to the people. The *Beaux-Arts* agenda maintained that the production and appreciation of art was essential to developing and maintaining a high level of national culture—a level that many thought America had not yet reached. Artists and architects thereby organized themselves and promoted “high art” through institution building and the production of civic works.<sup>17</sup>

Millet was instrumental to this project in both ways. First, he became an active member of a number of artist organizations and activities. He helped to found the American Academy in Rome, the American Federation of the Arts, and the Municipal Arts Society in New York, to promote the dissemination of art throughout the country.

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<sup>16</sup> Frank Millet, “Conditions and Possibilities of Art in the United States,” Yale University, June 1, 1904, 8, Francis Davis Millet and Millet Family Papers. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, New York, New York.

<sup>17</sup> As Sarah Burns has argued, Will Low, for instance, was a “progressive, civic-minded, professional,” devoted to teaching and serving on “eight committees to further the progress of American art.” Kenyon Cox, too, was committed to a handful of art societies, with his major goal being to educate and serve the public. Sarah Burns, *Inventing the Modern Artist: Art and Culture in Gilded Age America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 32–33.

He was a major supporter of the “free art” movement and went in front of Congress with a bill attempting to lift the tariff on imported art works.<sup>18</sup>

Second, Millet began to produce art for large audiences. His first experience was at Trinity Church (figures 9 and 10), where he assisted John La Farge in decorating the interior. Trinity, an Episcopal church designed by Henry Hobson Richardson, was famous in its day for its unusual Romanesque design (which would later become the hallmark of Richardsonian Romanesque) and its emphasis on ornamentation. Featuring early examples of American stained glass and mural painting (Millet assisted on all the murals, but painted two himself),<sup>19</sup> Trinity Church was an expression of Aesthetic ideals. A movement that encouraged “art for art’s sake” and a breakdown of artistic hierarchies, the Aesthetic movement promoted sumptuous materials and all-over decoration. In Richardson and La Farge’s application of these principles, they created a space that emphasized the power of decoration to inspire through beauty. The colorful windows, bright red walls, and decorative ornament on every surface set the tone for Aesthetic interiors to come. At the same time, Richardson encouraged collaboration and put in motion a mode of art practice where artists from multiple disciplines worked together to create a unified design statement. Millet, deeply inspired by this commission, would promote these practices throughout his entire career.

After this commission, despite a scarcity of civic-art opportunities, Millet continued to find avenues to create large-scale works that would inspire diverse audiences. He illustrated books and articles for publishing houses like Harper & Brothers;

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<sup>18</sup> Frank Millet to Charles Deschamps, August 5, 1884. Francis Davis Millet and Millet Family Papers. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, New York, New York.

<sup>19</sup> His two mural paintings, of King David and of St. Luke’s Ox, line the central tower.

as Director of Functions at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, he organized dozens of parades and pageants, curating objects and people and making costumes and sets; and he created war medals for the United States government. Millet spent so much time working for a public cause that, with more painting commissions coming in after the start of the City Beautiful movement in the early twentieth century, he eventually gave up easel painting entirely. According to his old friend Adams, Millet "was public spirited to a degree which at times gravely interfered with his private interests."<sup>20</sup>

Civic art in late-nineteenth-century America was therefore the product of a highly self-conscious desire by artists and architects, as well as by politicians and businessmen, to educate American citizens about taste. To do this, they did not simply promote art in and of itself but, rather, put forth a singular artistic style: neoclassicism. By attempting to standardize artistic styles and practices, artists, architects, and special-interest groups promoted a unified artistic vision. In turn, through the use of classicism's ordered proportions and themes of civic virtue, civic art was used to encourage social harmony and common culture.<sup>21</sup> By cultivating audiences to appreciate classical principles of beauty and order, American artists believed they could create not only an atmosphere of good taste but also a better body politic.

Scholars like Bailey Van Hook and Michele Bogart have discussed nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century civic art in terms of mural painting and public sculpture, not to mention architecture.<sup>22</sup> Illustration and parades, however, are not often included under

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<sup>20</sup> Charles Francis Adams, Jr., in Brown, *Millet Memorial Meeting*, 22.

<sup>21</sup> For more on this, see Michele H. Bogart, *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal in New York City, 1890-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

<sup>22</sup> For their work on civic sculpture and painting see: Bogart, *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal*; Bailey Van Hook, *The Virgin & the Dynamo: Public Murals in American*



this term. Bogart, for instance, discusses illustration as “commercial art,” different from art with a civic function, because it was created for private publications. Parades, too, though compared to mural painting in recent scholarship, are also discussed as something similar to, but ultimately different from, civic art.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps because they are not understood as fine art in the same way as a painting or sculpture but rather as performance—a medium, I argue, is inherently connected to two-dimensional representation.

Throughout this dissertation, I use the term “civic art” to include illustration, performance, stained glass, public medals, and more. For artists in this period, the main purpose of civic art was, as Edwin Blashfield defined mural painting, to be “of the people, by the people, and for the people.”<sup>24</sup> It was meant to emphasize civic ideals and patriotism, and was geared toward a large audience. Because of this, I use the term to refer to all art forms that did just that. It should be noted, however, that the use of “civic art” to refer to all these works is my label. Millet himself never used the term and always referred to these works as separate entities: mural painting or wall decoration, illustration, and processions.

I have chosen to use this term because I feel it best implies the spirit of Millet’s body of work. All of this civic art was produced for a large audience in order to shape that audience. As Bogart argues about illustration, artists “saw the new technologies and

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*Architecture, 1893-1917* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003); and Van Hook, *Angels of Art*.

<sup>23</sup> Annelise K. Madsen, “Model Citizens: Mural Painting, Pageantry, and the Art of Civic Life in Progressive America,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 2010.

<sup>24</sup> Edwin Howland Blashfield, *Mural Painting in America: The Scammon Lectures*, delivered before the Art Institute of Chicago, March 1912 (New York: Scribner’s, 1928, 1913), 97.

modes of production as means to extend their reach and to create demand for more and better art. . . . Broad distribution of art would advance public taste and enlightenment; it would help to realize the democratic ideals of the nation.”<sup>25</sup> For artists like Millet, all of these art forms were meant to stimulate the minds of their viewers in an attempt to create a cultivated body of citizens.

At the same time, it should be stressed that, throughout most of his career, Millet’s so-called “public” for his civic art was essentially white and upper-middle class. In the late nineteenth century, though he saw himself as creating works “for the people,” those who visited his spaces or read *Harper’s Monthly* were primarily white. It was only spaces paid for by elite white males and geared to elite white males that offered Millet the possibility to practice his profession at the end of the century. Though Millet’s opportunities increased later in his career as he and other artists received more funding from the government to create works theoretically geared to a truer American public, those projects still catered to and were experienced by a primarily white male elite. As I will explore in the Baltimore Custom House chapter, though the building was technically a “public” space in that anyone could enter at any time, Millet’s murals were geared to the specific group of white men who used the space the most—ship captains. It is for this reason that I have chosen not to use the term “public art”. This type of art implies that it was made for a broad audience, which Millet’s clearly was not.

### **Cultural Evolution**

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<sup>25</sup> Michele H. Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 11.

In order to promote a program of American supremacy, Millet's civic art dealt with the subject of cultural evolution. Whether in murals, illustrations, parades, or lectures on costume design, he juxtaposed one culture against another in a linear and dynamic system. This choice of subject matter is somewhat perplexing. Not only did his peers deal rarely with this theme in their work, the two terms "culture" and "evolution" had only recently been defined, and were still being worked out in the fields of ethnography, anthropology, and sociology.<sup>26</sup> That Millet chose to engage with such new scientific concepts, instead of the more traditional themes of history and allegory, suggests a desire to find different ways of addressing and inspiring his audience.

In the nineteenth century, there was a growing awareness of cultural difference. Immigration was on the rise and ease of travel had increased exponentially, and Americans were experiencing unfamiliar cultural groups firsthand faster and more often than ever before. Despite these changes, however, Americans lacked the modern terminology with which to deal with these encounters. At the end of the nineteenth century, Americans confronting different cultural groups understood them on a hierarchical scale. Anglo Americans compared themselves to Italian, Chinese, and Turkish immigrants or African Americans in a linear progression of human difference, based primarily on physical properties. In this way, the Gilded Age was, according to literary historian Brad Evans, a period "before cultures." It was an era when anthropologists, writers, and the American public more generally sought to find new ways to negotiate the cultural differences that they were beginning to see around them on a daily basis.

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<sup>26</sup> Brad Evans, *Before Cultures: The Ethnographic Imagination in American Literature, 1865-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

The term “culture” was in use in this period. As today, it referred to the “complex whole” of society.<sup>27</sup> Man of letters Matthew Arnold and ethnographer Edward Burnett Tylor (figure 11) both used the word to interpret the modern existence and state of human society. However, what distinguishes their use of the term from the modern usage was the fact that Tylor and Arnold both referred to a singular culture. “Culture,” for them, was understood as a teleological process of development, with all ethnic groups placed along a single linear trajectory. It was not until Franz Boas used the word in the plural sense in 1906 that people began to disassociate “culture” from an evolutionary scale.<sup>28</sup>

The major difference between Tylor’s and Arnold’s work was that Tylor published his theory of “culture” under the guise of science. According to Tylor, writing in *Primitive Culture* in 1871,

Culture or civilization taken in its wide ethnographic sense is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

Writing through the lens of ethnography, Tylor used recent archeological and anthropological data to prove his theory of “culture.” Arnold, meanwhile, presented his understanding more as an idea than a proven fact. Arnold applied the “culture” concept to the development of the arts while Tylor used it to make sense of the invention of specific objects and technologies (in addition to subjects like religion and mythology). Because of this, Tylor’s theories were more prevalent in scientific inquiry and museum exhibitions of

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<sup>27</sup> George W. Stocking, Jr. “Matthew Arnold, E.B. Tylor, and the Uses of Invention.” In *Race, Culture, and Evolution; Essays in the History of Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1968), 73.

<sup>28</sup> Though Boas used the word in the plural sense in his commencement address at Atlanta University, it did not receive popular acceptance until the 1930s. Alan C. Braddock, *Thomas Eakins and the Cultures of Modernity* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2009), 3–4.

the day, and his understanding of “culture” was the most influential on Millet’s work. It is from this vantage point that I investigate Millet.

Crucial to Tylor’s definition of “culture” was what he termed the “comparative method.” In order to understand the similarities and differences of culture, ethnic groups had to be categorized in one of three stages: “savagery,” “barbarism,” or “civilization.” In order to do this, Tylor compared weapons, technologies, religious practices, and other material objects and customs across cultures. He arranged the results systematically into a progression, so that readers could see how specific ideas or objects developed across different “stages of culture.” The goal of *Primitive Culture* was thereby to demonstrate that “the phenomena of culture” was the result of progress. He argues that, “from an ideal point of view, civilization may be looked upon as the general improvement of mankind by higher organizations of the individual and of society, to the end of promoting at once man’s goodness, power, and happiness.”<sup>29</sup> The seeds of any technology or object could be found in an early stage, which then underwent a natural process of development to end up in its modern form.<sup>30</sup>

In this way, Tylor’s understanding of human development was linked to the work of Herbert Spencer. While Charles Darwin rooted his study of evolution in the scientific investigation of plant and animal forms, Spencer, in his ten-volume system of synthetic philosophy, written between 1862 and 1896, applied evolution to a range of subject matter: language, costume, fossils, behavior, education, architecture, and visual art. Indeed, Spencer’s synthetic philosophy made the case for universal evolution, one

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<sup>29</sup> Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*, Fifth edition (London: Murray, 1913), 27.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

brought on by progressive processes.<sup>31</sup> Spencer believed that the biological processes of nature were related to the same evolutionary laws that led to the development of society. Everything in the universe came together to move progress forward or to push out those elements that prevented its development.

Throughout Millet's early life, he would have encountered Tylor's and Spencer's way of thinking. He would have read about distinct ethnic groups in periodicals and books, and seen photographs and illustrations of "types" in popular forms of visual culture. He would have likely learned about cultural difference as a child, in textbooks such as Mitchell's *Intermediate Geography*, which grouped different races into "Stages of Society."<sup>32</sup> Millet's Tylorian understanding of culture also derived from museum exhibitions. Whether in displays at the National Museum in Washington, D.C., or in those at the Centennial Exhibition and World's Columbian, George Brown Goode, Otis Mason, Spencer Baird, and others presented culture in a series of three stages. Inspired by the work of Tylor via Lewis Henry Morgan's 1877 book *Ancient Society; or, Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization*, museum curators organized objects along a linear evolutionary scale.

While these sources likely influenced Millet because of their prevalence in this period, the majority of Millet's inspiration came from the work of Frederick Ward Putnam (figure 12) and Franz Boas (figure 13). On the one hand, there is a good chance that Millet knew these two anthropologists personally. Putnam was a graduate student under Louis Agassiz at Harvard while Millet was an undergraduate, and he later ran

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<sup>31</sup> Stocking, "The Dark-Skinned Savage: the Image of Primitive Man in Evolutionary Anthropology," in *Race, Culture, and Evolution*, 117–118.

<sup>32</sup> For more, see Braddock, *Thomas Eakins*, 6.

Harvard's Peabody Museum at a point when Millet was still closely associated with the university (making stained-glass windows for Alumni Hall in 1889). More importantly, Putnam was head of the Anthropology Department, known as Department M, at the World's Columbian, where Boas was his second in command. Millet was close with virtually everyone at the fair and likely knew these two personally.<sup>33</sup>

On the other hand, Millet's civic works represented not just cultural evolution but, rather, cultural evolution grouped by place. This emphasis on geography in relation to human development was deeply inspired by the work of Putnam and Boas. In Millet's lifetime, the two followed a Tylorian understanding of culture, but both were deeply critical of the idea that culture could be understood only in terms of human progress. In their exhibitions, they grouped objects not according to type of object but, rather, according to region. In the Anthropology Building at the World's Columbian, for instance, all Northwest Coast objects were together, while Southwest objects were grouped separately. In displays organized by the Smithsonian, meanwhile, objects from different regions were mixed together, so that types from around the world were highlighted—all weaving instruments from around the world, for instance, were grouped in a single case.

It is surprising that Millet emphasizes both regional differences and a broader linear scale of progress in his work. Millet's argument that regional and local differences are meaningful, while simultaneously comparing technological advances in disparate

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<sup>33</sup> At the World's Columbian, Millet befriended many different people through his various jobs. According to Millet's close friend James Hunt, "Mr. Millet was universally beloved by his employees, for he was known by every one of them from the boy carrying water to the man handling flags on tops of buildings." James Hunt, "Millet at Work: A Chronicle of Friendship," Pts. 1 and 2, *Art and Progress* 4:11 (September 1913): 1093.

locations, may represent divergent ideas. However, this was not a tension for Millet, who believed that it was important to show wide ranges and types of objects along a linear scale. Millet's project was grounded in the practice of juxtaposition and comparison—a practice that can only happen when what is distinctive about one region is dislocated enough to be put in comparison with the same thing from another place. In this way, Millet emphasized the specifics of geography as much as he could within a larger project that was often heterogeneous. By emphasizing place, he was able to more clearly and accurately display difference across a wide variety of ethnic groups.

Millet's interest in cultural difference was symptomatic of what Evans describes as the "ethnographic imagination." According to Evans, the "ethnographic imagination" was "the experimentation, sometime serious but often in the form of aesthetic dalliance with new ways of perceiving, representing, and producing structures of affiliation and difference."<sup>34</sup> An example of this, according to Evans, was works by Henry James about European high society, published alongside those by ethnographer Frank Hamilton about Zuni practices. For Evans, "The circulation of something like "cultures" became a sign of "Culture." The contact with or appreciation of cultural others, whether "primitive" or "civilized," became an indication of being "cultured."<sup>35</sup> In other words, through the "ethnographic imagination," Americans could better understand the differences around them and their own personal relationship to it.

Though Evans speaks of it in terms of literature, it is clear that the "ethnographic imagination" played out in art as well. Alan Braddock discusses it in terms of the easel paintings of Thomas Eakins. For Braddock, Eakins's work reflects a deep interest in

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<sup>34</sup> Evans, *Before Cultures*, 7.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.



“human difference, diffusion, and artistic nationalism.”<sup>36</sup> In this way, he portrays Eakins as invested in the study of cultural diversity and in the nascent anthropological project itself—even painting a portrait of Frank Hamilton Cushing (figure 14). Like Millet, Eakins worked in a period “before cultures,” and in his work attempted to negotiate what culture was and how it looked.

However, Millet’s project was different from Eakins’s. For one, Millet’s subject matter dealt with cultural difference as it played out on a global stage, while Eakins’s had a more national bent. Millet emphasized the diversity that he encountered on his journeys around the world, while Eakins often dealt with the people around him. Secondly, Eakins created small easel paintings, not large-scale works. Eakins’s works were commissioned by patrons or produced in the studio and sold after the fact. Millet’s, meanwhile, were massive works, and in the case of the performances were created on the spot. They were meant and indeed geared toward large audiences. Eakins’s were not. Though contemporaries, and both working within the mode of academic realism, Millet’s engagement with cultural difference was not just a means of exploring it for himself and his small circle of collectors; rather, he aimed to present and interpret difference for a larger American public.

Millet’s civic art might also be compared to works produced by American artists working in the early twentieth century. The art historian Lauren Kroiz has recently described the ways in which cultural difference transformed the artistic practices and style of the Stieglitz circle. Working in New York, she argues, and “operating in a milieu where boundaries of race and media were under construction and under pressure, the

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<sup>36</sup> Braddock, *Thomas Eakins*, 2.

continual process of categorization, differentiation, and synthesis was precisely what fomented aesthetic change.”<sup>37</sup> Studying the work of a group of artists who included a number of immigrants among their ranks, she argues that “debates about what American modernism could be were informed by the historical context: those debates took place in northern cities, where an unprecedented influx of new immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, along with native-born blacks and whites from Southern and rural regions, provoked fresh uncertainty about who and what could be considered American.”<sup>38</sup> Described as “composite modernism,” Kroiz contends that modernism emerged because of the “composite” nature of their work: “composite refers to individuals, groups, or images pushed together but maintaining their difference, layered to reveal their sameness, or synthesized (frequently by sexual reproduction) into something new—significations that parallel popular period models for integrating ethnic and racial differences in the United States: cultural pluralism, assimilation, and miscegenation.”<sup>39</sup>

Millet’s work fits nicely as a precursor to this composite modernism. Though certainly not modern in its style, there is something inherently new about Millet’s project. What was innovative was the emphasis on cultural difference. Though Millet did not practice the pioneering medium specificity that Kroiz describes of the Stieglitz circle artists, in some ways Millet’s work functioned on a more far-reaching level than theirs. While they were creating works for an art magazine and private gallery shows, Millet

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<sup>37</sup> Lauren Kroiz, *Creative Composites: Modernism, Race, and the Stieglitz Circle* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press; Washington, D.C.: The Phillips Collection, 2012), 3.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

was making his images of cultural difference for a large viewing public. Performing parades at the World's Columbian and publishing illustrations in *Harper's Monthly* meant that his works were reaching hundreds of thousands of viewers. Their impact was therefore presumably much greater than the work of the Stieglitz circle. Despite its obvious imperialist undertones, to signal out cultural difference at all to a massive audience was highly unusual in this period. As I argue in chapter four, Millet's work was ultimately deemed too new by government agents hiring artists. It was potentially because of this engagement with cultural difference in his civic works that he was not hired for large federal commissions.

### **Objects and Accuracy**

Millet attempted to promote this hierarchical understanding of cultural difference through carefully studied objects and bodies. Millet believed that accurately rendered reproductions of historical subjects could teach audiences about the world more fully than any other subject matter. Most artists working for a public audience in this period followed this same belief system. Though they painted singular images of historical events, they emphasized careful scrutiny of detail in those works. To ensure that they were teaching an accurate lesson, artists spent a great deal of time, sometimes multiple years, learning about their subjects. The quest for accuracy was an important one, as it solidified the artists' standing as educators and public servants.

Richard Guy Wilson has written at length about the Gilded Age artists' fascination with research in painting, sculpture, and architecture.<sup>40</sup> Following the

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<sup>40</sup> Richard Guy Wilson, *The American Renaissance, 1876-1917* (Brooklyn, N.Y.:

teachings of the *École des Beaux-Arts*, American academic painters approached their art with what Wilson describes as a spirit of “scientific rigor, inquiry and definition.”<sup>41</sup> Whether working on a private easel work or a public commission, these artists visited foreign countries, studied in museums and libraries across the globe, collected objects for inspiration, made historical costumes by hand, and posed models in period-specific settings. As Wilson points out, Charles McKim ordered a wax impression of the joints of the Erechtheum in Athens as a study model. For the Lincoln Monument, Daniel Chester French used Matthew Brady photographs and casts of Lincoln’s death mask and hands, and studied Lincoln’s shoes. Meanwhile, Edwin Austin Abbey wrote of his own work, “I feel it my duty as well as my pleasure to be guilty of as few historical inaccuracies as this antiquarian age permits.”<sup>42</sup>

Millet’s own interest in historical accuracy was deeply rooted to this Beaux-Arts practice. However, his took on a slightly different form from many of his colleagues. On the one hand, Millet traveled more than many of his fellow artists. While abroad, he immersed himself in foreign cultures to better understand the diversity of the world. He collected and studied dress, objects, and technologies in an attempt to know places authentically. It was in doing so that he could promote himself to patrons as not only a traveler of the world but also a true knower of the world. Through this direct contact, he understood the world more fully than most other Americans, or so he believed.

On the other hand, Millet’s interest in accuracy was different, because it was rooted not in historical scenes but in historical objects. More than most artists in this

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Brooklyn Museum; New York: distributed by Pantheon Books, 1979), 57.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

period, Millet traveled extensively to museums all over the world to examine their collections and study objects on view. When representing technologies, he visited sites where objects were made or where historical examples remained in situ. Millet believed that historical accuracy lay in the details of the work.

Millet believed that human and historical development could most easily be observed in objects. This thought process was deeply rooted in anthropological practice. In the mid-nineteenth century, the burgeoning field of anthropology emphasized visual modes as a way of gaining and presenting information. Wary of information gleaned from personal conversations with native or foreign people, anthropologists trusted objects and information recorded with the camera.<sup>43</sup> According to the British anatomist W. H. Flower, “physical characters are the best, in fact the only tests ... language, customs, etc. may help or give indications, but they are often misleading.”<sup>44</sup> For scientists like Tylor, external objects offered stable forms of knowledge, or what he termed “object lessons.”<sup>45</sup> Objects and photographs presented culture with a type of “knowability” that language and even the written word could not do. This interest in objects, and in the concept of culture more generally, arose in response to a slightly earlier one, in which the body was held as a site of knowledge. In his emphasis (and invention) of culture, Tylor moved the place of study away from the body and toward the “complex whole” of society. As anthropologist Christopher Pinney explains, he “remove[d] physiological and racial from the ambit of

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<sup>43</sup> Christopher Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 14.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*

anthropology and reconstituted man as primary bearer not of genetic inheritance but of what was fashioned by society.”<sup>46</sup>

Because of this, as historian Steven Conn has argued, nineteenth-century anthropology, most of which was based in museums, emphasized an “object-based epistemology.”<sup>47</sup> In other words, anthropologists argued that objects had the power to teach and tell stories. Objects were not opaque things; rather, with careful attention, they could offer lessons and important information about the world.<sup>48</sup> As a result, anthropologists collected specimens with great fervor in this period, and then displayed them in museums in an attempt to teach viewers about the world.

As Conn has noted, “museum objects both stood as synecdoches so that each butterfly or ceramic pot stood for the whole of the category of butterflies or pots and as metonyms so that each stood for part of the larger body of knowledge for natural history or for anthropology.”<sup>49</sup> The lesson, however, was not only found in the objects themselves but in the careful arrangement and organization of the objects. For Conn, “meaning was thus constructed visually with objects like words in a text as the fundamental building blocks of the museum language.”<sup>50</sup>

This fascination with objects was related to a general Victorian fascination with objects during this period.<sup>51</sup> However, unlike objects found in department stores or displayed in one’s own home, museum objects were removed from circulation and were

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>47</sup> Steven Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 4.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>51</sup> For more on this see: Miles Orvell, *The Real Thing: imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

invested with a different kind of value. As Conn has argued, “in place of functional or monetary value, absent now precisely because the objects no longer circulate, museum objects in the late nineteenth century were given an intellectual value.”<sup>52</sup> According to Conn, objects were imbued with value by the curators and by their organization within the museum. But they were also imbued with meaning by those who viewed them. For Conn, “value [was] completed through attention paid them by museum visitors.”<sup>53</sup>

In this period, it was museums, not universities, that presented and developed new ways of understanding and dealing with the world and with cultural difference.<sup>54</sup>

Universities were seen as tired institutions at the end of the nineteenth century. University professors did not often engage with original research and spent little time teaching about new ideas. Even when new information was presented in a university setting, it was not disseminated to a large group. Universities were exclusive and presented knowledge on a small scale. Museums, on the other hand, displayed cutting-edge research. They led expeditions and encouraged the dissemination of new modes of thinking and looking. Museums also made information available to a large public through their objects. They placed these objects in glass cases and encouraged people to look and learn through the act of viewing them. In this way, it was museums, more than universities or academic writing, which negotiated cultural difference in this period. It therefore makes sense that Millet would have looked to their models to create civic art that would teach about cultural difference on a large scale.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 15.

The view of the world presented by the museum was a hierarchal one. Curators from Putnam to Mason organized their exhibits according to Tylor's model of culture, with savage objects at the bottom and civilized ones on the top. In some museum buildings, this meant literally placing Anglo Saxon works of art on the upper floors and indigenous works in the basement.<sup>55</sup> The goal of this message was not only to teach white elites about their status in human development but also to promote a message of white supremacy to immigrant audiences.

American museums experienced unprecedented growth at the same time that immigration was on the rise. Museums were used as spaces to educate those immigrant groups as a means of Americanizing and "civilizing" those viewers. Because knowledge was presented through objects and not words, it was more readably understandable to people who might not be able to speak the language. At the same time, because these objects were housed in a museum and collected by scientists in the field, they were understood to communicate knowledge scientifically, in a way that was more accurate than information presented in other forms or in other more popular venues.<sup>56</sup>

Millet's own emphasis on objects came from this museum context. He, like Mason, Putnam, Boas, and other curators in the late nineteenth century, believed that objects could teach. They were inherently imbued with meaning, and if viewers looked at them under the right conditions they could be taught a specific lesson.

At the same time, Millet saw objects as the subjects through which to emphasize the authenticity of his project. Millet spent a great deal of time in museums viewing objects and likely learning the strategies used to organize those objects in a way that was

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 89.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 6.



coherent and systematic. Millet then made use of these strategies in his own work, as a means of grounding his civic art in the realm of scientific knowledge. By focusing on objects (particularly objects, he often points out, housed in museums), Millet thereby aligns his work to a specific type of anthropology. He makes use of the strategies explored in anthropology museums in an attempt to teach his own viewers a lesson about the world.

### **Rethinking an American Artist**

Despite the complicated, multi-disciplinary nature of Millet's project and his crucial role in the American art world, he was largely forgotten by the 1920s. Because his work, particularly his private easel paintings, was understood to be the antithesis of modernism, he was almost entirely written out of the history of American art. Since the 1970s, however, there has been a small resurgence in the work of American Beaux-Arts artists, and interest in Millet has slightly increased. H. Barbara Weinberg published an article about Millet's career in 1977, and he receives careful treatment in a study of the Hudson County Courthouse published in 1986. Marc Simpson wrote a dissertation in 1993 about the artists working in Broadway, England, in which Millet received his own chapter. Simpson subsequently published an article on the topic in the *Archives of American Art*. In 1997, Michele Mead Dekker wrote a master's thesis on the Baltimore murals, and Karen A. Zukowski wrote about Millet in 1999 in her dissertation on late-nineteenth-century American artist studios. Gina D'Angelo wrote a Ph.D. dissertation on Millet's early work in 2004.

My dissertation supplements the small body of literature devoted to the work of this quintessential Beaux-Arts painter. It attempts to provide a detailed reading of his oeuvre in order to counter his status as a conservative, traditional, and hackneyed artist. Moreover, I hope to provide a more nuanced reading of an academic painter in an attempt to complicate our understanding of what it meant to follow a Beaux-Arts agenda. Artists like Millet, Abbey, Kenyon Cox, Howard Pyle, and a whole slew of others have often been discussed in identical terms. However, each one approached their subject and their ideals with a vastly different set of tools and goals, making the American Renaissance movement a more textured and varied object of study than has previously been argued. This rethinking of the status of a Gilded Age artist is deeply indebted to the work of Sarah Burns and her argument that the public identities of artists were carefully constructed and constantly changing in this period.

Alan Braddock's work on Thomas Eakins has proved extremely important for my project as well. By examining Eakins's work in a larger cultural context, including local color literature, museums collecting, and mass media, Braddock argues that Eakins's work was informed by many sources. Like Braddock, I explore Millet's understanding of culture in a similar historical moment, influenced also by contemporary social theory and intellectual thought as well as by popular culture. I argue that Millet, like Eakins, understood culture in a pre-modern sense. As I have previously stated, my work deviates from Braddock's in the fact that I look only at public commissions, not at private easel works.

The work of Jo Ann Mancini, in particular her understanding of pre-modernism, is also crucial to understanding Millet's work. While Mancini uses the term "pre-

modernism” to describe the role of critical writing in the emergence of modernism, I take Mancini’s argument in a new direction. In this dissertation, I use Millet as an example of a painter whose artistic practice might be understood as symptomatic of this emergence. Despite his lack of formal experimentation, I argue that Millet was in fact pre-modern, because of his ability to recognize the limitations of his own art movement and look elsewhere for new subject matter.

In this way, this dissertation is also influenced by the writing of Lauren Kroiz and Jacqueline Francis, who explore the notion of cultural difference as it plays out in the work of immigrant artists and in the case of Stieglitz, an artist influenced by those immigrant artists. In thinking about the relationship between cultural difference and modernism, these authors have argued that aesthetics and difference are crucially linked. Millet’s work, though from an earlier moment, uses cultural difference similarly: as a means of re-conceptualizing what civic art should look like for a modern audience.

Civic art from this period and the idea of an artist as a public servant has received some critical attention in the past twenty years.<sup>57</sup> In her study of public sculpture, Michele Bogart describes the relationship between sculptors and their government patrons. She writes about the desire to create a sense of civic virtue with the works, but ultimately concludes that the public did not respond well to sculptors’ elitist language. Bailey Van Hook, on the other hand, describes the relationship between government

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<sup>57</sup> Meanwhile my understanding of “public art” in this period derives from the work of Harriet Senie and Sally Webster, among others, who in their compilation *Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context, and Controversy* discuss the problems that have arisen throughout American history when artists attempt to create work “for the people.” My understanding of the power structures inherent to public art and public space comes from the work of Rosalyn Deutsche, Henri Lefebvre, Cameron Cartiere, and Shelly Willis.

patronage and the artist at length. She writes about the government's hands-off approach and the mural painters' desire to educate the public. Finally, Annelise Madsen, in her work on mural painting and pageantry, discusses both sets of artists as sharing a Progressive ethos. She argues that mural painters (and pageant members) saw their role as reformists not only of art but also of public welfare. She describes how they hoped to create an art that emphasized, and thereby created, a sense of community among all segments of the public. These works have been invaluable to my study of Millet, who believed it his duty to teach his audience about art.

This dissertation is broken down into four chapters. Each one concentrates on a specific work of civic art in a different medium. The dissertation focuses especially on images of cultural difference, and traces the development of this theme throughout Millet's career. I argue that Millet's understanding and presentation of cultural difference remained the same from his early days as a civic artist until the end of his life.

Chapter one focuses on the semi-public frieze murals painted by Millet and a partner, George Yewell, in the Veteran's Room at the Seventh Regiment Armory in 1880. The murals, taking on the subject of the history of warfare throughout the globe, are explored in light of museum exhibitions of weapons. I argue that, in the Veteran's Room, Millet first presented his understanding of cultural difference as a hierarchy, placing Native American cultural practices directly in contrast with contemporary Anglo Saxon ones.

In chapter two, I explore Millet's illustrations of the cultures along the Danube River. Commissioned by *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Millet wrote about and illustrated images of the Balkan people in an attempt to present Eastern European "types"

to his white American audience. I argue that *Harper's Monthly*, with its wide circulation and intimate place within the family home, served as a space of public discourse. Millet took advantage of this, and presented a series of images that readers could discuss while at the same time use as a key to interpreting the new immigrants arriving around them.

Chapter three examines Millet's parade of land vehicles at the World's Columbian Exposition. I explore the Midway groups that participated in the parade, with particular emphasis on the Dahomians. By exploring the reception of the Dahomians at the fair in the context of the parade, I argue that Millet's public procession (in its emphasis on racial hierarchies) was a dynamic visual spectacle.

The final chapter takes a look at a later mural painting—this one from a government-sponsored building, the Baltimore Custom House. Through an examination of this mural cycle, particularly the representation of a Chinese junk, I argue that Millet, yet again, presented a cultural hierarchy in order to emphasize American greatness.

## Chapter One: Americans at War in the Seventh Regiment Armory

When Frank Millet was fifteen, he enlisted in the Union Army as a drummer boy. The Millets, a proud New England family who could trace their ancestors to John and Priscilla Alden, staunchly supported the Union and opposed slavery. When war broke out, Asa Millet, Frank's father, immediately offered his services and acted as a surgeon on the front several times, with Frank joining him toward the end of the war in Fredericksburg.<sup>58</sup> Millet was fascinated with the subject of war, as a drummer boy and in his adult life, too, covering two important wars as a newspaper correspondent: the Russo-Turkish War of 1878-79 and the Spanish-American War of 1899. For both assignments, he lived with soldiers and helped restore peace in the aftermath of battles. He studied weaponry, costumes, and war practices and befriended many who fought in foreign armies. When he arrived back in the States after these adventures, he put his war experiences to use in paintings and stories. Significantly, after the campaign with the Russians, Louis Comfort Tiffany offered the young artist an opportunity to paint about war, in the Seventh Regiment Armory in New York City.

In the Veteran's Room at the Armory (figure 1.1), Millet and another artist, George Yewell, depicted the history of war in a frieze (figure 1.2). This painting, Millet's first official large-scale commission after Trinity Church, allowed him to explore the subject of war in a major work, and afforded Millet the opportunity to think through how monumental painting should look and function. It was here that Millet first began to investigate the type of subject matter that would suit a large audience. Understanding this

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<sup>58</sup> Gina M. D'Angelo, 'Francis Davis Millet: The Early Years of "A Cosmopolitan Yankee," 1846-1884,' Ph.D. Dissertation, City University of New York, 2004, 25.

space as a semi-public one, he wanted to be sure to create a work that would garner interest and encourage the commission of other large-scale works by American artists.

At this time, there were few large-scale commissions for artists, particularly painters. Because of this, Millet and Yewell were left on their own (with the aid of Tiffany) to determine how this example of early civic painting should look. Though Millet had worked on Trinity Church, other institutions rarely paid artists to create monumental works to decorate their interiors. On occasion, hotels, social clubs, or, in this case, a military organization commissioned artists, but governmental and institutional patrons were generally uninterested. There were two main reasons for this. On the one hand, Americans still understood decoration of public buildings as frivolous and excessive. Many believed that interior painting was not worth the expense. On the other hand, few American artists were actually able to paint on such a large scale. Most had not received this type of training, and therefore were not capable of producing monumental works.<sup>59</sup> For Millet, with little experience and with few models from which to study, the Veteran's Room project was an experiment in how to create a work that would engage a large (albeit primarily white elite) viewing public.

The choices that Millet and Yewell made in creating a large-scale work that they wanted to be relevant and interesting to their audience were revealing in many ways, reflecting themes, techniques, and ideas that were novel at the time and repeated in Millet's subsequent works of civic art. The frieze celebrates the progressive course of Anglo Saxon culture and is grounded in a Tylorian understanding of culture and

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<sup>59</sup> Harriet F. Senie, "Introduction," in *Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context, and Controversy*, ed. Harriet F. Senie and Sally Webster (New York: IconEditions, c1992), xii-xiii.

comparative techniques. It emphasizes objects and technologies and borrows from organizational structures of museum exhibitions of this period. Subjects are depicted with accuracy and care, even when a painting style or technique from another culture (Sioux hide painting, for instance) is being referenced. The Veteran's Room mural cycle experiment lays the groundwork for the unusual civic-art program that Millet would promote until his death.

### **The History of Warfare**

In off-white, beige, brown, and metallic-silver hues, the frieze in the Veteran's Room features Aztec headdresses, the sword of an Indian "rajah" from the sixteenth century, and a Colt Peacemaker circa 1873—to name only a few of the dozens of arms and armor depicted. These objects are placed in a web of knot-like ornament that surrounds painted battle vignettes and shields. The vignettes, meanwhile, feature schematic renderings of figures practicing different methods of warfare, such as an Etruscan mounting a chariot and a tug-of-war between a Greek soldier and an Amazon. The shields depict imagery representing geography or historical time periods: a lotus plant for Egypt and an elephant head for India. In other words, Millet and Yewell present the history of warfare as a history of invention. Instead of focusing on singular events in history, or on battles between cultural groups, they emphasized the development of technologies of warfare in specific places during important historical epochs. Individual events and actors are eschewed for an emphasis on particular weapons and modes of armor. This choice was relevant to the space itself, which, as an armory, held weapons, including some that were featured in Millet and Yewell's frieze.



Millet and Yewell present the history of warfare as a global evolution, beginning with Native American methods and ending with those practiced by the Seventh during the Civil War. Though the work was theoretically a historical chronology, it also emphasized a Tylorian understanding of culture. It begins with the “primitive” groups, represented by American indigenous populations, on the north wall, then moves on to the “barbarous” groups of Mongolia, China, and Japan on the east wall, the “low civilization” of Greece and Rome on the south wall, and medieval Europe on the west wall, and finally ends with the “high civilization” of England, Germany, and the United States on the left side of the north wall. The goal of the frieze was to teach the elite white veterans who occupied the room about their powerful place as the most highly evolved soldiers in history. The frieze argues that modern American soldiers had, through their use of contemporary firearm technologies, mastered the art of “civilized” warfare—depicted as almost nonviolent and bloodless.

### *The Veteran’s Room*

It seems logical that Millet and Yewell chose the subject of arms and armor to decorate a veterans’ room located in an armory. The building (figures 1.3 and 1.4) was designed for the Seventh Regiment, a volunteer reserve army and, later, a part of the Nation Guard. It was a large space for practicing drills and for storing weapons. Designed by Charles W. Clinton and completed in 1880, the building is a castellated fortress of red brick, with raised and battered masonry foundations, tall narrow windows protected by iron grilles, massive sally ports, and cornices with corbelled brickwork. The building originally featured a large tower that stretched out of the middle bay of the Park Avenue

side and an impressive double-sided staircase in front of the entrance. The interior is perhaps even grander than the building's façade, featuring imposing corridors; high ceilings; a large administration block in the front with spacious rooms, conceived of by New York's most prestigious designers, devoted to each company, the veterans, the board of officers, dining and reception, and so on;<sup>60</sup> and a 55,000-square-foot drill hall, made of massive steel trusses, in the rear.

Located in the northwest corner of the first floor (figure 1.5), the Veteran's Room (figure 1.6) was designed by Louis Comfort Tiffany, the internationally renowned artist and son of the owner of the luxury-goods store Tiffany & Company, and Associated Artists,<sup>61</sup> a firm Tiffany had created two years earlier.<sup>62</sup> Practitioners of the Aesthetic

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<sup>60</sup> Other firms that designed rooms included Pottier & Stymus, Alexander Roux & Co., and Herter Brothers.

<sup>61</sup> While the building and the majority of its interior decorations were sponsored by all members of the regiment, as well as by outside benefactors, the Veteran's Room was paid for only by veterans of the regiment. It is for this reason that Tiffany was hired for this space and its adjoining library only. The veterans wanted their space to be aligned to their elaborately designed private homes, and they looked to Tiffany to design a space to do just that. Chelsea Bruner, "The Seventh Regiment Armory Commission and Design: Elite Identity, Aesthetic Patronage and Professional Practice in Gilded Age New York," Ph.D. Dissertation, City University of New York, 2013.

<sup>62</sup> The firm formed as three distinct entities: Tiffany & Wheeler for embroideries, Tiffany & de Forest for decorating services, and L. C. Tiffany & Co. for furniture. By the middle of June, 1881, they merged into a single firm: Louis C. Tiffany & Co., Associated Artists. In reality, however, the work produced by the firm was primarily done by Tiffany and Wheeler. Tiffany, an academically trained painter, was in charge of the overall scheme of the designs, as well as the glass, while Wheeler created the embroideries. De Forest and Coleman were only brought in for consultation. Tiffany also hired designers for specific details. In the case of the Veteran's Room, he hired Stanford White to consult on the architectural arrangement of the space. He also hired Millet and Yewell to design the frieze. This collaboration was a radical strategy at the time, and was considered an experiment by all those who participated. The Veteran's Room was the largest, most elaborate space the firm had designed up to this point, and it was celebrated and criticized for just that. Roberta A. Mayer and Carolyn K. Lane, "Disassociating the 'Associated Artists': The Early Business Ventures of Louis C. Tiffany, Candace T. Wheeler and Lockwood de Forest," *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 8:2 (Spring-Summer 2001), 2–36.

movement, Associated Artists designed the Veteran's Room to function as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total work of art.<sup>63</sup> To create such a work, Tiffany emphasized unity in his design. He did this by calling attention to the military nature of the space. In every material, ornamental pattern, and tiny detail, Tiffany references the objects and materials of war: chainmail was wrapped around the columns, metal shields decorated the wall panels, ornament inspired by actual armor decorated the ceiling, and the frieze literally depicted the history of war. Unlike the other rooms in the building, which featured floral motifs similar to the sitting rooms designed for New York's elite, Tiffany & Associated Artists employed a visual vocabulary that related to the function of the room. According to one reviewer,

It is such a clever escape to get one of our noble public rooms out of the hands of the man-milliners, who put fine furniture in them, and fine frescoes on them, and finest satins about them—all meaning nothing, and who do not study or comprehend the significance of decorative media, and the power in colors and in lines, to make an atmosphere in a room or house, that shall be redolent of the aims and purposes and meditative outlooks, that belong or should belong to the occupants.<sup>64</sup>

The frieze was a crucial component of Associated Artists' design. Though it was a decorative element contributing to the overarching effect, the frieze was not pure ornamentation. One reviewer exclaimed, "Very much happier, as it seems to us, is this belted story of all war-times wrought into a severe adorning frieze, than all the arabesques, or cupids, or nymphs, that might in some hands have chased their idle ways over the same lifted spaces."<sup>65</sup> While friezes were included in elaborately designed

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<sup>63</sup> Other *Gesamtkunstwerks* include the Henry Marquand House or James McNeill Whistler's Peacock Room. Designed by artists and designers who followed Aesthetic principles, these rooms emphasized sumptuous materials and elaborate ornament.

<sup>64</sup> Ik Marvel, *The Veteran's Room* (New York: privately printed, 1881), 21.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

interiors, they mostly featured pure ornament. In the Reception Room at the Seventh Regiment Armory (figure 1.7), across the hall from the Veteran's Room, the frieze was of a more typical variety, representing a series of repeating floral motifs. Made using the technique of marouflage—a process by which a canvas is attached to the wall using plaster—the frieze in the Veteran's Room was meant to be the focal point of the room, not pure ornamentation. Because of this, Tiffany, who emphasized collaboration at his firm, engaged painters who could create such large-scale, elaborate art works. Millet was likely hired because he was one of a handful of artists who had experience with such painting, through his efforts at Trinity Church. Yewell, meanwhile, a reputable landscape and portrait painter who had studied in Europe and had a studio in the Tenth Street Studio Building, was likely brought in because of his friendship with either Millet or Tiffany.<sup>66</sup>

The importance of the frieze to the overall design of the room is made clear in an illustration from *Harper's Magazine* (figure 1.8). In a view taken from the doorway of the adjacent library, the artist presents the room with exaggerated perspective, as if crouching down and looking up. As the viewer focuses on the upper portion of the print, the ceiling pulls their eye to the frieze, which is framed by candelabras and two massive columns that fill the center of the image. The frieze itself is described in detail; some of the shields and vignettes are easily identifiable, as two arms of the long and narrow work are almost entirely in view. From the image, it becomes clear that the frieze was a focal point for those in the space, as well. Slumped down in a heavy wooden chair, which anchors him to the space, an officer seated on the left focuses his attention toward the panels on the eastern wall. Whether pulled in by the intricate ironwork or by the upward-

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<sup>66</sup> Gerald M. Ackerman, "George Henry Yewell," *American Orientalists* (Courbevoie: ACR, 1994): 284.

pointing columns and pilasters, all eyes were directed upward. Similarly, the two men on the balcony, seemingly dwarfed by the large panels above them, can easily view the north section of the frieze from this vantage point, and probably will as soon as they readjust their viewing positions or turn to leave.

As the focal point of the room, the frieze functioned to unite all the disparate parts of the space. Its color palette matched that of the heavy wood furniture and dark paneling. Its glittering paint, made even more noticeable through gas lighting, was also applied to other surfaces of the space, like the ceiling. Meanwhile, the shields within the frieze rhymed nicely with the shields decorating the wall just below it. The rest of the ornament, from the latticework screen to the ceiling design to the stained-glass windows, featured abstract designs and patterns, meaning that this was the only part of the room that displayed narrative and illusionism. It commanded attention precisely because of the story it had to tell.

### *Civilized versus Savage*

The narrative in the frieze told the history of warfare as a cultural evolution of specific technologies. Throughout the frieze, forms of armor, swords, bows and arrow, firearms, and other weapons technologies are traced from start to finish. Viewers sitting in the heavy oak chairs could watch as a Native American bow and arrow was replaced by a medieval crossbow. They could see as thirteenth-century firearms developed into Colt revolvers and Remington Rolling Blocks. With close attention to detail, this frieze presents every example, “savage” or “civilized,” with careful scrutiny.

This is clearest on the north wall, where Native American practices are directly juxtaposed with contemporary Anglo American ones (details, figures 1.9-1.11). In between the start and end of the frieze is a circular shield larger than the rest featuring the Seventh's motto "Pro Patria et Gloria" (figure 1.10). Above the circular panel is a Remington rifle with its bayonet point touching a spear of Native American origin. Below that is a Colt revolver resting against the head of a Native American tomahawk. These weapons are depicted naturalistically, and suggest that Millet and Yewell hoped to teach viewers about cultural difference. That they depicted these objects with cultural sensitivity at all implies that the artists hoped to show the Anglo American veterans what indigenous weapons looked like in reality. The goal was to provide accurate representations, to enact a lesson in which viewers could compare and contrast distinct types of objects.

Much like Edward Burnett Tylor's "comparative method," Millet and Yewell presented an evolution, in which different objects were juxtaposed to better understand the development of mankind. According to Tylor, "On the definite basis of compared facts, ethnographers are able to set up at least a rough scale of civilization."<sup>67</sup> For Tylor, the goal was to treat mankind as a single entity and then to place different groups at various grades along a spectrum. In the Veteran's Room, Aztec, Egyptian, and Roman practices and weapons, for example, lead up to contemporary North American ones. Early non-Western cultures are thereby placed in relation to, but also in contrast with, modern Western ones. In this way, the entire world and its history (at least in terms of

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<sup>67</sup> Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*, Fifth ed. (London: Murray, 1913), 27.

warfare) was understood on a linear scale, in which all groups were related to one another, despite their differences.

On the north wall, in particular, “savage” and “civilized” war practices face off directly, promoting a message of Anglo American superiority. The center of the wall, where the Native American spear touches the Remington Rolling Block’s bayonet, was described as a “meeting”—an actual confrontation—“of the latest war forces and the barbarian symbols of massacre.”<sup>68</sup>

Though Millet and Yewell do not put the two civilizations at odds with one other in a single scene, their relationship can be interpreted through this symbolic imagery. This is done through the close proximity of the weapons, and also through the juxtaposition of the vignettes. In the vignette on the right side (figure 1.11), one Native American (perhaps a Sioux, given the style? I will discuss this type of imagery below) attempts to pull another off a horse, while both trample over a fallen body. On the left side (figure 1.9), a group of three officers holding bayonets face off with a man (presumably a Confederate soldier) on a horse. While the Native American fights his enemy in a way that is physical and up close, the mechanized Anglo Americans fight at a distance, using a method that is indirect and bloodless—this is reiterated through the choice of weapons depicted in the tracery. The Native Americans are, according to Millet and Yewell, brutal and ruthless, but the United States Army was efficient and practiced war in a way that eliminated pain or suffering.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Marvel, *The Veteran’s Room*, 22.

<sup>69</sup> It should be noted that Millet also likely painted the Civil War scene as he did—without action or bloodshed—because he was painting during the Reconstruction Era. Northerners and Southerners were attempting to work together and rebuild a united nation. To paint an image that pitted one group of Anglo Americans against another in a

With their physical acts of warfare and primitive forms of weaponry, the Native Americans are represented as the savages of society, while the Anglo Americans with their guns represent the apex of civilization. As T. J. Jackson Lears has pointed out, the bloodthirsty warrior of earlier decades had given way to the rational soldier after the Civil War, singled out for his self-control and peaceful modes of resolution.<sup>70</sup> As Mary Blanchard has argued, the heroic soldier/citizen type was in many cases eschewed entirely in favor of images of technology used to symbolize male strength.<sup>71</sup> Through this juxtaposition of civilized versus primitive, new versus old, modern versus ancient, the frieze maintains that the most advanced civilization is modern day Anglo America. Millet and Yewell's frieze, therefore, serves as a lesson of how far America had come by 1880, from a land of wild savages to a dominant military force in the Western world. Ignoring scenes of actual battle and bloodshed, the juxtaposition of weapons and their uses served as a lesson in the development of civilization.

This image of the peaceful civilized American soldier was, of course, a complete myth. Battles were happening across the country, as American soldiers were brutally killing and subjugating a wide number of indigenous populations. The gun was no less bloody than any other instrument of war, and Native Americans were being massacred in a way that was messy and painful. What Millet and Yewell call to mind in this panel is

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violent struggle would not have been patriotic. It would not have resonated with the veterans, nor did it fit with Millet's own agenda. At the same time, as I will discuss below, a bloody battle scene between the two would have been all too familiar for audiences who, having experienced the Civil War firsthand, likely did not want to relive the traumatic events.

<sup>70</sup> T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 100.

<sup>71</sup> Mary Warner Blanchard, *Oscar Wilde's America: Counterculture in the Gilded Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 5.



therefore the brutal struggle between two cultural groups, as one attempted to completely eradicate another in the name of American imperialism. Not only were Millet and Yewell attempting to demonstrate the differences between “primitive” and “civilized,” they were also making a case for why “primitive” ways of life should be eradicated entirely. The “savage” states, exemplified by indigenous North Americans, were considered dangerous, and it was the responsibility of the members of the highest form of civilization to remove them, so that civilization could progress to its fullest capabilities.

### **Commemorating the Seventh Regiment**

In the frieze, Millet and Yewell depict not just any Anglo Americans as the highest form of civilization but, specifically, the Seventh Regiment. According to a pamphlet published by the regiment about the frieze, three soldiers standing in formation in the last vignette symbolize the Seventh.<sup>72</sup> Wearing their Union uniforms, the soldiers represent the North in the face of Southern rebellion. They are poised and fearless, ready to act as the horseman draws nearer. Surrounding this panel are weapons of war that were used during the Civil War and after, some specifically by the Seventh. Painted in profile and almost true to life in their size, they are straightforward images of individual types: a Remington Rolling Block, a Minié-type rifled musket, the Colt Peacemaker, and a cartridge belt (figure 1.10). In this way, Millet and Yewell’s frieze commemorated the Seventh’s efforts in the Civil War and their role as the nation’s protectors afterwards. As a volunteer militia, the Seventh served the country valiantly, and in 1880 continued to condition their bodies and minds in preparation for future battles. By depicting the

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<sup>72</sup> Marvel, *The Veteran’s Room*, 22.

Seventh and their weapons as the culmination of evolution, Millet and Yewell wanted to commemorate this volunteer militia and memorialize them in front of the large numbers of people who entered the space.

### *The Seventh and their Armory*

The earliest incarnation of the Seventh Regiment was organized in 1806. Members of this volunteer militia policed the city, marched in parades, and escorted visiting dignitaries. Members of the Seventh fought in the War of 1812 and the Civil War. One of the earliest regiments to enlist in the North, they fought for the Union along with other volunteer regiments during major battles. A total of 58 men from the Seventh lost their lives.

The Seventh's service in the Civil War was interrupted in 1863, however, because of the Draft Riots that occurred in New York for a week in July of that year. After the passing of the Conscription Act, which demanded that all males between 20 and 45 years old enlist in support of the Union, working-class laborers who could not afford the \$300 "commutation fee" were forced to fight. In New York, Irish workers became enraged with this reality. Already frustrated because they were competing with African Americans for jobs, they were not interested in risking their lives for the emancipation of the entire race. That summer, riots heated up, as Irish Americans first burned the draft office and then went after government buildings, factories, and, later, private homes of government officials and African Americans (figure 1.12). By the second day, Secretary

of War Edwin M. Stanton sent the Seventh back from active duty to reestablish order (figure 1.13). They restored peace within a week and later returned to the front.<sup>73</sup>

After the riots, white New Yorkers saw the Seventh as their saviors. Elite members of society began to enlist their sons, and the Seventh itself began to publicly promote their identity as “native-born and Protestant.” This, in turn, became an official requirement of membership. In his history of the Seventh, General Emmons Clark made a point of this, by stating that “at least nine-tenths of the members have at all times been of American birth and of the Protestant faith.”<sup>74</sup>

With enlistment numbers increasing at the end of the 1860s, the Seventh had outgrown their old quarters above the Tompkins Street meat market, and they decided to construct an armory. Though armories existed, they were essentially large open-planned buildings for making guns, such as the Springfield Armory constructed in 1847 (figure 1.14). The Seventh’s armory would hold drills and store weapons, but it also needed to serve as a social space. The “armory” type, then, was not quite right. Taking its form from a combination of arsenal, railroad, historical, and museum architecture, Clinton essentially invented a new kind of building. With its nod to medieval castle design in combination with its massive steel drill hall, the building represented the strength, social standing, and modernity of this volunteer militia.

The Seventh Regiment Armory was a military space first and foremost. The building meant to house a reserve—a reserve of officers but also a reserve of weapons.

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<sup>73</sup> Bruner, “The Seventh Regiment Armory,” 67.

<sup>74</sup> Colonel Emmons Clark, *History of the Seventh Regiment of New York, 1806-1889* (New York: Seventh Regiment, 1890), 397.

Hundreds of weapons were kept in wooden cabinets in the drill room.<sup>75</sup> At the same time, members used the massive drill hall on a regular basis to train and practice formations. According to General Emmons Clark, families had their sons join the regiment to encourage the development of their physique. At the same time, he argued, “life in the regiment tends to regulate the habits of young men, and to improve and confer good morals.”<sup>76</sup> The goal was to give these young men a “regulated” way of life. As members of the Seventh, they were groomed into strong men and well-behaved citizens.

At the same time, however, the Armory was also a prestigious social club. Home to the richest chapter of the National Guard in the country, known as the “Silk-Stocking Regiment,” the Armory served as a gathering place for some of New York’s wealthiest citizens. The Vanderbilts, the van Rensselaers, and the Roosevelts had family members in the unit, and would occasionally socialize there during evening hours. Members came to smoke in the Veteran’s Room, shoot in the rifle range, and participate in sporting events in the drill hall.

The Veteran’s Room was used primarily by the veterans themselves. They socialized together and with friends in front of the fireplace or at the large table in the center of the room. According to one source, veterans “need continued affiliation to the old order to keep alive their esprit du corps, permit of a cherishment of past associations, and connect them still—in a fatherly way with the privileges and good name of the

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<sup>75</sup> Black walnut cases were designed specifically for the Regiment’s Remington rifle collection and lined the drill hall. Andrew S. Dolkart, *Touring The Upper East Side, Walks in Five Historic Districts* (New York, NY: New York Landmarks Conservancy, 1995), 17.

<sup>76</sup> *The Knapsack*, November 27, 1879.

regiment.”<sup>77</sup> However, veterans were not the only people to use the space. Younger members of the regiment and non-members were often invited to the room, which was referred to as a “saloon.”<sup>78</sup> As the picture from *Harper’s Monthly* indicates, it was a space to relax, play cards, and lounge.

There were times when the building was also open to non-members. In December, 1880, for instance, an inauguration was held to celebrate the completion of the building. Five thousand people came to dance, eat, and visit the newly built space. The Veteran’s Room was even decorated for the festivities.<sup>79</sup> Events were open to non-members on a semi-regular basis. Every year at least through the teens, the Seventh Regiment Athletic Association held sporting events that attracted up to five thousand visitors. Moreover, military parades, balls, and musical events were also hosted in the drill room, because it was one of the largest open indoor spaces in the country, with mahogany settees and raised platforms that allowed for eleven hundred people to sit comfortably (figures 1.15 and 1.16).<sup>80</sup> To publicize these events, many were depicted in illustrations and articles in popular magazines. In *Harper’s Monthly*, *Harper’s Weekly*, and *Scribner’s*, interior spaces were described for their aesthetic attributes and also for the activities that took place there. In this way, the pages of the magazine were used as a means of negotiating and recognizing the public-ness of this new type of space.

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<sup>77</sup> Marvel, *The Veteran’s Room*, 7.

<sup>78</sup> “New York Seventh Regiment: A Grand Dedication Ball,” *The Sun*, December 18, 1880, 6.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> “Seventh Regiment Games: Thousands of People See the Contests,” *New York Times*, December 8, 1889, 3; “Seventh Regiment Parade: A Remarkably Fine Military Exhibition Enjoyed,” *New York Times*, February 25, 1892, 6; Frederick Nast, “Music and Musicians in New York,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* 62:372 (May 1881), 803–818.

Though open to non-members, the Armory was not exactly a public space. Members of the regiment were mostly upper-class citizens themselves, and their guests were likely of a similar social standing. Those who attended sporting and musical events were also similarly privileged, and probably had a personal connection to the regiment. However, this building was still one of the few spaces in the city where a large group of people could come together. Because of this, it should be understood as semi-public architecture. It was a gathering space for a wide audience, offering activities, often for free, to men, women, and children alike. Aside from museums and private clubs, there were not many spaces in the 1880s that did this—and none that could do it on such a large scale.

In this way, Millet and Yewell's mural straddles the boundary between public and private. It was private because of its location. It was made for a building with limited open access and for a room that was geared toward elite white males. However, it engaged a large audience and called to mind an ideology that functioned to unite a group of people. On the one hand, the ideology espoused by the Veteran's Room frieze promoted Anglo Saxon hegemony. In the face of immigrant violence, it emphasized the Seventh as the saviors of the white Protestant population. By depicting them with the highest forms of weaponry, the Seventh was seen as the most technologically advanced. On the other hand, the work had a commemorative function. Celebrating the Seventh's service in the Civil War, the frieze served to unite all members of the regiment (and their visitors) in a common celebration of their role in the North's victory.

### *An Act of Commemoration*

While the Seventh were building their new armory, they were also designing a public sculpture to commemorate their service and those who had fallen during the Civil War (figure 1.17)—a sculpture similar in style and function to Millet and Yewell’s mural. Located at 69th Street and the west side of Central Park, *The Seventh Regiment Monument* features a Union soldier standing in relaxed contrapposto holding a rifle. The bronze statue, made by the popular sculptor John Quincy Adams Ward, stands on a marble base designed by Richard Morris Hunt.<sup>81</sup> The idea of a statue to honor the Seventh’s 58 Civil War casualties was proposed in 1867, but due to issues with cost was not unveiled until July, 1874.<sup>82</sup>

Ward’s sculpture is a typical, if early, Civil War monument. The figure stands in a relaxed pose, gripping the top of his rifle firmly and staring off into the distance, as if deep in thought. His body is muscular and his features delicate. There is no question that he is a white American male. Unlike public statues from earlier periods, this work depicts a common soldier type and not a specific hero. Depicted at rest, the sculpture is devoid of both action and spectacle. In this way, Millet and Yewell’s frieze shares much in common with Ward’s sculpture. Like the bronze statue, Millet and Yewell’s gilded mural commemorates the art of war—the culmination of which was the Civil War—in a way that was anonymous, bloodless, and peaceful.

In the period after the Civil War, most Americans did not want to think about war. They embraced peace and ignored the painful and violent experience that had recently

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<sup>81</sup> For more on Ward, see Michele H. Bogart, *Public Sculpture and the Civic Ideal in New York City, 1890-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 19–20.

<sup>82</sup> Bruner, “The Seventh Regiment Armory,” 119–120.

occurred.<sup>83</sup> The war had taken the lives of one-quarter of the white men of military age in the South and nearly 360,000 Northerners. One soldier recalled, “It was thought to be a great thing to charge a battery of artillery or an earthwork lined with infantry. We were very lavish of blood in those days.”<sup>84</sup> Many who fought in battle, as well as those who did not, remembered the horrors of the war long after it was over. In his memoir, General Grant wrote about how he suffered personally over the deaths of his soldiers and their animals. “I was always glad when a battle was over,”<sup>85</sup> he admitted, reflecting a culture wearied and confused by the memory of death on the battlefield. Henry James never served, but was haunted by what he remembered as “this abyss of blood and darkness.”<sup>86</sup>

Commemorating the Civil War in the form of public sculpture was meaningful to all Americans, regardless of which side they fought for. The war had been so horrific that both the North and the South wanted to memorialize it, but in a way that ignored the traumas that had occurred. Because of this, Kirk Savage has argued, war memorials erected in the name of the Civil War dead were no longer the standard fare. Gone were the equestrian statues of important leaders (figure 1.18), and in their place was the “common soldier” monument. These works commemorated not the individual “heroes” of the war but, rather, the average soldier who was one of many who fought in the name of the Union or the Confederacy. This type of monument arose just after the Civil War, when private citizens wanted to celebrate not just those who led the battle but those who fell in such great numbers. According to Savage, “In an earlier century, public

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<sup>83</sup> Blanchard, *Oscar Wilde's America*, 4.

<sup>84</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Ulysses S. Grant, *Memoirs and Selected Letters* (New York: Library of America, 1990), 348.

<sup>86</sup> Henry James quoted in Blanchard, *Oscar Wilde's America*, 5.



monuments had been part of a cult of rulership. Now they claimed to be relations of the popular will.”<sup>87</sup>

The impulse behind these sculpture campaigns was not just to commemorate and memorialize but also to depict history in a carefully curated way. History was supposed to be presented neatly, in order to emphasize peace and not conflict. In this way, public monuments were supposed to shape the public consciousness and conserve specific information about history while disposing the rest. Made of permanent materials like stone and metal, monuments were erected in public spaces and meant to stand the test of time. Because of this, they were intended to testify to a collective memory and serve as a symbol for a large American public—which, of course, as Savage has argued, was inherently problematic.<sup>88</sup> Ward’s common soldier monument attempted to do just that. It served to commemorate the Seventh in the Civil War with a type that could stand in for any member of the regiment. It presented the soldiers as steadfast and strong and the art of warfare as noble and rational—regardless of the actual situation.

Millet and Yewell’s work shares attributes in common with Ward’s sculpture. Both present the Union soldier as an anonymous type in an attempt to speak for all of those who fought and perished. Both also emphasize realism with carefully studied representations of costumes and weapons. The focus on the gun, at rest in both, is also notable in that it connotes inaction and calm.

Works like Ward’s sculpture and Millet and Yewell’s frieze commemorated the Civil War successfully for many veterans because of their lack of conflict and drama.

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<sup>87</sup> Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997), 5.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

They highlighted peace so as not to remind viewers of the painful experience of war. Veterans could feel in control gazing upon a soldier at rest in Central Park or identifying revolvers and rifles in the Veteran's Room. They could easily recall their experience, but from a distance. Indeed the artists focused on objects and soldiers at rest, eschewing historical scenes or heroes entirely, in an attempt to steer clear of any subject matter that might be too traumatic.

### **The Evolution of the Gun**

#### *Guns*

In Millet and Yewell's frieze, guns are presented as the culmination of the history of warfare. Painted in profile and outlined with attention paid to crucial details of each device, guns are depicted as static objects. They are not shown in use or in relation to the body (with the exception of the rifles in the vignette) but, instead, appear diagrammatically, paired down so that viewers could reflect on their status as tools of warfare.<sup>89</sup>

Guns were rarely depicted on their own in artwork. Instead, they were shown in use or, at the very least, in contact with the body. However, guns were displayed, and often arranged "artistically," regularly in this period. In the Armory, guns were hung in cabinets vertically, hundreds in a row. Guns were arranged somewhat decoratively in other armories around the country as well. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow describes the "organ of muskets" in the Springfield Arsenal (figure 1.19): "This is the Arsenal. From

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<sup>89</sup> For more on the relationship of the gun to the body and to human vision, see Alan C. Braddock, "Shooting the Beholder: Charles Schreyvogel and the Spectacle of Gun Vision," *American Art* 20:1 (Spring 2006), 36–59.

floor to ceiling, / Like a huge organ, rise the burnished arms; / But from their silent pipes  
no anthem pealing / Startles the villages with strange alarms.”<sup>90</sup> At the Philadelphia  
Centennial, Krupp, Remington, and Colt had booths in which they displayed their guns in  
neat formations, in order to draw attention to new designs. Guns were also collected in  
this period, as they were understood as objects of visual delectation. In “Curiosity  
Rooms”, guns were carefully placed on shelves amidst other objects, to create an  
Aesthetic display. This is illustrated in an image of the Armory’s own “Curiosity Room,”  
organized for the Armory Fair in 1879 (figure 1.20). In this illustration, a gun leans  
against the wall on the right side next to a collection of chests draped with tapestries and  
other exotic weapons.

Despite the elaborate knotwork, there was little inherently “decorative” in the way  
that Millet and Yewell depict their guns. Presented in profile, the guns were meant to be  
viewed as objects, things that were made and used in human society. In this way, Millet  
and Yewell emphasized Steven Conn’s “object-based epistemology” in the frieze. The  
history of war is a history of weapons, and it is easy to read and follow as it progresses  
from the spear to the Remington Rolling Block.

The last two rifles depicted in the frieze are particularly notable. The first, a  
muzzle-loading rifle, was one used by most soldiers in the Union Army during the Civil  
War (figure 1.21, in the frieze below the first vignette and second shield, figure 1.2). The  
second, an improved and more powerful version of the first, was the Remington Rolling  
Block rifle, the official weapon of the Seventh in 1880 (figure 1.22, in the frieze above

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<sup>90</sup> Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, “The Arsenal at Springfield,” 1845, in *Poems and Other Writings*, ed. J. D. McClatchy (New York: Library of America: Distributed to the trade in the U.S. by Penguin Putnam, 2000), 33–35.

the Civil War vignette, figure 1.9). While the exact brand of the first gun is not readily identifiable, it seems likely that Millet and Yewell depicted the Springfield Model 1861. A Minié-type rifled musket, the Springfield could work efficiently in rough terrain and could shoot effectively from two to three hundred yards away. This design became popular after the Frenchman Claude-Étienne Minié developed the Minié bullet, which was not the typical round ball but was, rather, conical, providing spin for better accuracy. Used in the Minié rifle, the bullet could be loaded into a gun, with gunpowder poured down the barrel after. Before this innovation, rifled muskets required a great amount of work to load, and once fired the expanding gas from the gunpowder deformed the bullet, making its path less precise. Equipped with a socket bayonet, the Springfield was extremely deadly, and even with very little training could be operated effectively. The Springfield was used effectively against the Confederate Army, who also employed a Minié rifle, the Enfield, though theirs was more expensive to make and less rugged.

As Savage has argued, this new rifle technology, specifically the Minié rifled musket, created a new type of warfare. Depicted by Winslow Homer in *Sharpshooter* (figure 1.23), this long-range weaponry prevented warfare from being up close and hand to hand in most instances. Warfare instead was impersonal and occurred over vast distances—those killed by Homer’s sharpshooter would not have even seen their assailant. This type of fighting often led to defensive stalemates, extended the length of the war, and ultimately resulted in more deaths. As Savage notes, “It also transformed war by totalizing it, so that armies could no longer rely on fighting one another in brief,

ostensibly glorious episodes of battle but had to endure long, constant periods of terror and violence.”<sup>91</sup>

In the late 1860s, the rifled musket was replaced by breech-loading rifles. These guns made use of self-contained metallic, integrated cartridges (as opposed to paper), which made the process of loading the gun even quicker. Millet also depicted a cartridge belt at the end of the frieze (figure 1.10), to call attention to this technological development. The Remington Rolling Block was one of the earliest successful breech-loading rifles. Produced beginning in the 1860s, it was strong and easy to operate. It was hugely popular around the world because it was nearly foolproof, shot straighter than most guns, and held up in a variety of climates. It was also extremely efficient. Few motions were required to load and fire the gun, so that an expert marksman could shoot seventeen shots in one minute.<sup>92</sup>

Viewers of the frieze would have recognized these guns. They would have known the Springfield from Homer’s illustrations in *Harper’s Weekly* and from articles about the Civil War that appeared in a variety of illustrated magazines. Veterans of the Seventh would have been intimately familiar with the Minié rifle, as they likely used it during the Civil War. The Rolling Block was important to viewers of the frieze as well. Not only was it the current standard issue by the regiment, but the Rolling Block also held a prominent place in Wild West lore. The Rolling Block, for instance, is featured obviously in a cabinet card of Bill Cody produced around 1875 (figure 1.24). Here, the famous Wild West performer, dressed in full Western regalia, holds his Remington casually. Situated

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<sup>91</sup> Savage, *Standing Soldiers*, 173.

<sup>92</sup> Alden Hatch, *Remington Arms in American History* (New York: Rinehart, 1956), 135.

in a desert-like setting against a cropping of rocks, his weapon may be down but he is ready to shoot at any time—presumably at some “savage” enemy.

The Rolling Block was intimately connected to the mythology of the Western frontier. It was used by the United States Army as well as by other law officials against Native Americans, and was a crucial tool used in the civilizing of “savage primitives.” In one famous incident from 1866, the Rolling Block was referenced by name. Armed with thirty new Rolling Block rifles, a rancher, Nelson Story, and a handful of ex-Confederate Texas cowboys headed out on a cattle drive from Wyoming to Montana. The group had been warned by the United States Army that the Lakota intended to kill anyone who attempted to cross the Bozeman Trail, so they came prepared with what might have been the first shipment of Rolling Blocks out West. As predicted, Crazy Horse and five hundred others came to drive Story out. Story and the other cowboys began shooting with the new rifles and Crazy Horse and his men retreated. According to one source, the rifles shot farther, quicker, and more accurately than any other gun Crazy Horse had encountered. This story was told across the frontier, promoting the efficiency of the new Remington rifle. As the United States Army began to use the Rolling Block in their own struggles against Native Americans, the gun became even more popular in myth and in use. The Rolling Block was the most popular sporting gun in the country until the Winchester '73 entered the market.<sup>93</sup>

As I have argued, in the face of Native American warfare, the American rifle was understood not only as more efficient but also as more civilized. In an issue of *The Knapsack*, a periodical produced for the regiment’s Armory Fair, the author discusses the

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 152.

“revolver” as being a more highly “evolved” weapon than those of the past because of its “bloodlessness.”<sup>94</sup> Guns were the highest-ranking weapon on the evolutionary ladder because they (supposedly) resulted in less physical violence and a lack of bloodshed. Produced by American manufacturers and used by United States citizens, guns allowed white Americans to evolve to their “civilized” state—and aided them in the “civilizing” of others.

### *Ethnographic Museums*

By removing these guns from the body and focusing on them as pure objects, the weapons in Millet and Yewell’s frieze were emphasized for their thingness. They were highlighted because of their status as manmade objects. In other words, the progression of weapons served to visually demonstrate the evolution of humankind. In order to contextualize the Rolling Block and Springfield as the most highly evolved weapons, Millet and Yewell depict earlier examples of guns along the frieze. Firearms specifically begin on the west wall, with the example of a small hand-cannon, a breech-loading canon, a gun said to have belonged to the thirteenth-century monk Berthold Schwartz, and an arquebuser. On the left side of the north wall, before the American section, Millet and Yewell depict a Swiss arquebuser, a German war ax combined with a matchlock gun. Next, Germany is represented with a flint-lock gun, a double-shot with connecting rod, bayonets, powered horns, pistols, blunderbusses, and a Krupp breech-loading gun.<sup>95</sup>

Arranged in this way, Millet and Yewell’s frieze is very similar to the organizational structure of museum exhibitions in this period. This is most clearly

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<sup>94</sup> *The Knapsack*, November 26, 1879.

<sup>95</sup> Marvel, *The Veteran’s Room*, 22.

demonstrated when the frieze is compared to the famous exhibits designed by Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers at Oxford University. An English general turned ethnographer and archaeologist, Pitt Rivers was known primarily for his collection of weapons.<sup>96</sup> Pitt Rivers began amassing objects in his youth, and over time accumulated a collection that he hoped would educate those who saw it. His collection strategy was to buy objects that were not necessarily scarce but, rather, “typical,” so that when arranged properly they might instruct viewers on the history of human development. Pitt Rivers explained,

For [the purpose of instruction] ordinary and typical specimens, rather than rare objects, have been selected and arranged in sequence, so as to trace, as far as practicable, the succession of ideas by which the minds of men in a primitive condition of culture have progressed from the simple to the complex, and from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous.<sup>97</sup>

Displaying his collection first in his own home, then in the Kensington Museum’s Bethnal Green complex in the 1870s, Pitt Rivers, a follower of Charles Darwin, organized the objects in an evolutionary sequence. He explained:

Human ideas, as represented by the various products of human industry, are capable of classification into genera, species and varieties in the same manner as the products of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and in their development from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous they obey the same laws. If, therefore, we can obtain a sufficient number of objects to represent the succession of ideas, it will be found that they are capable of being arranged in museums upon a similar plan.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> William Ryan Chapman, “Arranging Ethnology: A. H. L. F. Pitt Rivers and the Typological Tradition,” in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 15–48.

<sup>97</sup> A. H. Lane Fox, “On the principles of classification adopted in the arrangement of his anthropological collection, now exhibited in the Bethnal Green Museum,” *Journal of Anthropological Institute* 4 (1875), 294.

<sup>98</sup> A. H. Lane Fox, *Catalogue of the Anthropological Collection Lent by Colonel Lane Fox for Exhibition in the Bethnal Green Branch of the South Kensington Museum*, June 1874, pts. I and II (London: George E. Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1874), xii.



Pitt Rivers believed that objects could be organized into a taxonomic system. Cases would be ordered according to “class” and then, within each “class,” objects would be arranged by location or by similarities. The goal was to show, as scientifically as possible, how like objects developed across regions and time periods.<sup>99</sup>

For his collection of weapons, Pitt Rivers revolutionized exhibition design. In one instance, he displayed harpoons from a variety of cultures in a single case (figure 1.25). In another, bows and arrows of similar types from Alaska, the Island of Cyprus, Peru, Denmark, and Ireland were grouped together. One vitrine traced the origin of the bayonet to early daggers made in Flanders in the seventeenth century. And still another compared a Greek curved sword to one from Spain, as well as to the *kukri* of the *Gurkhas* (soldiers) of Nepal and the *yatagans* of the Turkish, Albanian, and Persian regions.<sup>100</sup>

Millet and Yewell would have learned about Pitt Rivers’s techniques from his exhibitions at Bethnal Green or from the Smithsonian Institution, where curators made use of his methods,<sup>101</sup> and the two were influenced by his model in a number of ways. First, like Pitt Rivers, Millet and Yewell’s frieze focuses only on arms and armor. Other

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<sup>99</sup> It should also be noted that Tylor himself oversaw Pitt Rivers’s collection at Oxford.

<sup>100</sup> In 1878, the collection was transported to the main South Kensington Museum, where it was displayed until 1884, when the Pitt Rivers Museum opened at Oxford University. “General Pitt Rivers’ (Lane Fox) Anthropological Collection,” *Nature* 22:569 (23 September 1880), 491–492; Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers, *Primitive Warfare: A Lecture Delivered at the Royal United Service Institute*, 1867.

<sup>101</sup> The displays of Pitt Rivers were hugely influential on American museum exhibition design. According to Curtis Hinsley, when designing the National Museum, George Brown Goode and Otis Mason looked to Pitt Rivers’s displays to organize their ethnographic collections. Housing the collections of the Bureau of Ethnology, they classified this material based on physical characteristics rather than geographical locations. See Curtis Hinsley, *Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), 94.

objects, like flags, costumes, or exotic textiles—objects included in “Curiosity Rooms” and other weapons displays—are not incorporated. Secondly, unlike in other displays, Millet and Yewell’s frieze displays weapons in an ordered series. The frieze begins with the so-called “savage” stage and then makes its way to civilization. This is a systematic arrangement of similar types. In this way, Millet and Yewell’s frieze follows the logic of Pitt Rivers’s evolution-based exhibition design. Third, like Pitt Rivers, Millet and Yewell emphasize authenticity. They have studied and chosen their examples carefully, and they provide a great deal of descriptive information in each representation, so that viewers can identify as well as compare and contrast them. In this way, Millet and Yewell, like Pitt Rivers, emphasize Tylor’s “comparative method.”

And yet, Millet and Yewell’s frieze is not exactly like Pitt Rivers’s displays. While the frieze does present weapons, as a whole, across a large period of time and exemplified by many different types of cultures, the artists make sure to call attention to the fact that these weapons were made at different times and by different cultures. Millet and Yewell argue that weapons have progressed distinctly in different places. In this way, rather than erasing geography, the frieze calls attention to it. For example, Pitt Rivers displayed crossbows from a variety of cultures and historical periods in one single case. The history of the crossbow is depicted as though all ethnic groups make up one single culture evolving, regardless of time and place (Tylor’s “culture” concept). Millet and Yewell’s frieze, meanwhile, calls attention to developments occurring in specific cultures at different times in history. Though they are all arranged together to present the history of warfare, the artists make a point of calling attention to specific cultures. They do this through the inclusion of battle vignettes and shields, which through style and subject let

the viewer know roughly what culture produced which objects, and when. The weapons that are depicted and compared in the scrollwork are thus provided geographical and historical context, so that viewers can understand how one cultural group relates to another.

In this way, Millet and Yewell's frieze was also indebted to the strategies used at the Peabody Museum at Harvard. Frederick Ward Putnam, the archeologist and anthropologist, took over as head of the Peabody in 1875. A student of the naturalists Jeffries Wyman, Asa Gray, and Louis Agassiz, Putnam had previously worked at the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard. Putnam's approach to museum exhibitions was thus based on those of natural history museums: he emphasized classification, and grouped objects according to place and historical time period. With Pitt Rivers's organizational strategies were running rampant in America, it was rare that a museum curator or anthropologist thought about human development in terms of region rather than evolution. Millet and Yewell's emphasis on location and historical time period suggests that one or both visited the Peabody, which would not have been surprising given Millet's connection to Harvard.

For Millet and Yewell, it was museums that provided the tools for representing human difference. They visited museums for research, and studied objects in glass cases for this commission. According to a pamphlet published about the frieze in 1881, the Russian helmet was studied from an example at the Tsarskoye Selo Museum, the Danish bronze sword from an example at a museum in Copenhagen, the Danish helmet from one at the British Museum, the cross-barred helmets from displays at the Maximilian Museum in Augsburg, and the old breech-loading canon from one at the Tower of

London.<sup>102</sup> Like museum curators, Millet and Yewell believed that objects had the power to teach in a way that words and convoluted symbolism could not.<sup>103</sup> Objects, when grouped appropriately, could speak for themselves and teach a lesson visually.

For scientists, museum curators, and, in the case of Millet and Yewell, artists, focusing on objects was a way to visualize time. By comparing historical weapons side by side, Millet and Yewell could show the evolution of warfare in a way that was legible and easy to follow. The goal for Millet and Yewell was to collect, quantify, and organize weapons from different cultures in order to present change and difference. By looking at the Remington Rolling Block and the Springfield Model 1861 in light of a crossbow and a yataghan, visitors could see human development in real time, with their own eyes.

### **Copying History**

*Scribner's* art critic William Brownell praised Millet and Yewell's frieze for its "archeological erudition." While Brownell was not overly enthusiastic about the space in general, he complemented the frieze panels multiple times, for the "great deal of curious detail in them."<sup>104</sup> The "curious detail" was the focal point of Millet and Yewell's work, which was intended to be grounded in historical accuracy. The two artists, or at least Millet, likely spent months studying the history of warfare in order to achieve this effect. As I have described, Millet's process included reading about his subject, visiting museums and libraries for research, and discussing historical facts with anyone who

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<sup>102</sup> Marvel, *The Veteran's Room*, 18–22.

<sup>103</sup> Steven Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 4.

<sup>104</sup> William C. Brownell, "Decoration in the Seventh Regiment Armory," *Scribner's Monthly* 22:2 (July 1881), 376.

knew about his subject firsthand. In some cases, Millet and Yewell took this accuracy to another level, as they literally copied their images from illustrations in books. In other cases, they took the style of representation from historical examples. The knotwork, for instance, was inspired by decorative patterns from cultures around the world. The scenes in the vignettes were painted in styles taken from indigenous art works. This level of accuracy made Millet and Yewell's work unusual.

This interest in empiricism can be seen most clearly in the Mesoamerican section (figure 1.26), in which depictions of weapons and costumes were copied directly from a book on the history of arms (figures 1.27-1.29). In "Part III: Ancient Arms of the Bronze and Iron Age," in Augustus Demmin's *Weapons of War: An Illustrated History of Arms and Armour from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*, the author dedicates an entire section to "American Arms." Here, he focuses primarily on the weapons of Central America as seen and collected by the Spanish conquistadors. The second and third examples he describes and illustrates are the two helmets from Millet and Yewell's frieze. The first is a "Mexican helmet drawn from a bas-relief of great antiquity at Hochicalco, in the province of Quernaraca, Mexico." The second is "drawn from a Mexican manuscript of the beginning of the fifteenth century."<sup>105</sup> The staff is described as a "Mexican ensign in gold, surmounted by an eagle's head, life size, fifteenth century."<sup>106</sup> The feathered shield, too, is represented by Demmin and described as a "Buckler or small round Mexican shield, 25 inches in diameter, of gold and silver, and

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<sup>105</sup> Auguste Demmin, *An Illustrated History of Arms and Armour from the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1877), 89.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, 91.

ornamented with feathers.”<sup>107</sup> Comparing the works side by side, it is clear that Millet and Yewell have copied the illustrations almost directly. Though flipped so that they are mirror images of the representations in the book, the helmets feature the same schematic profile rendering, with an emphasis on outline and flatness and little attention paid to shading or to creating a sense of three-dimensionality. There are slight differences: the tongue on the animal helmet is not curved on the frieze; the eye, ear, and feather details seem to be more pronounced; and, perhaps most importantly, Millet and Yewell’s versions are much larger in size than Demmin’s. Overall, however, the works are very similar.

It makes sense that Millet and Yewell would have chosen such a source as their inspiration for the Veteran’s Room frieze. A German-born art historian who spent most of his life in Paris, Demmin was an expert in ceramics and weapons.<sup>108</sup> *Weapons of War*, written in French, was so popular that it was translated into English from French by C. C. Black, of the South Kensington Museum. The book’s popularity likely resulted from its generalized format. Demmin states at the outset that his book is meant to be “a guide to the people at large, and a scientific encyclopedia to collectors.”<sup>109</sup> His project was not intended to be an in-depth history, nor was it a facsimile of art works or historical objects. Instead, it was a broad exploration (with simple, easy-to-read illustrations) meant to trace historical developments in arms production.

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 90.

<sup>108</sup> It seems that Demmin was a merchant and ceramics dealer, and likely gained his expertise from life experience rather than formal training. Albrecht Freiherr von Reitzenstein, “Demmin, August Friedrich,” in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 3 (1957), 592; <http://www.deutschebiographie.de/pnd115703195.html>

<sup>109</sup> Demmin, *An Illustrated History*, 1.

At the same time, illustrations were a logical image type to copy. Demmin's illustrations did not depict their subjects in a tremendous amount of detail, but they still provided the key factual elements. For Millet and Yewell's frieze, representing the weapons in a schematic, easy-to-read manner was a perfect approach for a work of art that would be high on the wall. Millet and Yewell wanted their frieze to be historically accurate and include enough information to be recognizable. At the same time, however, the imagery had to be pared down, so that it could be easily spotted from afar.

It is striking that Millet and Yewell spent so much time researching objects that were actually used by different racial groups. They were not interested in employing stereotypical or generic images of weapons, but wanted instead to depict actual weapons crafted by specific cultural groups. In the same way, the shields and battle vignettes were inspired by the cultural groups that they attempted to depict. Symbols for shields were taken from actual war shields or from other war memorabilia that Millet and Yewell encountered in their research. Similarly, paintings, sculptures, and tapestries from a range of historical periods inspired the battle vignettes.<sup>110</sup>

The vignettes deserve more attention for this reason. While the vignettes that depict Western civilization—from Ancient Greece through the modern era—are all depicted in a naturalistic style, those that depict non-Western subjects take on the styles of their cultural group. The Egyptian vignette looks as if it was copied from, or at least inspired by, hieroglyphics. The Assyrian section features figures taken from Mesopotamian sculptural reliefs.

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<sup>110</sup> Marvel, *The Veteran's Room*, 18–22.

The difference in representation between Western and non-Western subjects is most clear on the north wall (figures 1.9-1.11). While the images of the Civil War are depicted illusionistically, the images of indigenous peoples are depicted with little regard for modeling or anatomically correct human forms. All are drawn in outline, but the Civil War officers still appear somewhat fleshy and have identifiable uniforms. The Native American figures, on the other hand, look like pictographs. Space in the Civil War vignette is depicted with perspective—some figures are clearly delineated in the background, while others are in the foreground. In the Native American panel, space is flat and all figures exist on the same plane.

Millet and Yewell's Native American vignette look like a form of native art produced in this period: hide painting. Hide and skin decorators from the Plains depicted scenes of hunting and village life on buffalo or other animal skins, which would be worn or stretched for teepees. A traditional practice among Plains tribes, hide paintings featured flat compositions depicting figures and animals in bold outlines. Works ranged from completely geometric to figural, with attention to detail depending on the artistic style of the hand that created it.

Hide paintings had been collected by Anglo Americans and Europeans since at least the start of the sixteenth century.<sup>111</sup> Many were bartered for goods from French fur traders, while others were collected by explorers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, for instance, traded for and were gifted hides on their trip west, which they later gave to Thomas Jefferson for his Indian Hall at

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<sup>111</sup> Castle McLaughlin, *Arts of Diplomacy: Lewis and Clark's Indian Collection* (Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University; Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003).



Monticello. While they hung at Monticello during Jefferson's lifetime, afterward they were exhibited in a variety of locations. First, they were given to the Peale Museum, where they were displayed with other indigenous artifacts. When the museum folded in 1850, the objects were sold to P.T. Barnum, who exhibited them in his New York museum. Barnum's collection was sold off in parts, and many of the Lewis and Clark objects ended up in the Boston Museum, which, though mostly a collection of curiosities, displayed these objects with others from indigenous cultural groups.<sup>112</sup> The Mandan hide (figure 1.30), a buffalo robe that featured elaborate pictographs, was one of the more famous examples displayed with this group—a collection that in 1895, it must be noted, ended up in Putnam's Peabody Museum, where it is housed today.<sup>113</sup>

In all likelihood, Millet, an avid museum goer, would have seen these objects, particularly the well-known Mandan hide, and would have been aware of this Native American art form. The schematic rendering of the figures, similar to pictographs found on rock formations, relates Millet and Yewell's vignette to the hides. Many of the figures on the hides feature sketch-like depictions of the human form, eschewing attributes entirely (figure 1.31). Their hair is fully abstracted into a geometric pattern. Furthermore, Millet's figures barely have defined anatomical properties. Their arms are stick-like. The color scheme, too, is monotone, similar to the hides, on which the horses are sometimes delineated solely by an outline.

Inspired by hides produced by the indigenous populations of the plains, Millet and Yewell called attention to the art practices of indigenous groups. Rather than representing

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Charles C. Willoughby, "A Few Ethnological Specimens Collected by Lewis and Clark," *American Anthropologist, New Series* 7:4 (October-December 1905): 633–41.

Native Americans through a stereotypical vantage point, Millet and Yewell chose to call attention to indigenous traditions. In this way, they let the native style speak for itself. Other than the frame, they impose little restrictions on the imagery, and allow visitors to make their own judgments.

There is clearly a certain amount of cultural sensitivity at work in the frieze. Millet and Yewell carefully studied nonwhite objects and attempted to recreate them in paint. However this cannot distract from the larger message of imperialism at the heart of the work. Attempting to copy and re-present native objects was not done to show off their greatness, but rather to present an accurate comparison to western types. The nonwhite people were, after all, placed at the start of an evolutionary hierarchy, which culminated with Anglo Saxon examples. In order to call attention to the greatness of American warfare practices, then, Millet and Yewell emphasized the difference and potential “foreign-ness” of the nonwhite examples by depicting them with careful scrutiny. In this way, Millet and Yewell taught viewers about cultural difference and used this lesson to reinforced Anglo American superiority.

This work was the Millet’s first to engage with the subject of cultural difference. Though not quite for a public audience, this was a monumental work that attempted to present an ideology about Anglo American dominance to a large group of viewers. In this way, Millet experimented with unusual subject matter in order to see how audiences would respond. What they thought of the frieze remains to be seen. Millet, however, must have found this work successful as he continued to present this ideology in his subsequent civic works.

## Chapter Two: Eastern Europeans along the Danube in *Harper's Monthly*

After working on the Veteran's Room, Millet concentrated on easel works, the subjects of which ranged from classically garbed women rendered in precise, historically accurate detail to scenes of everyday life in Colonial America or sixteenth-century England (figure 2.1). By 1884, Millet was spending half of his time in Broadway, England, surrounded by friends and family. It was here, while working on his historical paintings, that he was first encouraged by his friend Edwin Austin Abbey to expand his oeuvre and attempt illustration.<sup>114</sup> Although Millet had worked briefly with a printmaker before attending art school in Antwerp, he did not seriously begin illustrating until the mid-1880s. From this point on, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, and occasionally *Scribner's Magazine*, commissioned Millet to illustrate (and often write) stories about his adventures abroad. While his illustrations need to be seen as an offshoot of his reporting, they should also be understood as the works of an artist. In other words, while Millet emphasized his illustrations as objective records of first-hand experience, they are also indicative of his artistic style and aesthetic beliefs.

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<sup>114</sup>Abbey and Millet met abroad in England in the late 1870s and quickly became friends. Living together in Broadway in the mid-1880s, they worked closely and explored local subject matter together—the two men shared a deep fascination with England and English history. For the first two summers, Abbey worked on illustrations for a series of *Harper's Monthly* articles, while Millet created easel paintings. In the late 1880s, however, they encouraged one another to tackle new media (Abbey began experimenting with oil while Millet wrote and illustrated a story for *Harper's Monthly*). Moreover, Abbey invited Henry Harper to Broadway for a visit, which allowed Millet to develop a personal relationship with the famous publisher. For more on their relationship and Anglomania, see Marc Simpson, "Windows on the Past: Edwin Austin Abbey and Francis Davis Millet in England," *The American Art Journal* 22:3 (Autumn 1990): 64–89.

This chapter explores a series of illustrations that Millet created for *Harper's Monthly* in 1892. Understanding the magazine as public space, I argue that Millet used it as a forum to excite American audiences about art and also educate them about the world. As it was in the Veteran's Room, this "public" was a primarily white elite. However, the magazine's widespread circulation and place in the middle-class-family home allowed Millet's work to impart a message to an audience larger than that garnered by most other art forms created for a large number of viewers.

In *Harper's Monthly*, Millet presented a cultural evolution of types along the Danube. While he presents an evolution of groups, beginning with the civilization of Germany and Austria and moving to the "barbarity" of the Turks, he spends most of his time depicting the "in-between" status of the Eastern Europeans he encountered along the way. In his images of Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian culture, he promoted a message of tolerance, and at the same time presented his subjects as degenerate. He chose this theme in an attempt to produce art that was relevant and interesting for American audiences. Indeed he created works that would help modern audiences negotiate the cultural difference they experienced every day. Millet's message in *Harper's Monthly* was consistent with that of the Veteran's Room. He presented cultural difference that though accepting of foreign groups ultimately contained an imperialist message at its core.

### **"From the Black Forest to the Black Sea"**

In the summer of 1891, Millet made an eleven-week journey along the Danube River. Accompanied by his friends Poultney Bigelow and Alfred Parsons, Millet had

been commissioned by *Harper's Monthly* to travel the length of the Danube, illustrating his adventures along the way (figure 2.2). Setting sail from Donaueschingen, Germany, on June 21 and ending in Sulina, Romania, on September 9, the three visited dozens of cities and villages in seven different countries: Germany, Austria, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria (figure 2.3). From their boats and excursions, the three men took notes and made countless sketches of the countryside, castles, churches, architectural ruins, native flora, and the individuals they saw and met along the way. Upon their return to the States and England (Parsons lived in London), Millet turned his sketches into illustrations and text for sections three to seven of the series; Parsons provided additional illustrations for all seven installments, and Bigelow wrote the text for the first two chapters. The series of articles were later turned into a full-length book, published by Harper & Brothers, in 1893.

While multiple themes emerge in the text and illustrations that make up “From the Black Forest to the Black Sea,” the most obvious point of focus is cultural difference. Throughout the seven installments, costumes and architecture of different groups are discussed and depicted, and are often compared across cultures. In their illustrations, Parsons and Millet focused on different aspects of cultural difference. While Parsons concentrated primarily on landscapes and city scenes (figure 2.4), Millet centered on the details of the people they visited: their faces, their costumes, and their accessories. Millet was always on the lookout for people to study. He wrote of Galati, Romania:

The crowded market places are, in the morning, perfect museums of types and costumes. Albanians in fustanellas[sic] like ballet-dancers' skirts jostle; Slavic[sic] craftsman in their skin-tight woolen trousers; smart marines from the naval station at the upper part of the town haggle with peddlers of Turkish tobacco; and florid-faced cooks of English steamers

shoulder their way to the meat shops regardless of Romanian[sic], Bulgarian, Russian, Greek, or Jew.<sup>115</sup>

Millet then depicted these types in his writing as well as in the more than sixty accompanying line engravings and half-tone prints.

### *Millet's Danube Types*

*Romanian[sic] Peasants Selling Flowers and Fruit* (figure 2.5), an illustration from the sixth installment, exemplifies Millet's interest in the study of cultural difference. Here, Millet portrays a Romanian man and woman in medium close-up. Standing proudly, the two figures engage with the viewer—the woman offering a friendly smile. Surrounded by the fruit and flowers she sells, the young woman is depicted with thick black hair worn in long braids. Her face is white, but her lips are dark and her eyes are almost black. The man, too, is white, but with sharp, dark, fierce features. His black mustache and disheveled hair contrast with his white linen top. Meanwhile, the costumes of the two figures are distinct. The geometric patterning on the apron and the floral-like design on the blouse of the woman suggest a high degree of handwork. The man's tunic, hat, and pants, though simple, also stand out in their material and design. In the accompanying text, Millet wrote, "the clean white linen garments of both sexes were refreshing to look upon, and the brilliant aprons and elaborate red embroidery worn by the women made rich spots of color in the warm sunlight."<sup>116</sup> In the illustration and this text, these figures come alive.

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<sup>115</sup> Francis Davis Millet, "From the Black Forest to the Black Sea (VI)," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 87:89 (July 1892), 277.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

The majority of Millet's illustrations for the series look similar to this. Focusing on bust-length, full-body, and head views of a variety of subjects, Millet portrayed the body and its costumes as a site of cultural specificity. Out of 129 illustrations, Millet was responsible for 64 and Parsons for 65. Of Millet's 64, 50 were images of bodies. In all of his images, it was not only the body but the costumes and objects that were depicted in great detail. It was therefore not only skin color and facial features but also clothing and tools that distinguished one type from the next. For Millet, objects functioned as cultural markers, linking the ethnic bodies to their places of origin.

Millet's illustrations were part of a larger visual culture of ethnography. Magazine illustrations, along with tobacco cards, carte de visites, and postcards featuring these subjects, were printed in large volumes and collected by mass audiences, helping a middle-class viewership come to terms with the variety of types they experienced all around them. As anthropologist Christopher Pinney points out, images were a crucial part of defining "culture" in a period before the modern understanding of the term was developed. While writing presented ideas abstractly, "material objectification" in the form of actual objects, illustrations, and especially photographs "appeared to offer a more solid-resting point."<sup>117</sup> In attempting to "objectively" record a likeness, anthropological images depicted racial, ethnic, and cultural types. Viewers could actually see and visualize difference and then compare this visual evidence to real-life examples.

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<sup>117</sup> Christopher Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 26.

The “types”<sup>118</sup> that Millet represented in *Harper’s Monthly* were those that existed along the Danube River: German, Austrian, Hungarian, Serbian, Romanian, Russian, and Turkish. The Danube begins in Bavaria, a region that, at the end of the nineteenth century, though Catholic and representative of distinct cultural practices, was part of the German Empire, and was mostly industrialized. The Danube ends in Romania (a small section also ends in Ukraine), which, though primarily European, also featured large Islamic populations. The Danube was (and continues to be) considered the northernmost border of the Balkans, a section of Eastern Europe that includes a diverse set of cultural groups. This region was part of the European continent and was primarily Christian; however, because of former Ottoman occupation, the area along the eastern part of the Danube was rife with elements of Turkish culture, such as architecture, costume, food, and so on.

In this way, the region was considered only partially Western and semi-European. Situated geographically between Europe and the Middle East, the countries along the Danube have been understood to represent an “in-between” culture<sup>119</sup>—one that existed halfway between East and West, ancient and modern, Christian and Islamic. Millet and his companions witnessed this in-between-ness first hand. As they moved from the Black Forest to the Black Sea, they watched as the Western, industrial culture of Germany was slowly replaced by a more Islamic, pre-modern culture the farther east they paddled.

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<sup>118</sup> In section four, more than half way through their journey, Millet uses the word “type” for the first time in a caption. He uses it two more times. In instances when he does not use the word “type,” he makes a note of where the subject is from—“Romanian Peasant,” for example. It is unclear whether Millet or the *Harper’s Monthly* editors titled these works.

<sup>119</sup> James Barrett and David Roediger, “Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality and the ‘New Immigrant’ Class,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16:3 (1997); 3–45.



Because of this, Millet presented the types along the Danube in an evolutionary sequence. The Germans at the start of the journey were white and Christian, and looked like the readers of the text. In an image like *Max Schneckeburger, author of "Die Wacht Am Rhein," Schneckeburger* (figure 2.6), a German, wears Western clothes and is presented through the Western mode of portraiture. Illustrations and textual descriptions of the Germans and Austrians celebrate their technological advances and their modern industrial society. The Ottoman Turks (figure 2.7), in installment six, however, are depicted as dark and unfamiliar types. Presented at a distance and rarely looking back, they are understood as unapproachable and potentially threatening. In the text, Millet describes their religion, modes of work, and transportation as outdated and strange. Meanwhile, the Romanians, Serbians, and other Eastern Europeans who are presented throughout are portrayed in a manner somewhat in between these representations of East and West. They were depicted in exotic dress and performing unusual modes of labor, and yet, in medium close-up, they smile and actively engage with the viewer. They are presented not as threatening but, rather, as friendly—a peculiar type worthy of viewers' attention and interest.

Millet's illustrations emphasize Eastern European types, primarily Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians, and Serbians. Germans and Austrians are featured briefly in sections one and two, and Turks in sections six and seven, but the majority of the illustrations depict Balkan groups. On the one hand, this was because these were the most prevalent groups in the areas where Millet was traveling. On the other hand, these were the ethnic groups that Americans were curious about, due to the region's political struggles as well as the fact that these immigrant groups were pouring into the United

States in large numbers. At the same time, these cultural groups were also depicted according to regional type. Though Millet describes areas where different groups gathered together, he never presents images of this. The emphasis is instead on distinct types, which are presented at a distance from one another. The goal was for readers to compare the Romanian type to the Bulgarian type, the German type to the Hungarian.

In this way, Millet's illustrations for *Harper's Monthly* are like his paintings in the Veteran's Room. They represent the world, or in this case a specific region of cultural diversity, in an evolutionary sequence, with white society at the top and nonwhite society at the bottom. As he did in the Veteran's Room, this view of nonwhite or partially white cultural groups is presented in a complicated way. They are presented with sensitivity and genuine curiosity, but they are also "lesser than" the Anglo Americans viewing them. For Millet, the subjects represented from the Danube River are foreign curiosities meant to be collected and studied.

### **Eastern European Immigration**

In a period when many Americans were fascinated by the diverse cultures of the world, many wanted to know specifically about the cultures along the Danube. By 1891, the area around the Danube was a cultural mosaic. The region had been home to Romans in the first century and the Slavs beginning in the sixth. Slavic groups that resided in the Balkan region included Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, and Bulgarians. By the ninth century, Christianity had been introduced into the region, and the groups that lived there split into two camps: the Serbs, Bulgarians, and Romanians (a group considered to be a mix of Roman and Dacian) practiced Eastern Orthodoxy, and the Croats and Slovenes were

Roman Catholics. While the groups fought among themselves for five centuries, the Ottoman Turks brought about a social and political revolution in the fourteenth century. Under the Turks, the old aristocracy was removed and a culture of Islam was promoted. After four centuries, the Ottoman Empire entered a period of decline, and slowly began to lose land and power in Eastern Europe. In the nineteenth century, encouraged by the American and French revolutions, many Eastern European groups attempted to split from the Ottomans and form nation-states. With the help of major European powers like Russia, England, and France, each group fought for independence, resulting in a period of massive struggle and change in the mid-nineteenth century. The Russo-Turkish and Crimean Wars were two major examples.

The Germans, Austrians, and Hungarians along the Danube were also part of a mixed culture. By 1890, the Germans had become a unified entity, while Austria and Hungary had joined forces. However, in both cases, cultural groups attempted to live by their own distinct set of rules. Indeed, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was so-named precisely because the Magyars, native Hungarians, were constantly rebelling (and often posing successful battles) against the Austrians. Though Austria reigned over a wide territory that included other important nation-states, it was only Hungary that held any power within the government. Hungary received a great deal of cultural autonomy under their arrangement with Austria.

The Western world was fascinated by the changes happening in Eastern Europe. In addition to newspaper articles and war reportage, Millet's writing and illustrations were another important way for American audiences to learn more about the situation. Many readers received an overview from newspapers, and Millet's work filled in details

about whom these cultural groups were, how they lived, and why nationalist movements were important. Such current events would have resonated with American audiences who hoped to see democracy promoted around the world.

At the same time, Millet was not only teaching viewers about an interesting region of cultural diversity but was, perhaps more importantly, educating American audiences about the new immigrant groups entering the country. A mass immigration from this region occurred from the 1880s to the 1920s. Hungarians came over by the thousands, and their numbers increased each year. From 1874 to 1881, an estimated 2,273 had arrived, and in the next eight years 13,101 were living in the States.<sup>120</sup> Immigration from the Balkan countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Greece, and a number of others) was also increasing. In 1871, only ten immigrants were known to have come from Greece. By 1907, however, 46,283 had arrived from Greece; 21,174 from Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro; and 47,826 from Croatia and Slovenia.<sup>121</sup>

Arriving as a result of the political turmoil I have just described, Eastern Europeans were met with a great deal of racism upon entering America. At the end of the nineteenth century, massive waves of immigrants were arriving from all over the world. Anglo Americans classified and hierarchically arranged racial types in an attempt to control them. Earlier in the century, Anglo Americans had paid attention to race primarily in terms of black versus white, but the situation changed when different “shades” of

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<sup>120</sup> Henry Cabot Lodge, “The Restriction of Immigration,” *The North American Review* 152 (1891), 28.

<sup>121</sup> Maria Tetovska, “Fitting the Balkans: The Image of the Balkans in American Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Temple University, 2006, 90.

white people entered the country in greater frequency from foreign shores.<sup>122</sup> After the Draft Riots and other demonstrations staged by white members of society, Anglo Americans whose families had been in America for generations began to see certain white immigrants as a threat to society.<sup>123</sup>

Anglo Americans labeled the peoples of the Danube with derogatory terms such as “slavs” or “hunks.” The latter was a shortened form of “Hungarian,” and the term “slav” had little to do with many of these Eastern European groups, like Romanians.<sup>124</sup> “Slavs” and “hunks” were described by many in this period as “dark and swarthy.” Some even argued that “slavs” were perfect for mine labor, because they were “immune to certain kinds of dirt ... that would kill a white man.”<sup>125</sup> Law professor John Wigmore wrote in the *American Law Review* in 1894 that “the Semites, the Balkan people, the Greeks, the Italians, and the Hispano-Portuguese in Europe and in Latin America” were considered “white” “only in contrast with the African negro.”<sup>126</sup>

Many Americans believed that Eastern Europeans were members of a primitive society. In 1891, Henry Cabot Lodge, a Massachusetts senator and close friend of Millet’s, compared them to the Chinese, arguing that “Solvaks” are “not a good acquisition for us to make.”<sup>127</sup> In 1885, Hungarians (along with Italians) were said to have a “lower moral tone,” which would cause “moral deterioration” in the larger

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<sup>122</sup> Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999): 7–8.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>124</sup> Tetovska, “Fitting the Balkans,” 94.

<sup>125</sup> Quoted in Barrett and Roediger, “Inbetween Peoples,” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 16, 38.

<sup>126</sup> John Wigmore, “American Neutralization and the Japanese,” *American Law Review* 28 (November-December 1894), 821.

<sup>127</sup> Jacobson, *Whiteness*, 42.

community.<sup>128</sup> Tylor, meanwhile, argues in *Primitive Culture* that the area around the Black Sea should be known as a form of “low civilization.”<sup>129</sup> According to historian Matthew Frye Jacobson, ‘Most Americans believed that Southern and Eastern Europeans had a poor claim to “whiteness” and should be rejected for citizenship.’<sup>130</sup>

Many Americans wanted to stop these massive waves of immigration. Some feared violence or a dilution of the pure white gene pool, while still others feared the negative influence of the lower class on American culture more generally. Lodge, in an article for *Atlantic Monthly*, argued that “while our immigration is increasing, it is showing at the same time a marked tendency to deteriorate in character.”<sup>131</sup> He announced to his readers: “We demand now that immigrants shall not be paupers or diseased or criminals.”<sup>132</sup> His solution was a set of laws requiring every potential immigrant to submit tests proving their health, sanity, and literacy. He argued, “It would exclude many, if not all, of those persons whose presence no one desires, and whose exclusion is demanded by our duty to our own citizens and to American institutions.”<sup>133</sup> A supporter of the Chinese Exclusion Act, and later of the eugenics movement, Lodge argued what many were feeling.

Millet’s illustrations need to be understood as participating in a culture that was fearful of immigration. Many readers would have looked to his articles to shed light on these foreigners. As I will discuss below, these articles and illustrations were meant to help negotiate difference in terms that were familiar. As Allan Sekula has argued about

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<sup>128</sup> Barrett and Roediger, “Inbetween Peoples,” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 12.

<sup>129</sup> Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 43.

<sup>130</sup> Jacobson, *Whiteness*, 77.

<sup>131</sup> Lodge, “The Restriction,” *North American Review*, 32.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

the photographic archive, “Here was a method for quickly assessing the character of strangers in the dangerous and congested spaces of the nineteenth-century city. Here was a gauge of intentions and capabilities of the other.”<sup>134</sup> Francis Galton’s composite photographs of criminals and ethnic types were another means of distinguishing others from the status quo (figure 2.8). Millet’s illustrations were part of this visual culture of identification. By presenting ethnic types accurately and in detail, Millet taught viewers to “spot” them in their daily lives, and in turn to “know them.”

But Millet did more than just present cultural difference; rather, he depicted cultural difference in a way that disarmed viewers and made them less fearful of these immigrants. As I have noted, the subjects of images like *Romanian Peasants* return the viewer’s gaze. They welcome the viewer into their space, as the female figure smiles directly at them. This is even more pointed in an image like *Moldavian Peasants* (figure 2.9). Here, a man with wild hair and a disheveled beard bears a large grin while a child next to him, shading his eyes with his hand, looks curiously at the reader. Their direct engagement beckons the viewer to enter their space. Indeed, most of Millet’s subjects not only look directly at the viewer but smile or gesture and welcome viewers into their world. Figures are presented directly in close-up, rather than from a distance, so that the viewer may access them.

In this way, Millet depicts these cultural others with an emphasis on tolerance and acceptance. Not only does he portray Eastern European cultures respectfully, with careful attention paid to their costumes and objects, he presents them as friendly and welcoming. These were not terrifying, dirty, ragged people entering the shores (as critics described)

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<sup>134</sup> Allan Sekula, “The Body and the Archive,” in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, ed. Richard Bolton (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989), 348.

but, rather, a group of people who were simple-minded and friendly. This culture was different, but not one that needed to be feared.

A magazine was a perfect place to present ethnic others. It was a “safety zone” within which Western viewers could examine and study foreign cultures without actually travelling abroad.<sup>135</sup> Because the subjects were presented at a distance, viewers could feel safe looking at them, or rather studying them, for extended periods of time. Readers could even enter the imaginary space if they so wished. In this way, they could derive pleasure from the experience of looking—an experience that could potentially be less comfortable if it were taking place in the immediate vicinity of the subject.<sup>136</sup> Maintaining their dominant position, in some cases literally looking down at the subjects in the pages of the magazine, Anglo American viewers learned about the people of the Danube River in a way that was carefully curated and controlled.

### **Illustration as Art for the People**

Millet presented *Romanian Peasants* to a large audience. With circulation numbers in the hundreds of thousands, *Harper's Monthly* was one of the most popular illustrated magazines produced in the United States. It was read by a national (and in some cases an international) audience,<sup>137</sup> and was recognized by many as an important shaper of taste. In this way, Millet understood the space of *Harper's Monthly* to be a

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<sup>135</sup> Ellen Strain, “Exotic Bodies, Distant Landscapes: Touristic Viewing and Popularized Anthropology in the Nineteenth Century,” *Wide Angle* 12 (April 1996), 73.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>137</sup> Citing Poultney Bigelow, Mott describes how popular *Harper's Monthly* was in England, and how the English embraced the magazine as their own. Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines, 1741-1930*, Vol. 3 (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1958-1968), 399.



public one. It was a space in which his art would be seen by a larger audience than the ones that any museum, gallery, or exhibition could ever provide. Because of this, Millet created illustrations that could speak to wide audiences, and that could also teach such a diverse audience about an issue relevant to all of them—cultural difference.

### *Harper's Monthly*

*Harper's Magazine* was the first monthly illustrated periodical published in the United States, building on the precedent of popular un-illustrated monthlies like *The Atlantic* and *The National Review*. Developed by the New York-based book-publishing firm Harper & Brothers, *Harper's Monthly* first appeared in June, 1850. With more than three quarters of all Americans able to read and write, Harper & Brothers decided to create an inexpensive magazine to cater to this expanding audience.<sup>138</sup> The magazine started off as a vehicle for issuing reprints by English authors; however, by the 1880s, it was famous for its fiction by American writers such as Horatio Alger, Horace Greeley, William Dean Howells, Henry James, and Mark Twain. *Harper's Monthly* featured illustrations from its inception. In its first year, pictures illustrated travelogues, biographies, and scientific articles. In a period of massive growth for institutions devoted to visual culture, there was great demand for images in all parts of daily life, including magazines.<sup>139</sup>

Other publications soon followed the lead of *Harper's Monthly*. Illustrated weeklies such as *Frank Leslie's*, *Gleason's*, and *Illustrated American News* began to

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<sup>138</sup> Jo Ann Early Levin, "The Golden Age of Illustration: Popular Art in American Magazines, 1850-1925," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1980, 32.

<sup>139</sup> For more on this, see Page Stevens Knox, "Scribner's Monthly 1870-1881: Illustrating a New American Art World," Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2012.

appear in the 1850s.<sup>140</sup> However, *Harper's* had no substantial competition in illustrated content (and in terms of illustration quality) until *Scribner's Monthly* was formed in 1871. At that point, Charles Parsons, head of the art department at *Harper's Monthly*, grouped around him important artists, such as Edwin Austin Abbey, C. S. Reinhart, John White Alexander, A. B. Frost, Howard Pyle, and F. V. Dumond, in an attempt to produce the best magazine illustrations in the country. According to J. Henry Harper, "the competition between the magazines became so keen that at times we paid as high as five hundred dollars for an engraving for one page of our magazine."<sup>141</sup> As many as a hundred illustrators created works for *The Century Magazine*, *Harper's*, and *Scribner's* during a six-month period at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>142</sup>

Aside from the good pay, artists benefited from the large, particularly middle-class audience that would see their work published in magazines. Annual subscriptions to *Harper's Monthly* cost three dollars in the 1880s, making it among the most popular reading material in thousands of American homes.<sup>143</sup> With a circulation of 185,000 in 1880, it provided exposure that neither a museum nor a gallery could.<sup>144</sup> The artist Joseph Pennell called magazines "an art gallery for the world."<sup>145</sup> Moreover, once editors began to include artists' signatures on works, illustrators quickly became well known to magazine subscribers. According to historian Jo Ann Levin, "At the turn of the century, the names of illustrators Charles Dana Gibson or Howard Pyle were probably more

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<sup>140</sup> Illustrated periodicals were so successful that Harper & Brothers realized it could start its own weekly serial in 1857.

<sup>141</sup> J. H. Harper, *The House of Harper* (New York: 1912), 601.

<sup>142</sup> Levin, "The Golden Age," 39.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> Joseph Pennell, *The Adventures of an Illustrator* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1925), 191.

familiar to many than the names of painters James McNeill Whistler or Thomas Eakins.”<sup>146</sup> Indeed, illustrators won a great deal of recognition in the late nineteenth century. Pennell pointed out in 1890 that “within the last ten years illustration has become a specialty, and the few trained illustrators have taken equal rank with the practitioners of any other branch of art.”<sup>147</sup>

Artists were also attracted to illustration because of the lofty ideals of publishers. As Levin has argued, wealthy men who believed they were arbiters of taste developed magazines as a way to improve the knowledge base of the American public.<sup>148</sup> According to Doubleday & Page partner Walter Hines Page, “publishing is the least profitable of all the professions, except preaching and teaching, to each of which it is a sort of cousin.”<sup>149</sup> As “cousins” to sermons and school lessons, the content of magazines was meant to be educational and inspirational. *Harper’s Monthly* announced this goal in their first issue, stating that their mission was “to combine entertainment with instruction, and to enforce, through channels which attract rather than repel attention and favor, the best and most

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<sup>146</sup> Levin, “The Golden Age,” 6.

<sup>147</sup> Joseph Pennell, “A New Profession Wanting Professors,” *Contemporary Review* 58 (July 1890), 121. As a result of this public attention, illustration received new found popularity. Art schools began to offer classes in illustration, at the National Academy of Design and the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Art. The World’s Columbian featured contemporary American illustration in their Fine Arts Building: four hundred and sixty drawings by seventy-eight illustrations, such as Abbey, Gibson, Pyle, Frederic Remington, and Robert Blum.

<sup>148</sup> Levin, “The Golden Age,” 80.

<sup>149</sup> Walter Hines Page, *A Publisher’s Confession* (Garden City: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1905), 13.

important lessons of practical life.”<sup>150</sup> The writer Robert Underwood Johnson remembered: “There were times when *The Century* seemed like a great university.”<sup>151</sup>

Though privately owned, illustrated magazines were understood as public institutions. They were spaces of cultivation where writers and illustrators presented (presumably) unbiased content. Historian Leslie Butler has argued that the liberal political activist George William Curtis, in his “Easy Chair” column, functioned to uphold the standards of objective journalism. Unlike the sensational reporters known as the “press gang,” writers and illustrators from *Harper’s* presented facts and ignored their own self-interest (or at least seemed to).<sup>152</sup>

At the same time, magazines were meant to uplift and elevate taste. According to *The Century Magazine*:

The monthly magazine is the great modern intellectual amphitheater, and the publicity it is able to give to works of excellence of widely differing kinds is a perpetual stimulus to the intellectual activity of the nation.... There is no function in modern life more difficult or responsible [than the work of a monthly magazine editor]. The literary and artistic judgment of the editor who stands between the author and his readers—the artist and his public—must directly and strongly affect the taste and culture of the people, while the energy, originality and enterprise of the magazine publisher become modifying forces in art, literature and life.<sup>153</sup>

In terms of art specifically, William Coffin announced that “more has been done through the medium of illustrated literature to make the masses of people realize that there is such

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<sup>150</sup> *Harper’s Monthly Magazine* 1 (June 1850), 1.

<sup>151</sup> Robert Underwood Johnson, *Remembered Yesterdays* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1923), 114.

<sup>152</sup> Leslie Butler, *Critical Americans: Victorian Intellectuals and Transatlantic Liberal Reform* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 183.

<sup>153</sup> “The Rise and Work of a Magazine: The History of *The Century Magazine* (*Scribner’s Monthly*),” *Century Illustrated Magazine* 23 (November 1882), editors pages, 17.

a thing as art and that it is worth caring about.”<sup>154</sup> At the end of his life, Pyle remembered that he became an illustrator because of the large impact it could potentially have on audiences. He believed that through illustration, more than any other medium, “a wider impression can be made upon the world of American art.”<sup>155</sup> Art historian Page Knox has argued that ‘in providing the public with accessible standards of “taste,” *Scribner’s* not only promoted certain styles of art or patterns of behavior, but also shaped and guided larger values and outlooks that defined a growing segment of American society during the 1870s.’ *Harper’s Monthly*, like *Scribner’s*, allowed its primarily middle- and upper-class readership to distinguish itself from the quickly growing lower classes by engaging with the high-minded ideas put forth in its pages.<sup>156</sup>

In this way, illustration suited Millet’s larger project in life. He wanted to reach large audiences and educate them about “good art,” but he also wanted to promote his lessons of cultural difference. Magazines offered a way for him to do both. Not only could he reach an immense public, his own principles fit well within those promoted by these magazines. Like Curtis, Millet wanted to advance objective forms of knowledge and cultivate a body of likeminded patriotic citizens.

### *Public Space*

Like the frieze in the Veteran’s Room, Millet’s illustrations for *Harper’s Monthly* reflect the artist’s desire to create civic art. In 1892, America was still in a period, as I

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<sup>154</sup> William A. Coffin, “American Illustration Today. First Paper,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 11:1 (January 1892), 108.

<sup>155</sup> Charles D. Abbott, *Howard Pyle: A Chronicle* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1925), 216.

<sup>156</sup> Knox, “Scribner’s Monthly 1870–1881,” 9.

have described, in which most citizens were not interested in high art of any kind. Millet, like many of his peers, hoped to rally interest by creating works that would reach large audiences. However, with little support from the government, artists had to look to private commissions to create this type of work. With the Veteran's Room, Millet designed an early form of civic painting, but it served only veterans and their peers. *Harper's Monthly*, however, offered him the opportunity to present ideologically charged work for a larger public.

The audience for *Harper's Monthly* was huge. With numbers reaching close to 200,000 in 1885, the circulation of *Harper's Monthly's* was second only to the *Youth Companion*. By the 1890s, *Harper's Monthly* could be found in all areas of country. According to Anthony Trollope, on a trip to the American West, "*Harper's* everlasting magazine" could be found "in the humblest of cabins in a rude western country."<sup>157</sup> Not only was it popular in the West but, according to *Independent* editor Theodore Tilton, it was the main source of culture there: "*Harper's* is, as someone has said, the pioneer of civilization at the west."<sup>158</sup> The *Harper's Monthly* circulation rivaled that of newspapers like the *New York Times*, which had similar subscription numbers. Households bought subscriptions to magazines, so multiple people often read every one issue. Indeed, according to art historian Joann Levin, publishers at the time claimed that five people read a single issue.<sup>159</sup> From data published by N.W. Ayer and Son, an advertising agency that attempted to compile and publish "honest" circulation data, the readership of *Harper's Monthly*, together with *Scribner's* and *The Century*, approached half a million

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<sup>157</sup> Anthony Trollope, *North America* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1862), 144.

<sup>158</sup> Theodore Tilton, "Our Magazines," *Independent*, April 26, 1966, 4.

<sup>159</sup> Levin, "The Golden Age," 40.

at the end of the nineteenth century. If these and the publishers' estimates are true, it means that two and a half million Americans might have looked at these two magazines in a given year.<sup>160</sup>

*Harper's Monthly* was a family magazine. According to Henry Mills Alden, the magazine had pledged to print nothing "that could not be read aloud in the family circle."<sup>161</sup> Picturing the "family circle," one can imagine the experience of looking at *Harper's Monthly* in 1892. A father might read aloud to his family in the parlor after dinner. In front of a fireplace, multiple generations might gather together to hear about a trip along the Danube, or about Colonial history. As *The Manufacturer and Builder* described it, *Harper's Monthly* was so familiar and beloved that it was "a member of the family":

*The Monthly* has been for so many decades a regular visitor that in thousands of homes it is regarded in the light of a member of the family, while its contents are so uniformly good as to be beyond the pale of ordinary criticism, the graphic papers descriptive of travel and adventures in foreign climes, and the able novels of the best authors, many of which have made their first appearance in its pages, to the genial "Easy Chair," there is nothing to which the most fastidious could take exception, or in which the most exacting of readers will not find a rich literary feast.<sup>162</sup>

Civic art is defined according to its ability to reach wide audiences. Often taking the form of public sculpture in this period, civic art was placed in spaces that were theoretically open to everyone. Ideologically charged and commissioned by large interest groups or public institutions, civic art attempted to impose a set of ideas on a broad

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Henry Mills Alden quoted in Mott, *A History*, 401.

<sup>162</sup> "New Publications: *Harper's Monthly Magazine*," *The Manufacturer and Builder* 5:5 (May 1873), 116.

viewing public who would gather (artists and patrons hoped) in this public space to discuss their views.

In many ways, the pages of the magazine functioned as a public sphere where, as Jürgen Habermas defines it, an inclusive bourgeois public came together to discuss common concerns.<sup>163</sup> One can easily imagine that the father, the mother, the friend, or the child reading articles “aloud in the family circle” and holding up the pages of the magazine to show off their illustrations would spark a conversation or dialogue that ensued after the piece was finished. Reading *Harper’s Monthly* was often an engaged group activity, and because of this likely encouraged discussion. *Harper’s Monthly* was literally a nonsite, where readers interacted and discussed content that was being consumed by hundreds of thousands (even millions) of viewers around the world. The abstract space of the magazine shaped their thoughts and ideologies through a shared set of text and images.

The public sphere of *Harper’s Monthly* was a space devoid of actual physical borders. Its existence was ephemeral. Its material form, its pages, could be torn, smudged, or lost. It could be visited for as long as one pleased, with readers engaging only with the content they chose to—content that changed from month to month. It was often experienced both aurally and visually, as family members read it out loud. In this context, readers could mold the content and use it to create discussion on their own terms, depending on their feelings or the purpose at hand. In this way, the illustrations could be ignored much more easily than a sculpture, but it could still have a similar impact. It

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<sup>163</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence, 1st ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991, 1989).



could “raise up the ideal public sphere” and insight critical discussion. Illustration had a much less permanent status than a sculpture but because of the magazine’s massive readership (the enormous public of this particular public sphere), it could have even greater significance.<sup>164</sup> Illustration was thereby a civic art form for the modern moment—fleeting, perpetually changing, and experienced by a mass audience.

### **Magazines and Ethnography**

Millet’s civic art project was an ethnographic one. In order to present images of cultural others in terms that were nonthreatening and engaging for his public audience, Millet looked to ethnographic imagery—specifically imagery that emphasized context over bodies as the site of cultural difference. Described by critic William Coffin as “direct notes,” Millet depicted his subjects in a form that resembled objective evidence. According to Millet, illustrations that were straightforward, immediate, and drawn by hand presented cultural diversity more successfully than other types of imagery. Inspired less by touristic images and more by ethnographic photography and writing, Millet’s travel illustrations provided his audience with visual tools with which to make sense of the diverse world around them.

#### *Illustrating Travel*

Ethnic types were presented in the pages of illustrated magazines on a regular basis in this period. In addition to *Harper’s Monthly*, others magazines like *Scribner’s*,

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<sup>164</sup> However it should be noted that it is unclear if African Americans, Native Americans, immigrants, or anyone besides North American and British upper and middle classes read *Harper’s Monthly*.

*The Century Magazine*, and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated* similarly displayed foreign peoples in articles about travel, anthropology, and history. Travel stories especially were ubiquitous in illustrated magazines. Literary historian Richard H. Brodhead argues that “the great staple of these journals, the virtually mandatory item in their program of offerings, is the short piece of touristic or vacationistic prose, the piece that undertakes to locate some little-known place far away and make it visitable in print.”<sup>165</sup> *Harper's Monthly* was known for its travel literature. By the 1870s, articles had appeared about regions as remote as the Arctic, South Africa, and Asia. According to *Literary World*, “Hardly a spot on the habitable globe seems to have been left untouched by the travelers and narrators of the *Harper's* staff.”<sup>166</sup>

Millet's illustrations were an example of travel literature and were similar to other travelogues, including pieces about the Danube region previously published. In 1872, Junius Browne, a journalist and war correspondent, published a series of articles on his own trip down the Danube for *Harper's Monthly*.<sup>167</sup> Like Millet's trip twenty years later, Browne visited small villages along the river and described their people, architecture, and customs. Like Millet's, the illustrations for the article are clear renderings of people and places the illustrator experienced along the way. Though not drawn with nearly as careful an eye toward detail, like Millet's were, these illustrations, which I will describe below, present a clear picture of the cultures and sites along the Danube.

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<sup>165</sup> Richard H. Brodhead, *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1883), 125.

<sup>166</sup> *Literary World* 1:68 (October 1, 1870) quoted in Mott, *A History*, vol. 3, 395.

<sup>167</sup> Junius Henri Browne, “Down the Danube,” *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 45:270 (November 1872), 817–35 and 45:269 (October 1872), 652–72.

Articles about travel proliferated in magazines. In single issues, stories would depict life in all corners of the world. In the August, 1892, issue of *Harper's Monthly*, for instance, articles about Colonial Georgia, the Italian army, and life in Corfu were included in addition to the final installment of Millet's trip down the Danube. These articles, like Browne's before them, presented similar kinds of information about places and foreign people. Illustrations for Constance Fennimore Woolson's "Corfu and the Ionian Sea," for instance, depict architecture, social customs, and exotic bodies. In *Albanian Male Costume* (figure 2.10), the viewer is presented with a clear view of cultural difference. Dressed in traditional costume, an Albanian figure stands in for the cultural type. Depicting the people and landmarks of exotic locales, articles and illustrations transported "armchair" tourists to faraway lands. In a single issue, viewers could globetrot from Eastern Europe to Greece to Italy. On the pages of illustrated magazines, the world was presented in microcosm.

However, Millet's illustrations significantly differed from those that accompanied travel writing. While the illustrators of Browne's and Woolson's articles focused on the sites and activities available to tourists (figure 2.11), Millet chose not to emphasize tourist practices at all. The illustrations for Browne's and Woolson's articles feature important landmarks and distant views of the area, in an attempt to teach readers about potential places to visit. In *Dining at the Guingettes* (figure 2.12), from Browne's article, the illustrator depicts a place to have lunch. When cultural types are depicted, they are usually decontextualized. In *Albanian Male Costume*, the subject is placed in a gray box. This image is dramatically different from the rest in this article, in that it has no relationship to Corfu. While the others feature views and white tourists (figure 2.13), this

one removes the subject and the viewer from Corfu altogether, and places them in a studio.

As Brodhead has argued, the majority of vacationist articles present images and stories about Anglo American travel in Europe—not about native life in the region. They describe hotels, steamships, and restaurants. They focus on tourist attractions. They present natives as carriage drivers and waiters, or remove them from their surroundings entirely. In this way, they present the country as a destination, not as a place where people actually live. They erase local customs entirely.<sup>168</sup> Millet’s text and images, though connected to these illustrations in their emphasis on travel, differ significantly from these images in their greater attention to indigenous populations and their ways of life.

In this way, Millet’s work has a closer affinity to the ethnographic articles found within the pages of *Harper’s Monthly* and other illustrated magazines. Naturalists, anthropologists, biologists, pathologists, and other scientists published their writings in layman’s terms in the pages of these magazines, as Americans grew increasingly interested in science. In the August, 1892, issue of *Harper’s Monthly*, for instance, Theophil Mitchell Prudden published an article about the minerals that make up ice. In the April, 1892, issue, the naturalist Ernest Ingersoll published “Our Grey Squirrel—A Study.” Both of these issues also featured installments of “From the Black Forest to the Black Sea.” That Millet’s project was also grounded in ethnographic ways of thinking and looking is therefore not surprising, considering that it shared a space with more explicit scientific studies.

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<sup>168</sup> Brodhead, *Cultures of Letters*, 126.

Ethnography was also a subject covered by popular magazines. In an article for the June, 1882, issue of *Harper's Monthly*, the journalist Sylvester Baxter described customs and practices of the Zuni. Living among them with the anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing (who wrote his own articles in *The Century*) and the artist Willard Metcalf, Baxter studied the Zuni and wrote a piece that paid careful attention to costume, cultural practices, and ways of life. The goal of this article was not just to present a broad overview of the region, as was the case in travel writing, but, rather, to describe in depth the customs and practices of a specific group of people.

From Metcalf's illustrations, it is clear that his project was an ethnographic one, too. In his illustration *Making Pottery* (figure 2.14), two Zuni women mold pots of clay. This image is similar to Millet's in its emphasis on careful observation. In Metcalf's work, the two figures in the center of the composition are depicted naturalistically, with attention paid to their skin color, their facial features, and their costume. They are placed in a pueblo, surrounded by pots, and sitting on a blanket in order to provide layers of context. The rest of Metcalf's illustrations look similar to this. He presents a medium close-up of a native person, usually alone, surrounded by cultural markers or in a desert landscape (figure 2.15). In this way, Millet's and Metcalf's projects were nearly identical: both studied cultural groups firsthand, in order to create true-to-life representations of cultural others and their customs for curious Anglo American audiences.

Another crucial similarity between Millet's and Metcalf's ethnographic illustrations is the fact that their figures are clothed. There were many images made under the guise of science in which nonwhite people were depicted nude or topless. Louis Agassiz's famous daguerreotypes of enslaved African American men and women depict

cultural difference according to the surface of the naked body. Scientist John Lamprey and, later, photographer Eadweard Muybridge posed nude and semi-nude figures in front of a grid for the same reason (figure 3.26). However, neither Millet nor Metcalf participated in this practice. Instead, they marked cultural difference not only through skin color and facial features but through costume as well. By signaling out the costume of the Romanian peasants in the text as well as through detailed representation, Millet calls attention to its importance as a cultural indicator. For him and Metcalf, it was not just the body but the body contextualized by costume and objects that provided meaning. Just like his murals in the Veteran's Room, Millet argues that cultural difference was embedded in things.

Millet and Metcalf's work followed scientific trends. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was not bodies so much as culture that became the marker of human difference. While physiognomists and phrenologists measured the body and head in an attempt to classify and organize human difference, later anthropologists like Edward Burnett Tylor began to dismiss the belief that knowledge could be generated by the surface of bodies. It was the "complex whole" that needed to be studied, according to Tylor. Groups of people, their practices, and their objects became the site of knowledge. Man was not the inheritor of specific ways of living but was, rather, fashioned by society. In this way, by 1892, anthropologists were studying mankind in the context of their surroundings rather than in and of themselves.<sup>169</sup>

Millet's project therefore attempted to align itself with the visual culture of ethnography. Not only did his illustrations look like others that illustrated scientific

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<sup>169</sup> Christopher Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology* (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 32.

articles, they were also grounded in an understanding of culture promoted by many in the anthropological community. Through the emphasis on objects and costumes, not (only) on physical attributes, Millet attempted to present culture as the signifier of difference.

*“Direct Notes”*

As Brad Evans has argued, travel and ethnographic writing and images emphasized cultural difference because of the “social-scientific task the magazines seem to have set for themselves.” The goal of these stories and illustrations was to educate about culture before the modern field of anthropology was fully invented. The idea was therefore not only to provide images and knowledge about cultural difference but also to create a framework within which to make sense of it.<sup>170</sup> As Evans argues, the purpose of the ethnographic content was for readers “to think of themselves as being cultivated, and also as being part of a culture.”<sup>171</sup> There was a general fascination with difference and exoticness, and literary magazines decided to capitalize on this. They hoped not only to entertain readers but also to create an understanding of the concept of “culture” before there was even a term for it.

In her study of *National Geographic* magazine, Stephanie L. Hawkins argues that popular magazines, in presenting images of cultural difference in the late nineteenth century, cultivated an “educated gaze” and taught audiences “how to read [images] for

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<sup>170</sup> Brad Evans, *Before Cultures: The Ethnographic Imagination in American Literature, 1865-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 32.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

cultural meaning.”<sup>172</sup> Referencing John Urry’s “tourist gaze,” Hawkins argues that in its articles and photographs about travel, *National Geographic* cultivated in its readers “a roving eye that seeks as its objects the usual, the typical, and the repetitive, as well as the unfamiliar in the midst of the ordinary and commonplace.”<sup>173</sup> *National Geographic* told its readers that they were “Twentieth century pilgrims [who] in some sense ‘know each other before they arrive.’”<sup>174</sup> *Harper’s*, like *National Geographic*, created “visual and textual paradigms” in an attempt to teach readers how to identify visual and textual signs, and in turn how to understand and interpret different cultures.<sup>175</sup> They included images and texts of cultural difference that presented foreign cultures in neatly framed images and with carefully edited text. This, in turn, taught viewers how to interpret cultural difference and how to understand their own culture in the context of others.

There were a few different strategies that Millet used to make images of cultural difference understandable and interesting to his viewers. First, he created images that were supported by his text. Missing pieces in an illustration like *Romanian Peasants* were filled in by reading the words that surrounded it. Captions, too, helped readers interpret images. Second, Millet often included familiar elements, such as boats, architecture, and even food, that, although different, were instantly recognizable and easy to compare to similar objects found in readers’ daily lives. Third, Millet presented his figures in a friendly and welcoming way, so that viewers wanted to engage with the images.

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<sup>172</sup> Stephanie L. Hawkins, *American Iconographic: National Geographic, Global Culture, and the Visual Imagination* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 22.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.* The magazine started out with no illustrations, but decided to include them in the early 1890s and became famous for them in the early twentieth century.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*



Another strategy that Millet employed to help readers cultivate a “roving eye” was to present the cultures along the Danube through careful study and attention to detail—a technique he used in all of his work. According to a review in *The San Francisco Chronicle*, which described the book form of this project (a slightly expanded version of the articles), “Millet furnishes valuable estimates of the people and good descriptions of places along the banks.”<sup>176</sup> William Coffin described Millet’s illustration style similarly, noting in 1892,

A sober painter, with a care for detail that reminds us in his pictures of the great Dutchmen, we find more summary treatment in the drawings that Francis D. Millet has made of life in the Balkans and other places where his travels have led him, but they are always good in character, and possess that look of having been made under the influence of direct impressions from the actual scenes they represent, that is so important a factor in the illustration of life and manners.<sup>177</sup>

Though “summary,” these images were packed full of information. They were also, as Coffin argued later, “direct notes made on the spot,” a quality enhanced by the process of line engraving used to reproduce these works. A photomechanical technique developed in France in 1859, line engraving was especially effective for line drawings in its ability to reproduce only the outlines of subjects. Millet’s line engravings, therefore, looked like authentic views the artist stopped to make as he was walking through villages or dining with locals. In this way, it should be emphasized that Millet’s illustrations functioned as objective information. The images, because they were studied from life, were meant to be understood as visual evidence.

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<sup>176</sup> “Literature: Down the Danube ‘South Sea Idylls,’” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 2, 1892, 9.

<sup>177</sup> Coffin, “American Illustration Today. Second Paper,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 11:2 (February 1892), 200.

Millet's images are similar to ethnographic photographs produced in this period. Take, for instance, an image from a photographic album produced for the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, *Midway Types*, depicting a Bulgarian in traditional costume (figure 2.16). Like Millet's *Romanian Peasants*, the subject is presented frontally in close-up, against a nondescript gray background. Also like Millet's work, the Bulgarian smiles slightly, presenting his traditional costume for the viewer to see. *A Bulgarian* functions as a metonymic image, just as *Romanian Peasants* does. As the title implies, this subject stands in for all Bulgarians. At the same time, though, because this work is a photograph, the Bulgarian's costume and facial features are highly individualistic. The image, therefore, functions doubly, as a document representing a human type and as a portrait depicting a specific person.<sup>178</sup> Indeed, this illustration worked so well as a portrait that viewers were prompted by the caption to "recognize" the subject from the fairgrounds.

In this way, Millet's project is ultimately different from the one proposed by ethnographic photography. Millet did not use a camera, so his works, despite their status as "direct notes", do not operate as portraits. Their ability to function metonymically is more successful, because there is no trace of the sitter. While this allows them to work more effectively as "types," it also makes the images slightly less confrontational. Looking at a drawing of a foreign person is one step removed from looking at a photograph. In its status as a portrait, a photograph is a more intimate visual experience. The sketch-like quality of Millet's image gives a sense of the artist's hand and provides one more layer of distance.

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<sup>178</sup> A fact often discussed by photographic historians. For more, see Pinney *Photography and Anthropology*.

At the same time, the informational status of Millet's illustrations is ultimately what separates his work from that of other illustrators, like Metcalf. While Metcalf is also attempting to depict information about foreign cultures, he does so differently. For instance, he depicts the Zuni in a highly specific context. They are clearly placed in a pueblo or in the desert, surrounded by objects and architecture that provide a sense of place. While Millet does not remove his figures from a setting altogether (by placing them in the black box of the studio, as Woolson's illustrator does), he does remove them from their current location. The Romanian peasants are in elaborate dress and surrounded by their fruit and flowers, and yet the background is not a street in a small village near Braila, Romania, but rather the blank space of the page itself. Millet's goal was to ground his subjects in enough context that they could be type-cast accordingly, and yet he often presents them as place-less on the page.

In this way, Millet aligns his illustrations to his text. In their status as line engravings, the illustrations, like the letters on the page, are printed as mere outlines. They take on the status of words and function as information. As Coffin points out, their sketch-like quality makes them operate as "direct notes." Functioning as such, Millet's line engravings take on the status of writing itself.

Millet's emphasis on these images as information was a strategy and an aesthetic choice, employed by the artist to make his images of cultural difference understandable and interesting to his viewers. In a period in which culture was not yet defined in the modern sense, and in which scientists themselves were trying to figure out how best to represent difference, Millet developed a strategy that turned images into visual evidence.

By aligning his images to writing, he offered his illustrations as factual proof of cultural difference that could be easily studied and interpreted.

### **“Off the Beaten Path”**

Another strategy that Millet employed to make his text and images easy to follow and understand was to write and draw in a style that was immediate and personable. For instance, Millet’s writing style is casual. He speaks in the first person. The tone sounds as if he is recounting his adventures to close friends, in a way that suggests his own personal knowledge of a place. Similarly, though his illustrations convey a great deal of information, they are sketchy and informal. They address the reader with immediacy and intimacy. This stylistic choice related to Millet’s desire to present not just a realistic view but an “authentic” view of the Danube region—a sense that he was there and saw these people first hand. The type of immediacy attempted and, I would argue, achieved in Millet’s work was deeply rooted in touristic behavior, as well as in a new mode of ethnographic research: fieldwork.

According to James Buzard, there was a group of British and American travelers in the late nineteenth century who attempted to experience foreign countries in a way that was “off the beaten path.”<sup>179</sup> Unlike other forms of sightseeing, “anti-tourism” was grounded in “authentic” experiences that allowed visitors to understand a place as if they were locals. This mode of travel, however, as Buzard and Dean MacCannell have argued,

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<sup>179</sup> James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

was “an element of modern tourism from the start.”<sup>180</sup> Buzard even uses the terms “anti-tourism” and “modern tourism” interchangeably.<sup>181</sup> “Anti-tourism” was merely a branch of travel that developed in the modern moment as a way to distinguish one group of travelers from another. It was another branch of tourism, despite the fact that such “anti-tourists” saw themselves as a distinct entity.

Emerging in the 1860s, anti-tourists explored new places without guidebooks, ate local cuisines, and attempted to leave no trace of themselves. According to Buzard,

Travel’s educative, acculturating function took on a newly competitive aspect, as travelers sought to distinguish themselves from the mere tourists they saw or imagined around them.... Correspondingly the authentic “culture” of places—the genius loci—was represented as luring in secret precincts “off the beaten track” where it could be discovered only by the sensitive “Traveler[sic],” not the vulgar tourist.<sup>182</sup>

As Buzard points out, modern British and American men (and some women) saw themselves as especially suited for undertaking this kind of travel. It was not necessarily their status in society or their education but, rather, their “superior emotional-aesthetic sensitivity,” taught by their national culture, that primed them to explore and understand cultures more readily than the average tourist.<sup>183</sup> Buzard sets up Millet’s friend Henry James as the quintessential American “anti-tourist.” Visiting Europe first as a child and later as an adult, James, Buzard argues, believed that he could understand and know Europe better than American writers who had only visited as adults. At the same time, James believed that his own understanding of European culture allowed him to better acculturate for the periods during which he lived there. While he had an authentic

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 5 and Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1999).

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>182</sup> Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 6.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

understanding of European culture, he believed that most Americans had a provincial attitude. It was, therefore, up to him to write about his experiences in Europe in order to educate American audiences about what European culture was “really like.”<sup>184</sup>

Like James, Millet also exemplified the “anti-tourist.” Speaking languages as diverse as Spanish, German, and Arabic, Millet felt he could “know” the locals better than most travelers because he could actually communicate with them. Furthermore, because of his time in Broadway, Millet considered himself to be fully acculturated not just to British but to European life. Many artists and writers in this period lived cosmopolitan lifestyles and were able to drift easily from one major city to another. Millet attempted to use his skills of blending in when he traveled down the Danube for *Harper’s Monthly*. His goal was to create a sense of place that was “off the beaten path” and, more importantly, the “real thing.” In turn, he would share this sense with his reading public, who did not possess his talents.

Buzard has argued that “anti-tourists” attempted to make sense of specific ethnic groups’ “whole way of life.”<sup>185</sup> In attempting to understand and interpret cultures that were different from their own, “anti-tourists” gathered pieces of cultural memorabilia along the way and organized them to create a sense of the whole. “Anti-tourists” collected souvenirs, stories, meals, visits, and sometimes even spouses in order to make a case for achieving significant contact and feeling like they “knew” a place. According to Buzard, a place became an “imaginary emporium of cultural curiosities” upon a traveler’s

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 237–39.

<sup>185</sup> Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 7.

return home.<sup>186</sup> Through these items and experiences, anti-tourists created a composite view of a place. This view was presented to audiences as the real thing.

Millet and company attempted a similar project along the Danube. They collected experiences, souvenirs, and, most importantly, notes and images, which they pieced together to create a sense of the Danube region for *Harper's Monthly* audiences. In other words, as outsiders, they collected a series of fragments that, when combined, created a whole picture of a specific place. This project suggests that artists, like writers, used the lens of tourism as a framework for understanding cultural groups about which they knew very little. It was through this lens that they educated viewers back at home about cultural difference. In Millet's case, his goal was not just to create an image of a place for picturesque effect but, more importantly, to use this composite to educate thousands of readers about life in an unfamiliar country.

While it is unclear what Millet's subjects actually thought about him and his project, they are presented in the images and in the text as if they wholeheartedly embraced him. Millet describes their departure from Hundsheim (similar to the scene in figure 2.4):

One bright morning—the 27th of July, to be accurate—a crowd of new-made friends assembled to see us pack the canoes and launch them in the eddying stream. The hospitable miller, who had housed the delicate craft for us in an empty shed, had not kept secret the hour of our departure, and there were hundreds watching us as we hoisted sail to cross the frontier with speed and in sporting style.<sup>187</sup>

He describes a scene as they paddle through a Hungarian village, writing: “Cries of ‘Eljen!’ (hurrah!) and ‘Hova megy?’ (where are you going?) greeted us constantly as we

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<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 225–26.

<sup>187</sup> Millet, “From the Black Forest (III),” *Harper's Monthly* (April 1892), 750.

passed, shouting in reply ‘Fekéte Denerig’ (to the Black Sea).”<sup>188</sup> In Greben, he noted, “The cheery engineers, who had watched our descent of the rapids with great interest, welcome us when we landed with offers of substantial hospitality, and over a good dinner we discussed the one topic which had for us a common interest—the moods and caprices of the great river.”<sup>189</sup> It is possible, then, that these drawings, done on the spot, might have even been encouraged by those Millet encountered. There is an openness to these illustrations that is unusual, and perhaps has something to do with Millet’s own personality.

### *Fieldwork*

In an era in which fieldwork was just beginning to be practiced by the anthropological community, Millet’s desire to travel as an anti-tourist should be equated to this new mode of scientific research. Visiting a foreign place in an attempt to live “like the natives” and experience it “authentically,” as Millet, Bigelow, and Parsons did, was exactly what anthropologists were doing under the guise of science in this period. Earlier in the century, “men on the spot,” like missionaries or colonial officials, gathered data and sent it to anthropologists working at home in universities or at museums. Rarely, if ever, did anthropologists themselves actually travel to the areas that they studied. By the end of the century, however, anthropologists had begun to replace those “men on the spot,” and performed work in the “field” themselves, in order to collect raw data.

Fieldwork took on a variety of forms. While Cushing studied the Zuni and the Hopi by living with them on and off for a number of years, Frederick Ward Putnam

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<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, (May 1892), 914.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, (June 1892), 131.



revolutionized the field with his practices on the Ohio Serpent Mound in the early 1880s. Indeed, he taught his Harvard students that fieldwork needed to be performed with the utmost attention to detail. Objects needed to be photographed and noted according to position in the ground; if possible, they needed to be kept in the original groups and positions in which they were found. They then needed to be described by careful accession notes.<sup>190</sup>

Cushing celebrated Putnam's methods, and wrote in 1886, "I do not think the wonderful systems of research which [Putnam] has been the first to develop in mound exploration, can be too often commented upon. His work in the Ohio mounds, must take rank as the first of its kind."<sup>191</sup> Cushing employed Putnam's practices in his own fieldwork, which was different in that it dealt with living bodies, not artifacts buried in the ground. Cushing got to know the Zuni and the Hopi closely, so that he could learn from their teachings and their cultural practices. According to anthropologist James Frazer, successful fieldwork consisted of living "as a native ... conversing with them in their own tongue, and deriving all his information from the surest sources—personal observation and statements made to him directly by the natives in their own language without the intervention of an interpreter."<sup>192</sup>

Millet's work can be understood as closely aligned to these anthropologists' practices. Though not a scientist by training, Millet traveled to Eastern Europe with the express purpose of studying the customs, dress, and beliefs of specific ethnic groups.

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<sup>190</sup> Curtis M. Hinsley, "Anthropology as Education and Entertainment: Frederic Ward Putnam at the World's Fair," *Coming of Age in Chicago: The 1893 World's Fair and the Coalescence of American Anthropology*, ed. Curtis M. Hinsley and David R. Wilcox (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 4.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 6–7.

<sup>192</sup> James Frazer quoted in Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology*, 14.

Like an anthropologist, his goal was to examine cultural others in an attempt to learn and understand difference in human development and ways of life. He immersed himself in different cultures. He spoke the languages (when he could) and stayed with those who invited him to sleep, dine, or celebrate. He collected objects and brought them home to draw from and put on display in his studio. He went off the beaten path in an attempt to live like natives and experience a sense of place like those who actually lived there. All of this was done in order to teach audiences of *Harper's Monthly* about these cultural groups, about the differences and similarities to the audience's own culture.

In many ways, Millet was just as qualified as an anthropologist to do this. Many anthropologists did not know the languages of the people they visited. Some were unable to gain the respect of those they were studying. Millet, well equipped with his academic art training and modern-language background, possessed the tools to represent these cultures accurately.

### **De-evolution**

What Millet saw through his fieldwork along the Danube, and what he depicted in his illustrations, was a regression of humankind. He encountered an evolution in reverse—or so he argued—as the groups devolved from the “civilized” culture of eastern Germany to the “barbarous” culture along the Black Sea. As opposed to the enlightened West, where their journey began, the Eastern orient was considered uncivilized. Millet makes these negative feelings about the East clear upon the group's arrival in Budapest: “A new nervousness and new ambition of progress are upon us—new because there opened to our mental vision, at the mention of Islam, broad and fascinating vistas of the

orient, of strange lands and stranger peoples, of types new to our pencils.”<sup>193</sup> For Millet and his companions, the “orient” was a “strange” place, one that induced a feeling of “nervousness.” The East was nonwhite, not Christian, and pre-industrial, and for many Westerners this made it a terrifying place.

Millet’s project, therefore, was to emphasize Eastern European life, the in-between culture that existed between the barbarity of the East and the civility of the West. Because Ottoman Turks had for centuries been intruding (and taking over) areas of Eastern Europe, spreading Islam throughout and mixing with Eastern European populations, many believed that Eastern Europe’s in-between status was the result of cultural influence and miscegenation. In this way, their in-between-ness was not the fault or even the natural situation of Eastern Europeans; rather, it was the result of Islamic forces. According to Millet, tolerance and acceptance for Eastern Europeans should come as a result of recognizing their status as victims of the East.

And yet, despite (or perhaps because of) the fact that these cultural groups intermingled along the shores of the Danube, Millet presents these types as distinct entities. Millet never depicts two types together, opting to always keep them separate. Though he describes the market in Galați as “a perfect museum of types and costumes,” he never depicts in illustration this kind of gathering of diverse groups. Instead, he neatly arranges people in pairs, family groups, or according to gender, always separated by text and pages. In this way, Millet wants to make sure that the different groups presented on the pages remain contained. In an American context, he might be suggesting that while the large number of Romanians arriving on American shores need not be feared, they

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<sup>193</sup> Millet, “From the Black Forest (III),” *Harper’s Monthly* (April 1892), 744.

should still be kept separate from other cultural groups, in particular the Anglo American readers of the magazine.

### *The Orient*

In installment six, Millet and his companions arrive in Vidin, Bulgaria, and the images of the types he meets there change dramatically. Though Romanian peasants are still depicted, for the first time Turkish men and women appear, too. As Millet nears the end of his journey, skin colors become darker and architecture and costume become more clearly Turkish. In one image, *Turkish Women at Sistova* (figure 2.7), women are arranged along a series of registers, their heads covered with off-white scarves and their bodies cloaked in dark black fabric. Against the muddy gray tones of the landscape, the bodies fade into the background and their heads seem to float like ghostly apparitions on the page. In many ways, this image is a study of the different angles and folds of the hijab. From sketchbooks, it is clear that Millet was fascinated by Turkish headscarves and the intricacies of its form against the head and neck. At the same time, the image presents a quintessential Eastern type: the faceless Turkish woman, unadorned and simply dressed.

For Millet, these figures represent the “orient.” They represent the unfamiliar, strange, and fascinating place that the travelers understood as a cultural contrast to their own Western ways. The orient was understood as an imaginary realm—a space of fairy tales and exotic imagery. It was a space of excess and sumptuous materials. In the American painter Frederick Arthur Bridgeman’s *The Siesta* (figure 2.17), a woman lounges on an orange and gold day bed. She is adorned in a pale pink dress covered with

a red sash, and wears a blue headscarf over her hair. The woman is seen relaxing, literally sleeping, in a sumptuous setting of tile work and brightly colored fabrics. Scenes like Bridgeman's contrasted greatly to the utilitarian and profane Western world, and therefore made the orient a place of escape for many romantics. In the face of modern industrialization and the American Puritan tradition of work, it was a space of relaxation and leisure. According to one source, "Western would-be sultans retired to smoking rooms after dinner to enjoy the special licenses of a men's society akin to that of the Arab world. They wore banyans and robes, informal attire that corresponded with western undress."<sup>194</sup> Oriental subjects were immensely popular in Western art in this period. French artists, particularly Jean-Leon Gerome, painted North Africa, Turkey, and the Middle East as a pre-modern land of harem girls and wicked despots. These colonialist paintings functioned to titillate French viewers, as well as to make them feel superior. While American Orientalism was slightly different, focusing less on nude women and more on local scenes and distant views of exotic locations, it similarly presented "oriental" subjects as an exotic, primitive "other."<sup>195</sup>

Like other artists, Millet presents his Turkish subjects as strange: they wear unusual clothes and partake in unfamiliar cultural practices. Similarly, they exist in a pre-modern state. As I stressed in the previous chapter, Millet proves the development of

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<sup>194</sup> Quoted in Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, updated ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 13.

<sup>195</sup> For more on American orientalism, see Holly Edwards, *Noble Dreams, Wicked Pleasures: Orientalism in America, 1870-1930* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press in association with the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2000); Gerald M. Ackerman, *American Orientalists* (Courbevoie: ACR, 1994); Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996); and Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1992).

civilization through a case study of specific technologies. In his illustrations, through costume and textual descriptions, Millet often argues that lack of industrial development contributed to Eastern Europe's lesser status. In terms of the orient, he describes how countries there do not have many railroads, steamships, or factories. He explains how clothes are still made by hand and how travel is difficult due to pre-modern technologies. He depicts clothing and vehicles that are old-fashioned and unusual to the modern American viewer. Through his text and illustration, he emphasizes the lowly status of the orient through technology (or lack thereof).

However, in other ways Millet's interpretation of orientalism is atypical. Instead of ornate costumes, men and women are dressed simply, in black and white. In *Turkish Women*, there is no elaborate patterning or sumptuous material. Figures do not lounge and smoke all day, and are instead depicted as hurrying away from the viewer or quietly watching as a ship passes by. They are presented naturalistically, as they would appear in life. These are not images of fantasy. Furthermore, Millet's Turkish "types" do not let the viewer into their space. Unlike the woman in *The Siesta*, they are seen from a distance, with their faces covered or, in the case of Turkish men, from behind. In terms of architecture (figure 2.18), mosques are depicted behind large stone walls. They are unapproachable, and in some cases foreboding. Instead of decorative tile work or bright hot colors, they are depicted as stark white buildings with sharp minarets rising into the sky. This is not a romantic vision of the East. Instead, it is one that is dirty, faceless, and distant. The figures are presented as unfriendly, shadowy characters, and their architecture is unwelcoming and downright menacing.

For Millet, the East represented a place of oppression and tyranny. He writes of Hungary in the face of the Ottoman Turks:

It is ... pride which has bound the nation together all through the dark centuries of constant warfare with an implacable enemy, and it is this pride which is the Magyar's best support in his present struggle for a place in the foremost rank of civilized nations. There can be no question of his intellectual superiority over the races who crowd him on the east, the south, and the west. That he is not yet in the same lane of civilization as the nations in the west of Europe is due to the fact that while the west was civilizing, the Magyar was keeping the frontier against advancing Mohammedanism; and it is only now, after many centuries of discouragement and oppression, that he is in a position to advance along the road of peaceful development and culture. To such a nature as his, all is possible, and his marvelous progress during the past twenty years is gratifying proof that he is making the best of his present possibilities.<sup>196</sup>

Religion was a large part of the problem with the East. Though Millet was openly atheist, it is likely that he, like many of his contemporaries, favored Christian, specifically Protestant, values over any other religious beliefs. For many, Eastern Orthodoxy was seen as barbaric, and Islam was classified as downright savage. With the minarets that loom sharply like daggers in the sky in so many of his images, it is clear that Millet saw "Mohammedianism" as the ultimate symbol of violence. The Ottomans, under the guise of Islam, subjugated people, and in the process interrupted their push toward civilization.

It is not surprising that Millet presented the Ottoman Turks this way, given that he had witnessed their atrocities against Eastern Europeans firsthand. Serving as a war correspondent in 1877, he accompanied the advancing Russian Army through Romania and Bulgaria to the siege at Plevna. There he observed the tremendous violence perpetrated by the Turks, and aided in the effort to provide food and medical supplies to the cities under attack. At the end of the war, after marching south with the Russian

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<sup>196</sup> Millet, "From the Black Forest (IV)," *Harper's Monthly* (May 1892), 918.

troops to San Stefano, Millet received awards for bravery and humanitarianism: the Iron Cross from Romania, the Military Cross of St. Anne and St. Stanislaus from the Czar of Russia, and a war medal from Russia for his newspaper coverage.<sup>197</sup> For Millet, the Ottoman Empire was truly the barbaric force that threatened the state of civilization.

When it came to most ethnic others, including the Eastern Europeans seen here and the Native Americans, Africans, and Malay whom I discuss in other chapters, Millet had a complicated but somewhat positive understanding. The Ottoman Turks seemed to be a different story. Though he continued to depict these figures with attention to accuracy—the depiction of the hijab is the most detailed costume study in the entire work—they do not engage with the viewer, and are instead depicted as threatening. Because of their atrocities, this group was the ultimate menacing foreign body; Millet kept them separated on the pages of the magazine, not just from viewers but from the Eastern European cultures he depicted along the way.

### *Degeneration*

Americans and Europeans alike were fearful of the possibility that the Western world was no longer capable of maintaining a purely civilized society. With poverty, crime, and violence on the rise, many were worried that the West was in decline. Paris and London, for example, were no longer seen solely as cultural capitals. They were also understood as dangerous spaces of barbarism, with figures like Jack the Ripper on the loose. Writers like Émile Zola and Millet's close friend Robert Louis Stevenson described this new modern existence in their novels. The main character of *The Strange*

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<sup>197</sup> Gina M. D'Angelo, 'Francis Davis Millet: The Early Years of "A Cosmopolitan Yankee," 1846–1884,' Ph.D. Dissertation, City University of New York, 2004, 154.



*Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, for instance, epitomized a man torn between civilized and savage states.<sup>198</sup>

Employing the term “degeneration,” many Westerners believed that society was de-evolving. After Darwin’s publication of *On the Origin of Species*, people saw the darker side of natural selection and heredity. As Darwin argued, the natural history of all species suggests that no gene is permanent and unchangeable. Human beings had the ability to develop precisely because of changes in genes and environment. For some, this meant that the genes that led to the development of civilization could be replaced or taken over by ones that promoted savagery and barbarism. People feared that heredity could work against the good of a civilization, with “savage” genes breeding “savage” genes (figure 2.19).<sup>199</sup> Many argued that there were plenty of examples throughout history in which ancient empires had fallen, suggesting that the leaders of those civilizations somehow lost their ability to be civilized. Similarly, the recent discovery that mighty animals like dinosaurs had existed and then completely disappeared suggested that, at any point, powerful beings could go into decline.<sup>200</sup> Many believed this was the result of a tainted gene pool. According to the French aristocrat and scientist Joseph Arthur, Comte de Gobineau, this type of degeneration was the result of miscegenation. For him, Western civilization became degenerate because of interbreeding between Anglo Saxons and “lower” types.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Arthur Herman, *The Idea of Decline in Western History* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 121–22.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>201</sup> Arthur comte de Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races*, trans. Adrian Collins (London: William Heinemann, 1915).

While some believed that industrialization and modern culture was at the root of civilization's decline—in its encouragement of leisure as well as art forms about nothing<sup>202</sup>—others, particularly later in the century, began to follow Gobineau's teachings and saw degeneration as the result of intermixing. Scientists like Galton, Darwin's cousin, were concerned that the intellectual abilities that resulted in civilization were under threat not just by interbreeding but by too much growth in the lower classes. After coining the term "eugenics" in 1883, he argued that "eugenics cooperates with the workings of nature by securing that humanity shall be represented by the fittest races."<sup>203</sup> In the 1890s, scientists on the European continent absorbed Galton's and Gobineau's racial views and advocated a darker version of eugenics. Some, like German anthropologist Ludwig Woltmann, argued for state-organized natural selection that mandated abortions as a means for reasserting Aryan superiority.<sup>204</sup>

Examining Millet's illustrations for *Harper's Monthly* in the context of this fear of degeneration is revealing. Of his 64 images, eight depicted family groups and four were male-female pairs. Twenty-eight images separated men and women by gender: men working, women at rest, etc. As I have mentioned, what is striking about these images is the fact that not a single work depicts types from different cultures in the same image. According to their titles and the descriptions in the text that accompanies the images, they are all illustrations of specific cultural groups: Romanian peasants, Turkish women, a

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<sup>202</sup> For more on degeneration and art in this period see: Rachael Ziady DeLue, "Diagnosing Pictures: Sadakichi Hartmann and the Science of Seeing, circa 1900," *American Art* 21:2 (Summer 2007), 42–69.

<sup>203</sup> Herman, *The Idea of Decline*, 133.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

Hungarian family. Even in the images of large groups of people, shown in close-up, they all appear to wear the same dress and feature the same facial attributes.

This observation is striking for a number of reasons. First, in a society that was truly diverse, it would have been the norm to see different cultural groups mingling together—as Millet describes. Different groups would have not only interacted but also intermarried. Of course, this mixing was not useful for the male-female pairs in Millet’s project, which aimed to present metonymic types. And yet, to depict group scenes that separated people by culture and gender was not only unnecessary but also unhelpful for Millet’s project. While he describes scenes of multiple cultures gathering, he never illustrates them.

Second, Millet almost always grouped figures together. Out of the 64 images, there were only four that depicted individual figures. Unlike Metcalf’s illustrations of the “lone Indian,” Millet rarely portrayed his Eastern European types alone. Instead, they were most often shown in families: male-female, multiple generations, groups with children. In this way, Millet depicts his cultural groups in male-female pairs to present a self-contained lesson. In *Romanian Peasants*, for instance, he depicts a male and a female Romanian in their traditional costume in an attempt to represent “Romania.” Despite the fact that intermarriage happened in this area, Millet eschews any representation of it, and instead presents “pure” types.

This emphasis on purity is furthered by the placement of the figural groups on the page. Pages 262-263 in the July, 1892 (figure 2.20), issue provide a good example of this. On page 262, *Harper’s Monthly* editors chose to place the illustration *Turks at Widdin* at the top left. A sea of text surrounds the image on two sides while margins frame the rest.

Meanwhile, the image on the next page, *Bulgarian Peasant Types*, is directly opposite these Turkish types. Placed in the top right corner, the two images are separated by two columns of text, in addition to the seam of the magazine. In other instances, images of cultural groups are made separate by pages of text. Parsons' landscapes and distant village scenes are often interspersed with Millet's cultural types in order to place distinct types at a distance from one another.

Presenting these types in reproductive pairs ties Millet's work to ethnographic imagery. In photography and dioramas or "life groups" (which I will discuss in the next chapter), ethnic others were displayed as family groups. By placing figures in male-female pairs or family groups, they presented not only a traditional Western family structure but also a self-contained reproducing unit—a visual strategy taken from natural science illustration, where animals and plants are displayed in terms of reproductive processes.

In another way, by showing these cultural groups as discreet units, Millet presents them as distinctly separate from American audiences. Here, Millet suggests (perhaps inadvertently, perhaps on purpose) that, though Eastern European culture should be accepted, it needs little to do with audiences' own lives. Romanians could marry and breed other Romanians, and through this pure breeding keep separate from white Americans—even when they lived in the same cities. The same holds true for the Hungarian, Turkish, and other types along the Danube. If they all continued to breed within their own groups, they would maintain their status on the evolutionary hierarchy. Americans, by their own pure breeding, would in this way never lose their status as "most civilized."

For Millet, Eastern Europeans, as an example of an in-between culture, displayed the problems that occur when cultures mix. Through interbreeding and cross-cultural influence, civilization becomes tainted and impure. In this way, these cultures do not encourage modern growth and development. This leads to underproduction and a lower place on the evolutionary ladder. With increasing fears of this occurring in the States, Millet's work suggests beneath its surface that such degeneration will not happen as long as discreet cultural groups stick together.

In this way, Millet's illustrations for *Harper's Monthly* present cultural difference in complicated terms. On the one hand, he pays careful attention to accurately depicting non-Western types. He depicts these figures as friendly and nonthreatening, welcoming viewers into their space so that viewers will do the same. On the other hand, they are represented as a group that is fundamentally lower on the evolutionary ladder. They are presented in handmade clothing and using tools that were decidedly pre-modern. In this way, the types along the Danube River are distinct from the readers of *Harper's Monthly* but certainly not equal.

Millet taught the large readership of *Harper's Monthly* about the different cultures of the Danube in order to provide them with the tools to identify and presumably stay away from these foreign groups. This was part of Millet's larger project: to teach Americans about difference and remind them of their superior status. This is also how Millet represented the Native Americans in the Veteran's Room and, as I will argue, Africans in the Transportation Parade and the Chinese at the Baltimore Custom House.

### Chapter Three: Africans on Foot at the World's Columbian Exposition

Just nine months after arriving at the Black Sea, Millet was summoned to Chicago to work on the decorations for the World's Columbian Exposition (figure 3.1). Invited by Daniel Burnham, who along with Frederick Law Olmsted was in charge of designing the architecture of this major world event, Millet was asked to replace William Pretyman as Director of Decorations.<sup>205</sup> Millet's responsibilities in this role included selecting and overseeing mural painters, supervising all of the architectural and sculptural ornament, and creating the flags and awnings, which decorated façades and flagpoles. He also designed and painted multiple murals himself (figure 3.2, all of which are now lost).<sup>206</sup> Millet excelled at his job overseeing the decorative program at the fair, so much so that he was given another responsibility when the fair opened: Director of Functions. In this capacity, he was in charge of pageants, including costume design, fireworks shows, electric shows, and parades.

This chapter explores Millet's role as Director of Functions. It investigates one parade in particular, in an attempt to understand how Millet used his role of Director of Functions to educate and inspire audiences. In this chapter, I explore Millet's understanding of civic art as it extends into the realm of performance. Hoping to inspire,

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<sup>205</sup> Pretyman had argued with Burnham over the general color scheme—he wanted ivory, Burnham wanted white—and was let go when he would not comply. While Pretyman was Director of Color, Burnham extended Millet's duties. Janet Cecelia Marstine, "Working History: Images of Labor and Industry in American Mural Painting, 1893-1903," vols. I and II, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1993, 62.

<sup>206</sup> Of all of his responsibilities at the fair, Millet's job as overseer of the mural program has been most frequently discussed by historians. It was understood as Millet's most important role at the fair, but it has also been highlighted because of the importance of this mural program in the history of American painting. For more on his work as Director of Decorations see *ibid.*

entertain, and educate audiences at the fair, Millet used performance as a means of promoting a public message about cultural diversity and imperialism. In a parade in which nonwhite cultural groups marched triumphantly through the Court of Honor, this performance disrupted the White City in the form of pure spectacle.

### **The Transportation Day Parade**

Four months into the fair, Millet organized one of his many parades. On September 9, 1893, a Saturday, Millet created a procession that took place at 2 p.m. in the Court of Honor (figure 3.3) and was attended by large crowds—more than two hundred thousand people attended the fair that day. Organized to celebrate Transportation Day, the parade traced the evolution of land vessels throughout human history. Divided into three stages, the parade featured “human carriers,” “the lower animals,” and, finally, “the wheel,” depicting practices from countries like Turkey, Benin, Columbia, China, Italy, India, Japan, France, and the United States. Donkeys and camels from the nearby Midway Plaisance were featured in the “beasts of burden” stage (figure 3.4), and examples of the wheel included “Mexican ox-carts,” (figure 3.5) “Chinese wheelbarrows,” “Japanese rickshaws,” Lord Mayor’s “Dress Coach,” and President Lincoln’s carriage (figure 3.6).<sup>207</sup> The parade culminated with examples of safety bicycles (invented around 1876) and the first American “electric carriage” (developed by William Morrison around 1890-91) (figure 3.7). The *Chicago Daily Tribune* described

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<sup>207</sup> “Transportation Day,” *The Hub or The Automotive Manufacturer* 35:7 (October 1893), 543–44; and “Is Celebrated with Two Pageants: Transportation Day Brings Out Carts and Canoes from Ends of Earth. Haida Follows the Skiff. With Din of Bells, Horns, and Gongs. Lincoln’s Faded Carriage in Line,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 10, 1893, 4.

the parade as an “Encyclopedia of locomotion, museum of ethnology, panorama of costumes, tableau of history, tour around the world, charivari, three-ring circus, all in one.”<sup>208</sup> Millet’s parade was a spectacle, and an unusual one for that matter. Bodies and objects from a variety of countries were organized to depict an evolution of human invention. The parade was an amalgamation of other mass entertainments but not directly related to any one form.<sup>209</sup>

While it is unclear whether images remain of the parade, it is not difficult to imagine how it looked.<sup>210</sup> Marching through the white neoclassical buildings of the Court of Honor, different cultures wore traditional costumes and interacted with objects and technologies, some of them used in daily life. Many of the modes of transportation came directly from the Midway exhibits, others from the Transportation Building. Because of these technologies, the parade would have been noisy, with modes of transportation clanking and rocking as they moved along. At the same time, some participants sang national songs as they went. Others played instruments, while some even danced. The parade was a live-action event with the sounds, movements, costumes, and objects of the performers forming a crucial part of the amusement. To see these foreign bodies, so often depicted in two-dimensional form—in artworks, photographs, and illustration—moving directly in front of them would have been an extraordinary show for Western audiences.

Like his illustrations for *Harper’s Monthly*, Millet’s parade at the World’s Columbian emphasized cultural difference. Different cultural groups wore the costumes

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> It should also be noted that Transportation Day featured two other parades, of water vessels and steam engines, at least one of which was organized directly by Millet.

<sup>210</sup> While I have not done an exhaustive search of the archives, I have not uncovered anything in the research I have performed.



of their native lands, sang and moved distinctly, and operated technologies developed in their countries. In this way, one group was differentiated from another by costume, objects, song, and dance. At the same time, like his work for the Veteran's Room, the parade presented a cultural evolution depicted in terms of race. Those on foot were all nonwhite. They were Turkish, African, and Mexican. Those making use of animals or primitive carts were also non-Western groups. White bodies did not enter the parade until the very end, when the parade culminated with European and Americans riding the most advanced technologies of the current moment.

For these reasons, Millet's Transportation Day parade was an unusual one. Other than a procession in June performed to show off the concessions along the Midway Plaisance<sup>211</sup> and a few boat parades (figure 3.8)—all of which were organized by Millet—parades through the White City were much less culturally diverse (and circus-like). Indeed while the parade's message fit well within the overall theme of the fair, the procession itself looked nothing like the other parades and instead found its sources in ancient practices.

### *The World's Columbian*

One of the priorities for the World's Columbian was to depict the cultures of the world along a hierarchal scale of human development. Through the juxtaposition of different cultures, America was meant to be understood as the most modern and technologically advanced nation in the world. Taking place in Chicago from May 1 to

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<sup>211</sup> On June 17, Millet organized a parade through the Court of Honor (before he assumed responsibilities as Director of Functions), which included Egyptian, Javanese, Chinese, Native American, and African performers from the Midway, as well as animals and objects from their "villages."

October 30, 1893, the World's Columbian commemorated the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the Americas. Constructed on six hundred acres of swampland, the fair brought together America's most renowned architects and artists to transform the landscape into a "White City," with more than two hundred buildings and a series of canals and lagoons. The main buildings of the fair, making up what was known as the Court of Honor, were divided into specific industries, such as Transportation, Horticulture, Agriculture, Manufacturing, and Fine Arts, to name a few. Forty-six countries exhibited in these buildings, displaying recent inventions as well as historically important practices related to those industries. Despite the international nature of the fair, American exceptionalism was clearly the main focus, with American technologies and objects receiving the most space and granted the highest visibility.

While the Court of Honor was understood as the "high brow" section of the fair, the Midway (figure 3.9), in contrast, featured "low brow" entertainments and ultimately served as a pleasure ground. The Midway Plaisance, a strip of land a mile long running from the western side of the fair, was the center of amusements at the World's Columbian, featuring the world's first Ferris Wheel, cafés, games, souvenir shops, and performances. The areas within the Midway were named for a variety of exotic locations and were usually staffed by people from those nations. The Midway presented culture in obvious evolutionary terms. Leaving the White City, visitors came upon German Town and the Irish Village. Next were exhibits organized by Middle Eastern countries, such as the "Streets of Cairo," and Western and Eastern Asia. At the end of the Midway were the Dahomian and American Indian Villages. The Midway, therefore, began with Western civilizations, then moved to the East, and ended with the so-called primitive groups. It

presented the world in microcosm on an evolutionary scale. According to Julian Hawthorne, “Roughly speaking, you have before you the civilized, the half civilized, and the savage worlds to choose from—or rather to take one after the other.”<sup>212</sup>

The story told at the White City was one of progress and technological prowess. American practices were contrasted with those of other nations, both within the Court of Honor as well as with displays in the adjacent Midway Plaisance. This emphasis on cultural evolution can be seen in the organization of the fair itself. The Court of Honor, featuring neoclassical buildings painted entirely in white, called attention to itself as the culmination of high civilization. Within specific buildings, however, George Browne Goode, the Smithsonian secretary and an organizer of the fair, saw it fit to arrange the White City along principles of evolution. Exhibitions were organized by country on a scale from primitive to civilized. The goal was to compare the methods of one country to those of the next. Taken together, Goode believed that the exhibitions at the fair should illustrate “the steps of the progress of civilization and its arts in successive centuries, and in all lands up to the present time.” He organized exhibitions according to a hierarchy of cultures in an attempt to make the fair an “*illustrated encyclopedia of civilization.*”<sup>213</sup>

Millet emphasizes this message as Director of Functions. Given that he had free range to organize events as he pleased, it seems that this idea was his own. Every day on the fairgrounds, holidays were commemorated, special guests were honored, and states, countries, and sometimes cities had their own “day” of events (e.g., Norway Day, on May

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<sup>212</sup> Julian Hawthorne, “Foreign Folk at the Fair,” *Cosmopolitan Magazine* 15:5 (September 1893), 570.

<sup>213</sup> George Brown Goode quoted in Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at the American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987, c1984), 45.

17; Brooklyn Day, on June 27; Venezuela Day, on July 5; and Liberia Day, on July 26) as did professional groups (e.g., Butchers and Grocers Day, on August 30, and Carriage Makers Day, on October 3). The activities organized for such celebrations included all or some of the following:

Small bands and orchestras ... and singers, in company or singly ... swimming matches in the lagoons between representatives of different nationalities, canoe and boat races, comical aquatic sports, gondola regattas ... balloon ascensions, parachute drops, tight-rope walking, foot races, dromedary, horse, and donkey races on an improvised track at the west end of the Midway, tugs of war between different nationalities, and yawl races on the Lake Front.<sup>214</sup>

Millet and his staff were in charge of organizing, managing, gathering attendance for, and cleaning up after these events. Each one of these activities, whether it was a “gondola regatta” or “balloon ascension,” had an important role to play in the celebrations for the day, but it was the parades that garnered the most interest from viewers. One reviewer of the fair even described one of Millet’s parades as: “nothing like it ever seen.”<sup>215</sup>

### *Triumphal Procession*

Processions have been a common performance type throughout the history of mankind. In different historical periods, they have taken on distinct forms. Processions were especially popular in the nineteenth century. They were most often neatly arranged parades featuring bands and floats. In Philadelphia in 1887, for instance, to celebrate the centennial of the U.S. constitution, 23 social clubs marched in procession, ranging from the Knights of Labor to various ethnic beneficiary societies to the Kensington baseball

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<sup>214</sup> Rossiter Johnson, ed., *A History of the World's Columbian Exposition Held in Chicago in 1893: by Authority of the Board of Directors*, vol. 1 (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1897), 480.

<sup>215</sup> “Nothing Like it Ever Seen,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 16, 1893, 2.

club (figure 3.10). Groups marched in tight rows carrying physical remnants of their shared past, like flags, swords, and instruments.<sup>216</sup> Bands played instruments and crowds gathered as (primarily white) men, women, and children marched through the street.

Millet's parade was dramatically different from this. It featured a series of distinct cultural groups and transportation processes from a range of cultures. It was not organized according to social affiliations; rather, it was organized according to race and the place of specific races in a contemporary understanding of human development. Those marching were not united in celebrating a common holiday but, rather, were gathered together to teach a historical lesson. Indeed the arrangement of bodies served to present a message in its very form—it celebrated American progress on a global stage.

At the same time, Millet's procession was not neat and orderly; in fact, it was downright chaotic. Paraders likely encroached on each other's space, with different groups mixing and perhaps talking to each other as they went. Similarly, objects and animals were featured by the dozens. Some passed by quickly, others slowly. They made loud noises and produced smells, all of which added to the general messiness of the event. This was a "three-ringed circus," as one critic remarked, and at moments it likely seemed out of control.

Another type of procession was also practiced in this period. For costume balls and masquerades, artists would dress up in elaborate costumes and create *tableaux vivants* of historical scenes. Often included in these events was a procession (figure 3.11), in which participants marched in a historical trajectory relating to the time periods of the characters they played. Millet himself participated in these events, as did his close friends

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<sup>216</sup> David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, c1990), 16.

Edwin Austin Abbey and Augustus Saint Gaudens.<sup>217</sup> That these type of events existed suggests a desire to reenact history in three dimensions. Artists in particular (though writers, musicians, and socialites often participated in these festivities as well) believed that, through these performances, they could better understand and analyze history.<sup>218</sup> They could better know it for their representations of the past in their painting.<sup>219</sup>

Unlike either type of procession, the source for Millet's parade can instead be found in Roman triumphal processions. Written about by classical thinkers and depicted on triumphal arches and columns, processions were a common sight in Ancient Rome, and were likely a carefully studied historical event in the nineteenth-century Western world. It is almost certain that Millet, who excelled in classics and spent years studying all kinds of art forms abroad, would have known about triumphal processions. He undoubtedly read Livy, who wrote about processions during Augustus' reign (and other historical examples), and would have witnessed reliefs of processions in person. The Arch of Titus, for example, features large panels representing the Jewish Triumph of 71 A.D. (figure 3.12). The Temple of Apollo Sosianus, meanwhile, features a procession that includes Gallic prisoners—distinguished by their costume. Even if he was not aware of Roman examples, Millet knew the Parthenon frieze, which is also a procession that includes people carrying objects, leading animals, and pushing carts (figure 3.13).

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<sup>217</sup> For more, see Annelise K. Madsen, "Private Tribute, Public Art: *The Masque of the Golden Bowl* and the Artistic Beginnings of American Pageantry," in *Pageants and Processions: Images and Idiom as Spectacle*, ed. Herman du Toit (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 161–82.

<sup>218</sup> There were historical pageants similar to this that performed historical scenes on large floats in a chronology (the most famous being the Hudson-Fulton Celebration in New York City in 1909), however these did not begin until over a decade later. *Ibid.*

<sup>219</sup> Marc Simpson, "Windows on the Past: Edwin Austin Abbey and Francis Davis Millet in England," *The American Art Journal* 22:3 (Autumn 1990): 64–89.

Triumphal processions were performed when a victorious general and his army returned to the capital after battle. According to historian Ida Ostenberg, “Livy notes as many as sixty-seven triumphs for the period 753-293 BC,” but because of their frequency “tells very little of specifics.”<sup>220</sup> Participants in parades marched through the streets of Rome displaying captives, exotic animals, trees, jewelry, and other wares that represented the spoils of war. The parade took the form of the city streets as it moved through them. With banners, musicians, animals, bodies, and objects moving in dense array, the procession emphasized disorder.<sup>221</sup> As Ostenberg notes, “the parade was an ostentatious performance, abundant not only in wealth, but also in color[sic], sound, imitation, and emotion.”<sup>222</sup>

Triumphal processions were the site where many saw an elephant for the first time, as well as people from a variety of foreign nations.<sup>223</sup> Displays of exoticism were important to these processions, as a means of making citizens aware of the Roman conquest of the entire world. Captives, in particular, were important markers of this ever-growing power. Pompey in 61 B.C. included, in a single procession, captives from Armenia, Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, Edina, Colchis, Iberia, Albania, Syria, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Palestine, Judaea, Arabia, and the Parthians.<sup>224</sup> Captives were chosen to perform based on their looks. Some were even put in their national dress to emphasize difference.<sup>225</sup> In the case of a group of German captives, specific performers

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<sup>220</sup> Ida Ostenberg, *Staging the World: Spoils, Captives, and Representations in the Roman Triumphal Procession* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 15.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

were selected for their musculature and hair color in order to exemplify the type understood as “German.” Some were even asked to color their hair in order to appear “more German.” According to Ostenberg, without this “the men simply did not appear barbarian enough.”<sup>226</sup> In order to make it easier for citizens to identify these types, giant placards were included in the procession, labeled with their names: “Flumen Nathabur, Mons Nomine Niger, Oppida Baracum”<sup>227</sup>

As Ostenberg argues, the underlying function of the procession, in addition to a display of the spoils of war, was to unite a community. In the days of Caesar and Augustus, the Roman Empire was becoming huge and diverse. The triumphal parade was a way to bring together all peoples within the vast empire and make sense of it. As Ostenberg argues, by parading the spoils of war, including captives, the parade helped construct a view of a “united self.”<sup>228</sup> Through the depiction of a visual hierarchy of ethnic types, the parade organized and categorized the visual difference of the Ancient Roman Empire.<sup>229</sup>

From the air of chaos to the types of objects on display, Millet’s parade shares much in common with the triumphal procession. Millet, too, hoped to present the world as a united front. He displayed a range of cultures in a hierarchy in order to present American power in the context of the world. Just as Rome presented itself in light of its ethnic conquests, so, too, was America presented in juxtaposition with the “barbaric” cultures of the globe.

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 157.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 8.



Linking this performance for the White City to an ancient type would have made a lot of sense. The World's Columbian celebrated Americans as the inheritors of the classical ideal. The architecture and the art reflected this association stylistically, so for Millet to draw on a Roman practice for his parade was perfectly appropriate.

### **Spectacular Civic Art**

The World's Columbian was a perfect venue for Millet to depict a cultural evolution. The fair was a public space and people of all ethnicities, religious backgrounds, and ages visited its attractions. As scholars have argued, everyone attended the World's Columbian. Putnam exclaimed, in the introduction to a book on different racial types of the Midway, "All the world is here!"<sup>230</sup> Traveling on ships, trains, and carriages to get there, visitors rode the very technologies that Millet's parade (and other parades that day) celebrated. According to Smithsonian curator Otis Mason, "It would not be too much to say that the World's Columbian Exposition was one vast anthropological revelation. Not all mankind were there, but either in persons or pictures their representatives were."<sup>231</sup> Transportation Day alone attracted 231,522 people.<sup>232</sup> As a photograph from Chicago Day taken by William Henry Jackson attests, the fair attracted enormous crowds (figure. 3.14). The World's Columbian provided Millet with his largest and most diverse audience to date.

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<sup>230</sup> F. W. Putnam, "Introduction," in *Oriental and Occidental Northern and Southern Portrait Types of the Midway Plaisance*, n.p.

<sup>231</sup> Otis T. Mason, "Summary of Progress in Anthropology," in *Annual Reports of the Smithsonian Institution for the Year Ending July 1893* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1894), 605.

<sup>232</sup> Alfred S. Johnson, ed., *The Cyclopedic Review of Current History: Columbian Annual, 1893*, vol. 3 (Garretson, Cox & Company, 1894), 770.

Millet's parade on Transportation Day needs to be understood as a work of civic art. It was "civic" because it reached more than two hundred thousand viewers and held a message of American supremacy at its core. It was "art" because of its performative nature. It was storytelling with live actors on a grand scale. Despite the fact that it was a time-based and embodied performance, like painting, it emphasized historical specificity, color harmonies, and simplified forms. Barr Ferree argued later in *The Century* that civic celebrations like these were "work[s] of art": "the moving figures in the hands of parade designers become the pigment with which his picture is prepared."<sup>233</sup>

However, Millet's parade was not simply civic art, but was also public spectacle. As the previously cited reviewer put it, it was an "encyclopedia of locomotion, museum of ethnology, panorama of costumes, tableau of history, tour around the world, charivari, three-ring circus, all in one."<sup>234</sup> Indeed standing along the streets of the Court of Honor, hundreds of visitors watched as ethnic bodies and exotic forms of transportation marched along in procession. While many had seen Abraham Lincoln's carriage, electric cars, and bicycles in the Transportation Building on display, or had ridden on them to arrive at the fair, to see them in operation all together was a different experience entirely. Similarly, watching all of these ethnic bodies operating the vehicles, walking, or riding camels would have been a sight for the eyes. While the Midway offered an opportunity to view these different types in their "native habitats," they were still separated from each other (literally, by the ropes that announced the entrance to each space). In the parade, however, Dahomians, Egyptians, Arabs, Samoans, Alaskans, and Anglo Saxon Americans marched together, sometimes next to each other, in a continual progression.

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<sup>233</sup> Barr Ferree, "Elements of a Successful Parade," *Century* 60 (July 1900): 459.

<sup>234</sup> "Is Celebrated with Two Pageants," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 4.

They sang, made noise, and danced. In order to teach the lesson of evolutionary progress, Millet made use of the logic of the spectacle. He presented old and new technologies in conjunction with ethnic bodies in an attempt to sensationalize and educate.

As the definition of the term implies, spectacles are visually striking performances. A spectacle is an event that calls attention to the visual impact it has on the audience. In this way, spectacles are an inherent part of modern life. Because of this, artists engaged with the notion of the spectacle regularly in their work. Throughout the nineteenth century, they painted massive works like panoramas, performed elaborately crafted *tableaux vivants*, and attempted to create projected (usually moving) images—all of which they geared toward massive, urban crowds. Perhaps the most famous American example is Frederic Edwin Church's "big picture exhibition" that took place in 1863. In his studio in the Tenth Street Studio Building, Church presented his panorama-like *Heart of the Andes* surrounded by a curtain, theatrical gas-lighting, and tropical plants. While the frame itself appeared window-like, the other accessories aided in bringing the work to life, creating an unusual visual spectacle. (A photograph of the work displayed at the 1864 Metropolitan Fair in New York provides a sense of this type of exhibition) (figure 3.15). Advertised in newspapers, viewers were encouraged to bring binoculars, in an attempt to narrow in on all the details, even from a distance. Church's exhibition was dramatic and dynamic and the experience of the work was radically different than that of other paintings (perhaps with the exception of the works of Albert Bierstadt.) It was for

this reason that the exhibit drew in more than twelve thousand (paying) visitors in a three-month period.<sup>235</sup>

Artists also attempted to document the experience of the spectacle in their work. Edouard Manet, in *A View of the 1867 Exposition Universelle* (figure 3.16), presented the city and the Paris world's fair of 1867 as a spectacle. T. J. Clark has argued that "the city (and social life in general) was presented as a unity in the late nineteenth century, a separate something made to be looked at—an image, a pantomime, a panorama."<sup>236</sup> Modern society had shifted from one that emphasized the private and personal existence to one that took place in the street, grounded in commercialism, crowds, and display. Manet depicts this in *Exposition Universelle*, by representing urban space as a series of unconnected fragments. The figures experience the same physical space (the park) and spectacular sites (the balloon, the view) collectively and in the same moment, and yet they seem disengaged and distracted. Jonathan Crary has argued, referencing the work of Guy Debord, that the experience of the spectacle in the late nineteenth century was one that "immobilizes" and "separates subjects."<sup>237</sup> Viewing Church's work would certainly have had this effect. Focusing attention (especially with the aid of binoculars) on the minutia of the work resulted in a solitary viewing experience. Even in a modern world of mass audiences and crowds, spectacles produced an experience of isolation.

However Millet's spectacles were slightly different from this. Instead of isolating subjects, he hoped to unite them through this mass entertainment. He hoped that by

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<sup>235</sup> Maggie M. Cao, "Heade's Hummingbirds and the Ungrounding of Landscape," *American Art* 25:3 (Fall 2011): 56.

<sup>236</sup> T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986, c1984), 63.

<sup>237</sup> Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999), 74.

watching a parade that celebrated American technological triumphs, *all* American audiences—white, black, male, female, immigrant—would feel connected and inspired.

Millet hoped to create this sense of unity (within the performance and within the audience) not just by presenting all of these cultures together, but also by marching them through the Court of Honor. To witness a range of skin colors proceeding together through the White City in procession was not just spectacular but also truly extraordinary. In a space dominated by white audiences, Africans, Koreans, Egyptians, and many other non-Westerners marched as if it belonged to them. These nonwhite Midway players disrupted the White City for two hours that Saturday and re-appropriated it for themselves through their embodied performance.

According to Henri Lefebvre, art that is truly made for a wide audience and is democratic at its core, must “appropriate” space from the dominant capitalist and national forces that control it.<sup>238</sup> For Lefebvre, public space only becomes such when members of the non-dominant groups take over that space. In this way, Millet’s parade had a radical bent. By marching through the white-dominated fairgrounds, the nonwhite groups took possession of the space, appropriating it through the very act of moving through it. This civic performance, one organized through a sort-of collaboration with nonwhite others, was an act not only of resistance but of subversion. It was a way to take control of this white space through the act of moving, singing, and dancing. The Court of Honor had, for the duration of the parade, become a space of difference and non-whiteness.

The very act of marching through the Court of Honor, performing as they saw fit—within means—provided nonwhite participants with a way of expressing themselves

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<sup>238</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1991).

that was distinct from other venues at the fair. Though Millet was not consciously attempting to be subversive, he would have been well aware that nonwhite bodies marching through the White City was a highly unusual sight in this period. Indeed it was precisely the shocking and unanticipated nature of this sight that encouraged Millet to create this parade in this first place. Through the act of creating a spectacle, Millet inadvertently created a radical performance.

### **Africans at the Fair**

One of the more spectacular elements of Millet's parade was the Dahomian performers from the Midway. They began the procession by displaying a variety of ways to carry objects—garbed in traditional costume and singing as they went—but they abruptly disappeared in the final third of the parade after the wheel was introduced. In this way, Millet's parade calls attention to the typical racism that Africans experienced at World's Fairs in this period. Africans living in the late nineteenth century were understood as cultural throwbacks and were studied by anthropologists as primitive humans. Most Anglo Americans believed that African cultures contributed nothing to civilization and instead lived in a state of pre-modernism.

While Millet perpetuated African stereotypes by presenting Africans only in the first part of the parade, by providing them with a certain amount of freedom (within means) to perform as they wished, he gave them more agency than many other organizers at the fair. As active participants, they had the ability to perform small acts of defiance throughout the performance. Despite Millet's overall control, the Dahomians, as well as

the other nonwhite participants, had the power to shape audiences' perceptions of themselves in a way that they could not in their Midway "villages."

### *Dahomian Village*

At the fair, the Dahomians lived in a small "village" at the end of the Midway. Like other nonwhite performers, they lived and performed in a space made to look and resemble the landscape and architecture of their homeland. Organized in the name of science, they were placed under the direction of the ethnology department, and were thereby meant to function as real-life object lessons.

Frederick Ward Putnam was hired to run the ethnography department at the World's Columbian, formally known as Department M, in 1891. By 1890, Putnam was curator of the country's most important museum devoted to the study of mankind and an anthropology professor at the country's most prestigious university. Putnam's major contribution to the field was his support of fieldwork, and he promoted this method for the displays for the upcoming fair. He sent out expeditions to collect objects for the fair, which were then organized within the Government Building or Anthropological Building. Putnam was assisted by Franz Boas, a young German anthropologist, who at the time was working for the periodical *Science* and acting as a docent at Clark University. The fair provided Boas with an opportunity to perform fieldwork in the Pacific Northwest and to organize those objects in exhibitions at the fair.

Putnam was also put in charge of overseeing the Midway Plaisance. The main goal of the Midway, at least at the outset, was to serve as an educational and informational space. In this capacity, the Midway was an attempt to prove that cultures

were not all inherently related. The goal was to show that, though cultures exhibited similar-looking types of objects, that did not mean they were used for the same purposes. Rather, for Putnam and Boas, it was historical circumstances, not biology, that created those objects.

In 1887, Boas published a letter in *Science* about the problems inherent to the National Museum's ethnographic displays. Otis Mason had organized the National Museum (based on George Brown Goode's suggestions) according to "inventions." This meant that objects were grouped in terms of their use rather than their culture. Implements associated with weaving, warfare, and fire making were in the same case, regardless of region. Boas complained that objects for the North West Coast were "scattered in different parts of the building, and ... exhibited among those from other tribes." Boas argued that to class objects according to biology suggests that there was a connection "between ethnographic phenomena of people widely apart," which to Boas was unfounded. Though outward appearance could be similar, "their immanent qualities may be altogether different."<sup>239</sup> While Mason displayed objects according to form, Boas believed they should be organized according to meaning.

This, then, was how the anthropological exhibitions were arranged in the Anthropological Building and also along the Midway. Ethnic groups were organized together in cases and in villages according to their country of origin. Within cases, objects were classed according to type or, sometimes, in groupings that provided a sense of how objects worked (i.e., a hand loom, yarn, and a needle all displayed together).

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<sup>239</sup> Ira Jacknis, "Franz Boas and Exhibits: On the Limitations of the Museum Method of Anthropology," in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 77.



Villages along the Midway included buildings and objects to create a sense of context for those who inhabited them—much like a diorama in a natural history museum or an exhibit at the zoo. For Boas, context helped people better understand the way an object—or a group of people—functioned.

In this way, all of the nonwhite participants in Millet’s parade arrived under the guise of anthropology. They all lived in areas separated from each other that emphasized their own cultural practices. The Dahomian Village was one such space (figure 3.17). Organized by Xavier Pené, a French businessman working along the west coast of Africa, the Dahomian Village attempted to present Africa as it “really looked.” Pené began his career as an ivory dealer, but later trafficked in human beings, supplying men from the Krooman tribe to French railroad companies constructing a line across the Isthmus of Panama. In 1892, Pené, inspired by the French colonial village at the Exposition of 1889, attempted to persuade the Board of the World’s Columbian to put him in charge of an African village display. According to Rydell,

As excited as they were about making living anthropology displays a leading feature of their fair, Chicago’s exposition promoters were evidently nonplused by his proposal to construct an African village at the fair along the lines of the colonial shows that had been featured at the Paris Exposition. Exposition officials argued that “negroes were no novelty in America,” they had little reason to believe that the show would be successful.<sup>240</sup>

Pené, however, ultimately won the board over, and was contracted to create a “faithful” recreation of a Dahomian village populated by at least sixty Dahomians: thirty men

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<sup>240</sup> Robert Rydell, “‘Darkest Africa’: African Shows at America’s World’s Fairs, 1893-1940,” in *Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business*, ed. Bernth Lindfors (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999): 138.

(including one chief) and thirty female “Amazon warriors.”<sup>241</sup> Pené was also told that the performers would be required to regularly display practices of warfare and religious ceremonies, in addition to producing and displaying (and selling) objects of curiosity, including gold and silver jewelry.<sup>242</sup>

Pené visited Africa and returned with 67 participants, the majority from the Kingdom of Benin (including two children) and four each from the French Congo and French Guinea (figures 3.18). For eight months, Pené paid each adult a hundred francs per month (the two children received fifty). The chief received 150 francs, while a participant listed as a jeweler received 160.<sup>243</sup> At the fair, the Dahomians lived in a village constructed (and apparently designed) by local Chicago workmen. The Dahomians had little to do with the physical appearance of their village except to add a few objects brought from home.<sup>244</sup>

The majority of the Dahomians at the fair were subjects of Behanzin, King of Abomey (known to outsiders as Dahomey and within themselves as the Fon), and a quintessential representation of sub-Saharan Africa. They were members of a well-organized, centralized nation. They were recognized as exceptional warriors and were loyal to state leadership, and they emphasized work and family loyalty in their daily lives.<sup>245</sup> The understanding of Dahomey as a nation did not come through very well at the fair. As in other displays along the Midway, the Dahomians did little to exhibit cultural

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid. With the commercial aspect emphasized in these displays over the scientific one, Putnam and Boas quickly began disassociating themselves from the project.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 138–40.

<sup>245</sup> Christopher Robert Reed, *"All the World Is Here!": The Black Presence at White City*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 154–5.

practices. They performed songs and dances at allotted times and demonstrated war practices and religious ceremonies. Placed in a village that looked little like their actual home, they functioned as actors placed within a stage set.

Displays of African bodies were deeply tied to anthropological practices. As early as 1815, George Cuvier dissected the genitals of the “Hottentot Venus” in front of a large audience. In some ways, later anthropological displays at World’s Fairs found their root in freak shows.<sup>246</sup> According to Robert Rydell, these displays of ethnic others had a twofold purpose. First, anthropologists hoped to “wed their profession to specific national, imperialist ambitions, and thereby demonstrate their usefulness to the state.” Second, they hoped to educate the public about “the applicability of Social Darwinian insights to social struggle at home and imperial expansion abroad.”<sup>247</sup>

In an American context specifically, they sought to repair tensions about African Americans in the wake of the Emancipation Proclamation. With exhibitions like the Dahomian Village along the Midway Plaisance, the message was that slavery had “not been an unmixed blessing.”<sup>248</sup> The goal of Dahomian Village was to display Africans as savages, to prove the backwardness of the people white Americans had enslaved for so many years. It allowed them to be studied and classified in comparison to the other ethnic groups along the Midway by the audiences that visited. Provided an experience of direct contact with native people, this was one of the few instances in these visitors’ lives in which they would come into such close proximity with so-called primitive society.

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<sup>246</sup> Raymond Corbey, “Ethnographic Showcases, 1870-1930,” *Cultural Anthropology* 8:3 (August 1993), 354.

<sup>247</sup> Rydell, “Darkest Africa,” in *Africans on Stage*, 136.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

For the performers themselves, the experience was often dismal. Those in the Dahomian Village might not have been paid their agreed upon salary, as Pené gave everyone's earnings to the "chief" for distribution. Many performers likely felt homesick, visiting a new place, far from home, with a harsher climate. Others were emotionally disturbed by the circumstances and personal experiences of these exhibitions. Rudolf Virchow, a German scientist, described in 1880 how an Inuit woman literally ran into the walls of a room when the anthropologist attempted to take her measurements.<sup>249</sup> Other performers contracted diseases. Several Africans in an 1897 Kongolese Village on display in Terveren, Belgium, died as the result of an infection.<sup>250</sup> And yet some visitors had positive experiences. Sometimes, show runners paid natives well. Some even offered them sightseeing tours and dinner with local dignitaries.<sup>251</sup> However, as Raymond Corbey notes, without much written information, it is nearly impossible to know what these performers actually felt or how exactly they were treated.<sup>252</sup>

### *Africans in the White City*

Africans at the fair were described as "savages." As Putnam argued, "the Negro types at the fair—Sudanese[sic], Dahomians[sic], Nubians and the Congo people—represented very fairly the barbarous or half civilized states of a people."<sup>253</sup> According to

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<sup>249</sup> Corbey, "Ethnographic Showcases," *Cultural Anthropology*, 348.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 349–50.

<sup>253</sup> Commentary below "Zarotteffa: Soudanese Woman," in *Oriental and Occidental Northern and Southern Portrait Types of the Midway Plaisance: A Collection of Photographs of Individual Types of Various Nations from all Parts of the World who Represented, in the Department of Ethnology, the Manners, Customs, Dress, Religions, Music and Other Distinctive Traits and Peculiarities of their Race, with Interesting and*

*Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, the Africans “are here in all their barbaric ugliness ... blacker than buried midnight and as degraded as the animals which prowl the jungles of their dark land.”<sup>254</sup> Another person remarked, “The habits of these people are repulsive; they eat like animals and have all the characteristics of the very lowest order of the human family. Nearly all the women are battle-scarred; most of them are captives.”<sup>255</sup> Just by being there, the Dahomians presented a lesson of cultural difference through their visual presence. According to one reviewer, “If contrasts teach lessons, then such spectacles as are depicted (such as the Fon Village) ... must have leavened the multitudes with a great many seeds of knowledge.”<sup>256</sup>

The Dahomians were set out as cultural opposites from the primarily white audience precisely because of their skin color. Outside the entrance of the Anthropological Building, Boas and Joseph Jastrow, under Putnam, examined and measured visitors before they entered the building. Once the anthropologists gave visitors their measurements, they encouraged them to compare their dimensions to the nearby statues of male and female students from Harvard and Radcliffe, which were understood as the ideal types. Visitors could see how they measured up. On the one hand, the goal of this exhibit was to display techniques of physical anthropology. On the other hand, it encouraged visitors to place themselves within a hierarchy of human types.<sup>257</sup> With the

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*Instructive Descriptions Accompanying Each Portrait* (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Publishing Company, 1894), unpaginated.

<sup>254</sup> Edward B. McDowell, “The World's Fair Cosmopolis,” *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* XXXVI (1893), 415.

<sup>255</sup> Quoted in Rydell, “Darkest Africa,” in *Africans on Stage*, 140.

<sup>256</sup> *Oriental and Occidental Northern and Southern Portrait Types of the Midway Plaisance*, n.p.

<sup>257</sup> Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, 57.

ideal white, American, Ivy League-educated man at the top of the evolutionary ladder, the savage Dahomian warrior was at the bottom.

Pené explained that his goal for the Dahomian Village was less for personal gain and more to promote imperialism. He hoped to show visitors that civilized countries needed to intervene for the sake of these indigenous populations.<sup>258</sup> Their “savage” ways served as proof that African countries needed salvation and, in an American context, that African Americans should be denied political and economic equality until white America could cultivate them. In this way, the fair used race as a way to maintain the current social order.

This understanding of Africans was not new. They were only in rare cases understood as belonging to nations—the Dahomian Village did not help promote this fact—and were instead thought of as living in a state of savagery. Africans were understood by virtually everyone in the West as one singular group, meant to be colonized. Africa was being divided up by many countries, and if America had had an opportunity it would likely have taken a piece as well. Edward Burnett Tylor understood Africans to be a “rude” form of humankind. He refers to Africans, along with the “North American Indian” and the “Siberian” as the “barbaric ancestors” of the Ancient Greeks.<sup>259</sup> Similarly, as Corbey has argued, they were “cast as contemporary ancestors, receivers of true civilization and true religion.”<sup>260</sup> They were not even understood as of this historical moment. They were relics of the past still living in the present. For

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<sup>258</sup> Rydell, “Darkest Africa,” in *Africans on Stage*, 140.

<sup>259</sup> Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*, fifth ed. (London: Murray, 1913), 206.

<sup>260</sup> Corbey, “Ethnographic Showcases,” *Cultural Anthropology*, 360.

centuries, white America not only wrote and thought about Africans in such terms but depicted them as savage warriors or shameless jezebels in cartoons and illustrations.

At the fair, the Dahomians were ridiculed frequently in visual media. African women, in particular, were caricatured in illustration. Often described as “a savage looking lot of females, masculine in appearance, and not particularly attractive,”<sup>261</sup> they were depicted as masculine warriors, ape-like humans, or disheveled she-devils. In a cartoon for *Puck's World's* Columbian edition, captioned “A Privileged Race” (figure 3.19), African women are contrasted with Anglo Saxon visitors at the fair. The Dahomian females are depicted with dark black skin. Their hair is natty and they wear grass skirts or white fabric below their waist. The group of women is accompanied by a child, who is depicted in only a diaper and holding a stick. Further in the foreground, two white Anglo Saxon women with delicate features, wearing elaborate high-fashion dress, watch them at a distance. The Americans stare at the African group with incredulity. The text reads:

Anabel—Just look at those African women! I should think they'd hate to go out with such scanty clothing.

Madge—Well, you know, people with their complexions don't tan easily.

While the *Puck* cartoonist is poking fun at the American viewers, he is also presenting the Fon women through imagery typical from this time. Not only are the African women and their child presented as dirty, unkempt savages, they are shown on a much smaller scale than the white women in the foreground. Indeed, the cartoon itself presents an evolution through its composition. The white women loom large in the

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<sup>261</sup> John J. Flinn, *The Best Things to Be Seen at the World's Fair*, published by authority of the exposition management (Chicago, The Columbia Guide Company, 1893), 169.

foreground while the African women are much smaller and further off in the illusionistic space.

Black Americans, meanwhile, had an ambivalent relationship to the continent of Africa. While white Americans understood Africans as primitive savages, black Americans were not sure how to interpret them. In most cases, they had no context or knowledge about the countries they left behind, and were therefore unsure of how to relate to them. Though the United States was certainly not held on a pedestal, many African Americans did not necessarily see Africa as a source of pride, either. Some felt ashamed of their African legacy. Others acknowledge that the global position of Africa was low and that Africans were seen as “savages.” African Americans did not want to be linked to this stereotype.<sup>262</sup> Others wanted to help Africans achieve a higher level of civilization.<sup>263</sup>

At the fair, African Americans and Africans were intimately linked. This can be seen most obviously in a cartoon produced about the fair. One in a fifteen-part series made for *Harper's Monthly*, an African American, Mr. Johnson, has an encounter with an African at the Dahomian Village (figure 3.20). Here the two not only face each other, but

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<sup>262</sup> Elliot Skinner, *African Americans and U.S. Policy Toward Africa, 1850-1924: In Defense of Black Nationality* (Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1992), 10.

<sup>263</sup> A group of African Americans associated with the AME Church organized a conference at the fair. During the weeklong congress, a hundred people, including explorers, missionaries, and scientists, read papers on the problems facing Africa. Bishop Turner, who ran the congress, made a plea for African Americans to take a greater interest in Africa. (Rydell, “Darkest Africa,” in *Africans on Stage*, 141.) He argued that Africans were the kinsman of African Americans and therefore deserved more attention. He hoped that African Americans would travel to Africa and build a black nation run by black people. This point served to cause much dissent among his audience. While some understood his plea, many others were not interested in taking such extreme measures. (Skinner, *African Americans*, 153, 10.) In this way, the fair acted as a catalyst to get African Americans interested in the situation in Africa, recognizing their own personal connections to the country, as well as the lack of interest shown by white America.



mirror each other, as Mr. Johnson's features become more ape-like than in previous images (where he is still caricatured along with his mammy-huckster-type wife, though not quite as severely (figure 3.21).) Through this transformation, he begins to look just like the "savage" African. In this way, the illustration depicts the two as related types, suggesting that there was not much difference between Africans and African Americans.

It was precisely because of images like these that many African Americans had a problem with the Dahomian Village. While some found it exciting to come face to face with Africans for the first time, many saw it as a way to promote anti-black sentiment. According to Frederick Douglass, "African savages are brought here to act the monkey."<sup>264</sup> Douglass continued, "As if to shame the [Negro] that the Dahomians are also here to exhibit the Negro as a repulsive savage."<sup>265</sup>

Racism toward African Americans ran rampant at the fair. From the start, African Americans were excluded from contributing in any major way. The representatives from each state and national territory were all white, and African Americans had to go through them to put up exhibitions. As historian Bridget Cooks points out, "recognition of national diversity would have served as a blemish on the White City and complicated the appearance of a unified Anglo Saxon manifest destiny."<sup>266</sup> Some African Americans pressured the board to appoint an African American commissioner, hoping to form a "negro department" or "African American annex." Others, however, felt that this called attention to segregation. In response to the situation, Ida B. Wells issued a pamphlet, with

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<sup>264</sup> Frederick Douglass quoted in Bridget Cooks, "Fixing Race: Visual Representations of African Americans at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893," *Patterns of Prejudice* 41 (December 2007): 455.

<sup>265</sup> Rydell, "Darkest Africa," in *Africans on Stage*, 142.

<sup>266</sup> Cooks, "Fixing Race," *Patterns of Prejudice*, 444.

a forward by Frederick Douglass, to explain the situation: *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition*.

However, there was an African American presence in the Haitian Pavilion, where Douglass essentially held court most days. In charge of the entire pavilion, Douglass created an African American-centered exhibition that was visited by large numbers of whites and blacks. The space was intended by Douglass to be an escape from the racial discrimination in the rest of the fair.

While African Americans found spaces to resist racism at the fair, Dahomians had a harder time. They were treated as virtual slaves in their villages, and were rarely allowed to leave the Dahomian Village. Even when they did, it is safe to assume that they met with looks or even disgust along the Midway, and particularly in the Court of Honor. It is unclear whether or not Douglass would have made them feel welcome in the Haitian pavilion, but likely not. It was up to the Dahomians themselves to find other ways of making their agency known.

### *Acts of Resistance*

Despite the rampant racism at the fair, the Dahomians, like other cultural groups, were able to defy this white dominance in small, though meaningful, ways. In their village, because of their close contact, the Dahomians had the ability to resist the white gaze. They could make fun of white visitors behind their backs or to their faces in their own language; they could perform rituals incorrectly on purpose as a means of divesting the power of those ceremonies; they could engage with viewers by looking back at them and sneering. According to Alison Griffiths, “form[ing] an ironic, knowing, half-smile at

spectators to overt acknowledgement of their status as performers,” actors engaged in “resistive behavior.”<sup>267</sup> One visitor, who claimed that she could understand what the Dahomians were saying, reported:

A good many people imagine, I suppose [that the women] are sounding the praises of the exposition or at least voicing their wonder at the marvels they have seen since coming to this country. But the fact is that if the words of their chants were translated into English they would read something like this: “We have come from a far country to a land where all men are white. If you will come to our country we will take pleasure in cutting your white throats.”<sup>268</sup>

In many ways, this total immersion in the Dahomian Village was terrifying for white viewers. Not only were these audiences brought face to face with a “savage” African, as they understood them, but those “savages” could look back. Unlike in a photograph, there was interaction between the viewer and subject. According to Corbey, this fear of natives related directly to the reasons behind, and experiences of, colonizing them.<sup>269</sup> Participants in the Dahomian Village might have used this fear to their advantage in an attempt to subvert the racist agenda of Pené.

In this way, Millet’s parade was also an act of resistance. The parade, like the Dahomian Village, was a live-action event, and thus participants could engage with their audience. Members of the Dahomey group could easily have returned the gaze or insulted viewers in their native tongue. At the same time, the Dahomians resisted the racism they encountered through the very act of parading itself. Not part of Pené’s program, the Dahomians had more freedom as participants in Millet’s parade. Because Millet’s procession was meant to be an accurate representation of cultural difference, he gave

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<sup>267</sup> Alison Griffiths, *Wondrous Difference: Cinema, Anthropology, & Turn-of-the-Century Visual Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, c2002), 72.

<sup>268</sup> Rydell, “Darkest Africa,” in *Africans on Stage*, 145.

<sup>269</sup> Corbey, “Ethnographic Showcases,” *Cultural Anthropology*, 346.

participants autonomy to dress, behave, and make use of local objects in a way that they (presumably) would have done back home. No one was forced to march in these parades, and there is even a possibility that they were compensated for their time.

Christopher Robert Reed has argued that photographic records of the Dahomians at the fair presented African culture more objectively than other modes. He argues, “Viewers buying photographic souvenir books without commentaries benefitted ... by being able to intelligently form their own opinions.”<sup>270</sup> Photographs presented Africans as they “actually looked” at the fair. In a parade, too, though still a highly confused context, Dahomians were not presented as a caricature but, rather, in the flesh—displaying their bodies, costumes, and modes of transportation as they actually appeared. In an age when white America rarely saw actual Africans, viewing them in the flesh (theoretically) allowed them to form their own opinions. In fact, a parade provided an opportunity not just to present the Dahomians as they looked but also as they moved. During these visual spectacles, white audiences could witness Africans walking, singing, and moving in their native costume, in a way that was at least partially curated by those participating. According to Reed, as Africans “collectively paraded through the fairgrounds, individually competed in sporting events, socially interacted with strangers and with sometimes sanguine results, and, overall with no evidence to the contrary, more likely than not in reality left an indelible, and, in a few instances, a positive, imprint on the fair and its visitors.”<sup>271</sup>

In general, Millet’s representations of Africans were positive. Though he likely understood Africans as a cultural group lower on the evolutionary ladder, as was

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<sup>270</sup> Reed, *All the World Is Here!*, 152.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

commonly the case in this period, he still depicted them with respect to their difference. After spending time in North Africa sketching and studying their diverse cultures, he painted works representing the different cultural types he witness there. In the *Turkish Water Seller* from 1878 (figure 3.22), a dark-skinned man dressed in a bright orange turban stands with his arms crossed. He rests underneath a tent with an oriental pitcher and three glasses in front of him. While the costume and dark skin tone of the sitter call to mind the exoticness of the scene, the man seems deep in thought, unaware that he is the subject of our gaze. As Holly Edwards argues, Millet gives his subject a sense of agency, an unusually high sign of respect in Orientalist painting.<sup>272</sup> The image depicts a dark-skinned African man in an attempt to present type, and yet the subject is not objectified in the standard sense.

Though Millet likely treated the nonwhite participants with more respect than other organizers at the fair, this did not mean that the performance was a collaboration. Millet gave the performers free range but within means. Moreover, the organizational structure of the parade, determined by Millet himself, maintained a hierarchy and imperialist rhetoric with the nonwhite bodies on the bottom and Anglo Americans at the top. It was up to those nonwhite performers to subvert the framework imposed on them and present a different message. What white audiences responses were to this parade cannot, unfortunately, be determined.

### **The Bicycle vs. the Body**

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<sup>272</sup> Holly Edwards, *Noble Dreams, Wicked Pleasures: Orientalism in America, 1870-1930* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press in association with the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2000), 168.

Millet contrasted the nonwhite bodies moving through the White City with modern technologies. Through the juxtaposition of the African walkers at the start with modern bicycles at the finish, Millet emphasized Anglo American superiority. And yet, even in comparison to the modern modes of transportation, the African body maintained its spectacular status.

After seeing Dahomians, Japanese, Turkish, Mexican, French, and American men and women (to name a few) walking, riding on camels, pulling carts, and driving old-fashioned carriages and vehicles, the bicycle would have been a revelation. These other modes would have been slow and clunky. They would have made noise, and in some cases moved awkwardly. Either in formation or solo, the mass of bikes would have silently whizzed by, showing off their speed and their efficiency. They would have been quiet and taken up far less space on the road than many of the earlier examples. Riders might have dazzled with tricks, while others might have excited audiences by bicycling at a close distance. The bicycle, in the context of all of the other vehicles, was truly the epitome of modern transportation.

As bicycling became increasingly safer, more affordable, and more efficient, people of all ages, genders, and ethnic groups began to purchase “safety bicycles” in the 1880s (figure 3.23). The first safety bicycle was designed by Harry John Lawson, and unlike earlier bicycles, placed the rider’s feet within reach of the ground, to make it easier to stop. The rider’s feet were kept away from the front wheel, and instead the pedals powered the rear wheel. By 1879, when the chain drive, originally used for tricycles, was applied to the safety, it became less dangerous and more efficient. By 1886, the two wheels were made equal size, and in 1890 pneumatic tires were introduced. All of this led

to a safer, more comfortable vehicle. In 1885, the first commercially successful safety bicycle, the Rover, was introduced by John Kempt Sarley, in England. Meanwhile, Overman Wheel Company and Western Wheel Works manufactured some of the first American-made safety bicycles in the early 1880s.

By 1893, the bicycle had become a highly popular democratic form of transportation. Americans rode bicycles to work, to school, and in their free time. Even Henry Adams, a year earlier, more than fifty and complaining of old age, “solemnly and painfully learned to ride a bicycle.”<sup>273</sup> The bicycle made travel four times faster than walking, and therefore made it the most effective way to get places. In Maurice Leblanc’s novel about cycling, his main character proclaims, “This is not two different things like man and horse. There is not a man and a machine. There is a faster man.”<sup>274</sup> Some even saw the bicycle’s speed as a way of exercising the mind. According to Sylvester Baxter, the bicycle “quicken[ed] the perceptive faculties of young people and made them more alert.”<sup>275</sup> French writer Paul Adam wrote that the bicycle created a “cult of speed” for a generation that wanted to conquer time and space.<sup>276</sup> As Robin Kelsey has argued, cities themselves changed when asphalt paving was introduced as a result of the bicycle. For Kelsey, the bicycle greatly affected ways of seeing in this period—it was part of the “acceleration and fragmentation of human experience.”<sup>277</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007, 1918), 301.

<sup>274</sup> Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), 113.

<sup>275</sup> Sylvester Baxter, “Economic and Social Influences of the Bicycle,” *The Arena* (October 1892), 583.

<sup>276</sup> Paul Adam quoted in Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space*, 111.

<sup>277</sup> Robin Kelsey, *Photography and the Art of Chance* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015), 169, 171.

At the fair, bicycle clubs rode in tandem during the opening ceremonies (figure 3.24). Bicycle races were held on special days. Just outside the walls of the fair, all kinds of people could be seen riding bicycles. Also at the fair, a bicycle exhibition was included in Adler and Sullivan's famed Transportation Building (figure 3.25). Here, the bicycle display of the Western Wheel Works of Chicago inspired one writer to comment:

Bicycling in America has had a rapid and steady growth, and as the improvement in the character of these bicycles keeps pace with the demand for them, it is safe to assume that at no distant day their use will become almost universal. The wheel of a dozen years ago was but a crude invention compared with the swift, noiseless, easily propelled, and smoothly riding one of today ... some form of bicycle will be the vehicle of the future, as it has well been called the horse with feet of velvet, frame of iron, and nerves of steel.

The rhetoric surrounding bicycles centered on its status as a technological wonder. The same author described the twelve hundred "artisans" who crafted these vehicles at the Western Wheel Works' electrically lighted factory. He then speaks to the non-bicyclist, saying that even he "is bound to admire not only the brilliant finish of these wheels, but also the mechanical ingenuity shown in their fashioning."<sup>278</sup>

As historian David Nye has argued, Americans embraced technology and saw it as the epitome of civilization. Technology was defined in the nineteenth century as objects and practices that "emancipated the mind" and produced a faster-paced, more efficient society.<sup>279</sup> The railroad, the steamboat, the bicycle, and other forms of modern transportation were revered in society. They were praised for their agility, for the visual experience of the journey, and for the transformation of the landscape they precipitated.

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<sup>278</sup> S.S. Beeman, Rand, McNally & Co.'s, *A Week at the Fair, Illustrating the Exhibits and Wonders of the World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago, Rand, McNally & Company, 1893), 53.

<sup>279</sup> David E. Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, c1994), 46.



Though some Americans found traveling on these new modes of transportation uncomfortable and nerve-wracking in the early days, fears gave way to general enthusiasm.<sup>280</sup> As Nye points out, in England many “viewed industrialization in terms of satanic mills, Frankensteinian monsters, and class strife.” Americans, however, saw it as intimately tied to democratic virtues of invention and progress.<sup>281</sup>

Speed was a particularly exciting element of these technologies. Americans were awe-struck by how technologies made processes and human movements so much faster. The steamship, the locomotive, and even the bicycle decreased travel times exponentially. The telephone sped up the way people received information. Factory work was accelerated in this period by Frederick W. Taylor’s “scientific management” system. In the years just after the fair, the advent of the automobile, the moving picture, and the airplane made people even more interested in speed. Artistic movements like Futurism responded to these conditions in art, creating a “new aesthetic of speed.” According to Marcel Duchamp, at the beginning of the twentieth century “the whole idea of movement, of speed, was in the air.” Ferdinand Leger observed that life was “more fragmented and faster-moving than in previous periods.”<sup>282</sup> The culmination of Millet’s parade was therefore an expression of a technological wonder. In other words, it thrilled and entertained audiences because of its modernity and the way that it changed peoples’ perception of space and time.

Despite the fact that the bicycle was the culmination of the parade, the “human carriers” were still a major draw. According to *The Automotive Manufacturer*, “Among

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<sup>280</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>282</sup> Filippo Marinetti, Marcel Duchamp, and Ferdinand Leger quoted in Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space*, 117 and 118.

the most notable features were the human carriers.”<sup>283</sup> Indeed, though this performance was a celebration of technology, it was also a spectacle of difference that celebrated primitive practices. Though understood as slower and less efficient, the physical abilities and strength of the human carriers made them a sight for many viewers.

While many of the Dahomians simply walked carrying baskets or other objects, some of them were also in charge of holding up palanquins. In this capacity, they displayed their brute strength and physical form. Holding up these carriages, they demonstrated their physical abilities, by engaging bicep muscles and lifting enormously heavy objects. In this way it was not purely their skin color but also their physicality that made them worthy of note.

As Gail Bederman and Martin Berger have argued, the ideal masculine type was changing in this period.<sup>284</sup> In the Veteran’s Room, the model masculine soldier was supposed to be passive and anti-violent, but by the end of the century the musculature of the body, rather than inner workings of the brain, became a symbol of manhood. Many felt that young Anglo Saxon Americans of the late nineteenth century were too refined. They had become soft in the decades after the Civil War—for sociologists like Max Nordau, they had even begun to “degenerate.” Later in the century, men were encouraged to exercise and join athletic clubs. They actively participated in sports in grade school and college as an antidote against the degeneracy of intellectualism.<sup>285</sup> Protestant

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<sup>283</sup> “Transportation Day,” *The Hub*, 543.

<sup>284</sup> Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, 1995) and Martin A. Berger, *Man Made: Thomas Eakins and the Construction of Gilded Age Manhood* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2000).

<sup>285</sup> Elspeth H. Brown, “Racialising the Virile Body: Eadweard Muybridge’s Locomotion Studies 1883–1887,” *Gender & History* 17:3 (November 2005), 647.

ministers Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Henry Ward Beecher popularized the British ideals of “muscular Christianity.” Theodore Roosevelt, meanwhile, promoted the “strenuous life.”

In her discussion of Eadweard Muybridge’s time-motion studies, Elspeth Brown argues that Muybridge’s photographs of the black boxer Ben Bailey exemplified the ideal masculine type (figure 3.26). Posed against a grid, walking up a flight of stairs, shadow boxing, and throwing a rock, Bailey’s musculature is emphasized. For a culture that hoped to emphasize their manhood through human physique, Bailey’s body symbolized manliness. And yet, white America, including Muybridge, criticized the black body. In *Animal Locomotion*, Muybridge contrasts Bailey to the white male athletic build in an attempt to show that the white athlete presented a more perfect version of manhood, despite his obviously weaker stature. Citing Eric Lott, Brown argues that Bailey’s body fits with the dialect of “love and theft”: whites were fascinated by the black body and black vitality, but covered that love with fear and panic in the form of derision and disgust.<sup>286</sup>

The Dahomians walking and carrying palanquins in the Transportation Day parade can be compared to Bailey. Muscles engaged, they epitomized the strength and power of the black “savage” type. In an age that stressed the importance of exercise and physical might, white men (and women) would have celebrated or perhaps been jealous of the physiques of these other racial types. Indeed, new modes of transportation, particularly the car, were supposed to alleviate the stress of exercise on the body.

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid., 638. Also, see Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, c1995) and Shawn Michelle Smith, “The Space Between: Eadweard Muybridge’s Motion Studies,” in *At the Edge of Sight: Photography and the Unseen* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2013), 75–98.

This discussion of the strength of the Dahomians is not to detract from the celebration of technological development at the root of the parade. It does, however, suggest that viewers, while curious to see these displays of technologies, were also interested in seeing their opposite. Watching men, particularly black men, display their brute strength was a spectacle of its own. It suggests that there were multiple layers of attractions embedded in the parade.

### **Objectified Bodies**

As I have demonstrated in chapters about the Veteran's Room frieze and Millet's illustrations for *Harper's Monthly*, it was crucial that Millet ground his cultural evolutions in facts. This was easier in many ways at the World's Columbian, because Millet was dealing with actual human bodies. Similarly, the animals that participated were the camels and donkeys that were used every day for rides and attractions on the Midway. Finally, while some of the historical objects were borrowed from the Midway, the majority came from exhibitions held in the Transportation Building (figure 3.27).

Millet was still fascinated by objects in 1893. It was things that helped ground his work in the realm of authenticity. In Chicago, Millet did not just study objects on display but, he literally took them out of their museum context and added them to his performance. People would be well aware (from signs around the fair,<sup>287</sup> as well as from

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<sup>287</sup> It is worth noting the lengths Millet went to promote these events and the fair more generally. Three-sheet posters of the weekly event schedule were pasted on billboards around the fairgrounds. In addition, single-sheet posters circulated around Chicago and nearby towns, while twenty-five thousand illustrated "general posters" were sent out all over the country. Moreover, 250,000 "dodgers" were posted in railroad stations, announcing and describing events happening at the fair. The goal of these posters was to call attention not just to the vessels but also to those who were steering the boats.

the displays themselves) that many examples were the “real thing,” taken from their static positions behind rope in the Transportation Building. In this way, Millet’s parades emphasized Steven Conn’s “object-based epistemology” in a whole new way.<sup>288</sup> They were a more literal manifestation of the notion that “in the post-civil war period, objects, not books, would yield new knowledge.”<sup>289</sup>

Millet’s interest in vehicles worked well with Putnam’s philosophy in the Anthropological Building, where objects recently unearthed during fieldwork exercises were displayed for the knowledge they could convey in and of themselves. Putnam organized cases and dioramas in which he displayed objects in context or with other like examples, in an attempt to create an accurate understanding of the historical past. By studying objects, arranged systematically and with appropriate labels, audiences could see effectively how different cultures functioned and developed.

At the same time, the bodies themselves were understood as objects in Millet’s parade. Used to symbolically represent a place or stand in for a group of people, Dahomians, Turkish, and Japanese participants were objectified and commodified. As Eric Sandweiss points out, American visitors “felt free to speak to their midway guests as

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While some are described by name, like James Hunt, others were brought to viewer’s attention through references to nationality or geography, such as “Western Indians,” “Penobscot Indians,” or “British Columbia.” Through the text on the page, Millet mapped out the different cultural groups and organized them into a loosely evolutionary process with the American Captain Hunt and his whaler literally at the top of the page and the Native American vessels at the bottom. Johnson, *A History of the World's Columbian Exposition*, 480.

<sup>288</sup> Steven Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 4.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

they might of the animals of a petting zoo or the cast of a grade school play.”<sup>290</sup> Corbey has argued that anthropology and imperialism went hand in hand at the World’s Fairs; the desire was to turn those representatives of “primitive culture” into objects to be classified and organized, much like a photographic archive.<sup>291</sup> For Curtis Hinsley, the ethnic groups along the Midway were not only scientific specimens but also commodities meant to be possessed, controlled, and collected through the act of viewing, or more literally through the purchase of objects.<sup>292</sup> Millet’s parade played into this rhetoric by presenting these foreign people in a hierarchal order that organized and arranged them in a systematized way.

In many ways, Millet’s parade was similar to the dioramas around the fair. Dioramas were found in all kinds of buildings in the White City, but the majority were housed in the Government Building and the Anthropological Building. Overseen by Mason and Putnam, the dioramas accompanied exhibitions of Native American artifacts, serving to contextualize the objects on view around them. While some dioramas featured singular figures, others depicted family or gendered groupings. Known as “life groups,” these dioramas featured scenes of mannequins interacting with each other and with objects specific to (in most cases) a particular cultural group.

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<sup>290</sup> Eric Sandweiss, “Around the World in a Day: International Participation in the World’s Columbian Exposition,” *Illinois Historical Journal* (Spring 1991): 2.

<sup>291</sup> Corbey, “Ethnographic Showcases,” *Cultural Anthropology*.

<sup>292</sup> Curtis Hinsley, “The World as Marketplace: Commodification of the Exotic at the World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago 1893,” *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 344–65.

At the World's Columbian, there were eighty mannequins on display, and just over half of those were organized into 15 multi-figure groups.<sup>293</sup> Featuring scenes of work, such as Powhatans quarrying stones (figure 3.28), Navajo silversmiths forging objects, and Zuni women making pottery, these dioramas were carefully studied from photographs and drawings. While most of them depicted contemporary practices, others featured scenes from earlier periods in history.<sup>294</sup>

Life groups originated in the National Museum. They derived from waxworks displayed at the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851 and, later, from Artur Hazelius's scenes of Swedish peasant life exhibited at both the Philadelphia Centennial and the Paris Exposition of 1889.<sup>295</sup> The National Museum began to create examples of this type of diorama because, according to Goode, they had the ability "(1) To show the characteristics of the different races, (2) to display costumes, and (3) to illustrate the methods of use of weapons, instruments, and processes of various arts and crafts"<sup>296</sup> more effectively than other types of displays. In many ways, they were a response to Boas's 1887 *Science* article, in which he argued that curators needed to present objects with more context. Boas himself began to create "life groups" during and after the fair.

The life groups at the fair featured bodies that were literally objectified. Made out of plaster, human hair, and glass (for the eyes), the majority were artistic recreations of Native Americans modeled from clay. In order to represent these scenes accurately,

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<sup>293</sup> Ira Jacknis, "Refracting Images: Anthropological Display at the Chicago World's Fair, 1893," in *Coming of Age in Chicago: The 1893 World's Fair and the Coalescence of American Anthropology*, ed. Curtis M. Hinsley and David R. Wilcox (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 298.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>296</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 295.

curators studied non-photographic sources, like paintings of George Catlin from the mid-nineteenth century and John White's watercolors from 1584-1590. These works were therefore indebted to image-making practices and, despite their emphasis on objectivity and veracity, were based on principles of illusionism.<sup>297</sup> Because the bodies were not actually the real things but, rather, representations created from images, what made these life groups authentic were the objects with which the mannequins interacted.<sup>298</sup> All of these objects had been collected on expeditions into the field, and many were similar to those found in the nearby display cases.

Of course, these life groups were highly problematic. Not only were the bodies artistic interpretations but sometimes objects from different cultures got mixed in together. The goal of some of the anthropologists staging these works was the spectacular nature of the visual experience of the diorama rather than the presentation of discreet facts.<sup>299</sup>

What Millet's parade and the display of ethnic bodies along the Midway share with these life groups (and his earlier illustrations) is the notion that bodies help to give objects context. By watching the Dahomians interacting with objects associated with transportation, those static objects came to life like never before. Context created a more realistic and educational experience, just as Boas had argued it would.

However, the big difference between the displays of these actual bodies and those made of clay or pen and ink was the fact that real bodies moved. In this way, what made these bodies that much more educational and interesting was their ability to display not

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<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, 300.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, 315.



just how a costume looked but how it fit and moved. It showed how a cart was operated as it was dragged through the street. In an era before film, watching these performers march in Millet's parade was a more authentic experience of viewing a cultural other than anything that had come before—with the exception of traveling to visit these groups in the flesh. Though photographs and dioramas were seen as highly accurate, the dynamic, motion-filled parade took this understanding of authenticity to another level.

This was a period fascinated with movement. As I have argued above, the “cult of speed” was palpable in any major American city. Movement in and of itself was also a phenomenon. With the rise of time-motion studies and the zoopraxiscope, there was a desire to visualize time as a means of understanding the world more completely.

According to Phillip Prodger, in this period there was an “association of instantaneity with objectivity.”<sup>300</sup> In photography specifically, capturing movement with a camera was a sign of veracity. In anthropology, witnessing cultures first hand, experiencing their movements and facial expressions in the flesh as opposed to through static images, was a way of establishing a truer knowledge base—hence the beginning of fieldwork.<sup>301</sup>

In 1895, Felix-Louis Regnault, the photographer, scientist, and student of Eduard Marey, captured West African men and women at the Exposition Ethnographique in the midst of planned movements (figure 3.29). Photographing these participants as they walked, ran, or jumped, he attempted to study their actions. Indeed, he argued that “races reveal themselves in movement.” In the twentieth century, he was one of the first

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<sup>300</sup> Phillip Prodger, *Time Stands Still: Muybridge and the Instantaneous Photography Movement* (New York: Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University in association with Oxford University Press, 2003), 46.

<sup>301</sup> See Ellen Strain, “Exotic Bodies, Distant Landscapes: Touristic Viewing and Popularized Anthropology in the Nineteenth Century,” *Wide Angle* 12 (April 1996), 70–100.

anthropologists to use ethnographic film for the “taxonomic ranking of peoples.”

Regnault studied the development of mankind by comparing their movements on film.<sup>302</sup>

Millet’s own investment in moving bodies suggests the overlap of art and anthropology in this period, along with the desire to find ways of displaying motion in art forms. Millet did this by visualizing cultural difference not just through bodies and objects but through the movement of bodies and objects. In Millet’s parade, participants displayed how they used their muscles, how they danced, and how they moved in ways that were different from or similar to other groups. For Millet, it was not just through skin color and costume but also through movement that the development of mankind could be understood.

Millet’s parade at the World’s Fair was an unusual expression of civic art. Through public performance, Millet enabled a group of nonwhite members of the fair to appropriate the white spaces of the Court of Honor. Through their movements, the performers displayed a visual timeline of cultural difference, and also of historical development—one that traced not just the invention of modern transportations but also the development of “high” civilization. In this way, though he gave his performers a certain amount of freedom, Millet’s parade still enforced racial stereotypes and presented a message of American supremacy. At the fair, Millet objectified nonwhite bodies for the sake of spectacle.

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<sup>302</sup> Smith, “The Space Between,” *At the Edge of Sight*, 83.

After it ended, the World's Columbian ushered in a new era of civic art. On the one hand, the White City resulted in the City Beautiful Movement. A reform movement operating all over the United States, members of the City Beautiful set out to organize and redesign urban spaces with a focus on neoclassical aesthetics. On the other hand, mural painting as a mode of civic art took off after the fair. As public institutions as well as the federal government began to implement public building projects, mural painting became an integral part of this design. Selwyn Brinton said, of the impact of World's Columbian on mural painting, "the movement was already in the air and needed only a strong external impulse to focus its scattered forces together into new and living creative elements in American life. The impulse was given by the Columbian Exposition."<sup>303</sup> Millet should be given credit here (as Brinton also argues), for he was the one who, along with Burnham, made the mural program a reality.

That these new movements of urban design emerged from the White City suggests that the very notion of civic art became clearer, through not only architecture and painting but also performances and other public displays at the fair. However, despite Millet's influence on *all* of these projects, the type of civic art that was created after the fair did not focus on American in a global context but rather represented local historical and nationalistic themes.

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<sup>303</sup> Selwyn Brinton, "Modern Mural Decoration in America," *International Studio* 42 (January 1911), 184.

## **Chapter Four: A Chinese Junk at the Baltimore Custom House**

Fifteen years after the World's Columbian, Millet was busier than he had ever been. Rarely finding time to paint easel works or illustrate for magazines, Millet instead worked on large-scale collaborative projects. By 1908, he had designed murals for the Bank of Pittsburgh, the Essex County Courthouse, the Minnesota State Capitol, the Baltimore Custom House, and was just starting work on a series of "transportation vehicles" at the Hudson County Courthouse. He served on multiple committees, for the American Academy in Rome, the Municipal Arts Society, the American Federation of the Arts, and the (never realized) Tokyo Exposition. Residing in New York and Washington, D.C., (and sometimes Rome) almost full time, Millet spent the final years of his life producing and promoting civic art. Under the leadership of Teddy Roosevelt, the American government was, for the first time in decades, interested in bringing art to the people. Millet embraced this project and eschewed private works entirely, so that he might finally achieve his lifelong goal of creating an "art atmosphere" in the United States.

This chapter discusses one of Millet's final works, the mural program for the Call Room at the Baltimore Custom House (figure 4.1), in an attempt to understand how Millet engaged with civic art in the early twentieth century. Now that he was able to create works for a large American public through government sponsorship, I uncover how or if his approach to civic art had changed over the years. Through an investigation of the Call Room mural cycle, I argue that not much had changed in Millet's interpretation of art for a wide audience. It was just as global in its content as it had been

in 1880, and in this way was still dramatically different from the majority of civic art produced in this period.

### **“The Evolution of Navigation”**

The Call Room of the Baltimore Custom House is covered in ships. Gigantic ships adorn the ceiling and tiny ships decorate small areas of space in the corners of windows and arches, and along narrow bands that run the entire length of the room. Ships decorate the four-foot-high frieze and the five three-and-a-half-foot-high lunettes situated above the archways. In the hundred-plus panels, 135 ships are painted alone or in small groups, often in profile or three-quarter view. Shown against a blue-green background, the ships are either depicted in grisaille (the frieze and the spandrels) or feature a larger palette, in keeping with the blue-gray tones of the entire cycle (the ceiling and the lunettes). Each ship, big or small, is a distinct example, and each is rendered with great care and historical accuracy.

A truly monumental work, the mural cycle, executed by Millet and seven assistants (figure 4.2), was informally titled *The Evolution of Navigation*.<sup>304</sup> Described in a lengthy pamphlet accompanying the room, each section of the wall focused on a different theme relating to the overall subject. The frieze panels circling the top of the room depict the history of shipping across the globe, beginning in Ancient Egypt and ending with contemporary battleships. The spandrels framing the windows and archways and the narrow panels above them take on the subject of “small craft,” such as fishing boats from Peru, China, Scandinavia, Japan, and Java. The narrow panels along the edges

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<sup>304</sup> RPBS, Letters Received, 1843-1910, Box 69, January-August 1907 (1 of 2).

of the ceiling depict the history of the steamboat, a variety of local botanical specimens, and nautical knotwork.<sup>305</sup> The lunettes on the east wall represent “important ships in the history of commerce,” such as Cunard’s new steamer the *Mauretania*, and the 63-by-34-foot ceiling panel—touted as “the largest marine painting in the world”<sup>306</sup>—features a whaler, a barkentine, a brig, a schooner, and others, entering a harbor on a misty morning (figure 4.3).<sup>307</sup>

Much like his series of arms and armor in the Veteran’s Room and his parade of land vehicles at the World’s Columbian, Millet presents the history of a specific technology through an evolutionary sequence. Paying attention to distinct cultural practices, he traces the development of seafaring technology throughout the globe, culminating with American examples: battleships like the *Olympia*, the *Baltimore*, and the *Vermont*, and racing yachts like the *Kanawha* and the *Reliance* (figures 4.4 and 4.5).<sup>308</sup> This work was meant to be patriotic and at the same time educational, as it taught viewers not just about the history of shipping but also about America’s foremost place within that history.

Like his earlier civic works, this work gave equal attention to subjects from all historical time periods and all cultural groups. The Chinese junk, for instance (figure

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<sup>305</sup> Examples include dogwood, magnolia, pine, oak, tobacco, and corn. F. D. Millet, “Appendix: Catalogue of the Vessels,” in Michelle Mead Dekker, “Harboring Nostalgia: F.D. Millet’s mural paintings in the Baltimore Custom House,” Thesis (M.A.), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1997, 78.

<sup>306</sup> “To Adorn Custom House,” *The Sun*, January 20, 1908, 12.

<sup>307</sup> Millet, “Appendix,” in Dekker, “Harboring Nostalgia,” 1997.

<sup>308</sup> According to the critic Sylvester Baxter, Millet and Henry Rogers, the oil tycoon who owned the *Kanawha*, were old friends and spent many days on the famous steam yacht together. Sylvester Baxter, “Francis Davis Millet: An Appreciation of the Man,” *Art and Progress* 3 (July 1912), 635.

4.6)—painted on the frieze next to a Baltimore-built schooner from 1843 and an American clipper, “Great Republic”—is depicted like the rest, in grisaille against a pale blue background. It is painted in a straightforward realistic style, with careful attention paid to sail design and rigging systems. For those who knew what a junk looked like, this ship was easily identifiable. To those who did not, looking at Millet’s representation taught them a great deal of information about the vessel and how it moved. Either way, to see a Chinese junk on the walls of a neoclassical building in Baltimore was unusual.

It is not surprising that Millet chose to focus on boats at the Baltimore Custom House. Steamships came and went from Liverpool, Bremen, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Copenhagen, Hamburg, London, and Cardiff.<sup>309</sup> Boats sailed into port carrying chemicals, cork, iron, and steel. More than half of their exports came from copper, breadstuffs, and tobacco.<sup>310</sup> By 1911, while New York was far and away the largest and most profitable port in the country (\$895 million in imports, \$891 million in exports), Baltimore was in the top ten, bringing in \$28 million in imports and \$95 million in exports.<sup>311</sup> Ship captains entered the Custom House to weigh goods, present papers, and pay dues. Passengers stopped in before or after all kinds of voyages, short and long, to perform similar tasks. The Custom House was a bustling hub of seafaring (and commercial) activity.

Since the early nineteenth century, customs operations for the port of Baltimore had been performed in a multipurpose building designed by Benjamin Henry Latrobe. By

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<sup>309</sup> “When the Port is Busy: Activity Always Spells Prosperity,” *The Sun*, December 8, 1909, 9.

<sup>310</sup> “Baltimore Imports Increase: Exports, However, Show Falling Off In Decade,” *The Sun*, February 10, 1912, 14.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*

the end of the century, however, the Customs Department was in major need of a larger space. The Federal government, under the Tarsney Act, decided to construct a new building. Designed by the École de Beaux-Arts-trained and Washington, D.C., based architects Joseph C. Hornblower and John Rush Marshall, the C-shaped building opened to the public in 1907.

The Baltimore Custom House (figures 4.7 and 4.8) takes up almost an entire city block, and stands six stories on a steel frame. Its size and its granite neoclassical façade differentiated it from the brick commercial structures around it, giving it an imposing presence within the neighborhood. The design of the building related to its function, housing all customs operations for the Port of Baltimore: the offices of the Weigher, the Collector, the Naval Officer, and the Surveyor, along with the sub treasury, surrounded the Call Room; the second floor housed the Internal Revenues Department; the third floor the steam boat inspectors, lighthouse board, pension examiners, and immigrant inspectors; and the fourth floor was for archival storage.

To arrive at the Call Room, visitors entered the building from bustling Gay Street, walked through a dark lobby decorated with panels of Italian marble and an inlaid brass compass design, followed by a narrow corridor. At the end of the corridor, the Call Room is a feast for the eyes. At eye level, visitors are bombarded with sumptuous materials. Variegated Carrere marble and bronze grilles make up the partitions (behind which clerks would have performed customs duties), while marble on the floor is so highly polished that visitors' own reflections are visible. The walls above the partitions are lined with repeating pairs of ionic pilasters, dentals and crown moldings of intricately carved floral ornament, and molded arched window frames and niches featuring high relief festoons,



cartouches, and shells. No corner of this space is left unembellished, and every decorative detail seems intimately connected to the rest. Every part of this space echoes the overall Beaux-Arts architectural scheme in its simplicity of form, ionic principles, and light-toned color palette.

The Call Room is a *Gesamtkunstwerk* much like the Veteran's Room. It was a work that featured a common decorative theme that was maintained in every inch of the space. Everything from the ceiling panel to the festoons to the marble floor was decorated to present a unified vision. Like the Veteran's Room, the Call Room also emphasizes narrative. The sculptural details feature shells and dragon-like dolphins, while the painting tells a story about boats.

However, unlike the Veteran's Room, this was a truly public space. Commissioned by the government, and housing federal bureaucratic activities, this space was open to all members of the community. Millet's work (as well as that of the architects) had an important role to play. He had to create a space that could be enjoyed and could hopefully inspire a highly diverse group of people.

When Millet painted the Veteran's Room, there were very few commissions for any type of civic art. The federal and municipal governments rarely commissioned works, viewing them as too elaborate and frivolous. Artists had to look for large-scale commissions in other places, like private clubs. However, by 1908, the government had embraced civic art of all kinds. Artists finally had opportunities to create works for public audiences in a way that the artists themselves found meaningful (and usually lucrative).<sup>312</sup> Artists like Millet, Edwin Howland Blashfield, Kenyon Cox, Charles

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<sup>312</sup> Millet was paid \$50,000 for decorating this room. Dekker, "Harboring Nostalgia," 19.

Yardley Turner, and Edward Simmons were hired to paint mural cycles in state capitols, courthouses, libraries, and other public spaces. As Millet had always hoped, Americans were slowly beginning to appreciate art, and local and federal governments were beginning to see it as their responsibility to help promote that appreciation.

However, Millet's work for the Custom House looked dramatically different from other public murals painted in this period. Three years earlier, at the Baltimore Court House (figure 4.9), a ten-minute walk from the Custom House, Blashfield and Turner painted historical murals in the gathering spaces and courtrooms. While Blashfield painted a combination of personifications and historical details in *Washington Surrendering His Commission* and *Religious Tolerance* (figure 4.10), Turner depicted a seminal event in Maryland's colonial history: the burning of the British brigantine Peggy Stewart (figure 4.11). The paintings, in a series of three panels, are done in an academic style with an emphasis on the human figure. The work, meant to celebrate American resistance during the Colonial period (the boat was carrying more than a ton of tea when it was burned), emphasizes historical details. Colonial Americans are depicted in full eighteenth-century costume, and the landscape features local Maryland trees and shrubs. Ships are painted in the background and portrayed with historical accuracy. Every element has been carefully studied and adds veracity to the imagining of the scene.

Like Millet's work, Turner's mural instilled a sense of patriotism through its focus on American history. In addition, both works celebrated American individualism and both use the symbol of a ship to do so. The similarities, however, end there. While Turner's work was large, 10 by 60 feet, it did not compare in scale to Millet's overall project, which featured more than a hundred panels that decorated the space. At the same

time, while Millet's work emphasized objects, Turner's focused on the human body. Turner's work placed bodies in carefully researched costumes and provided a context through botanical specimens, architecture, and ships. Millet, meanwhile, presented his focal points—boats, and only boats—against a blue sky and sea, devoid of any clear setting. While both works are about history, Millet tells history through the development of a singular object. Turner, like most muralists, painted a specific historical moment, focusing on the human activity and response surrounding the event.

Similarly, though Millet's mural emphasizes American greatness, it does so in a global context. He presents American examples in light of European as well as non-Western types. A junk, a Barbary pirate ship, and an "Irrawaddy Rice Boat" (figure 4.12) are depicted in the frieze along with American battleships and Roman galleys. Turner's history, meanwhile, emphasizes a singular static moment through which to present a nationalistic narrative. While Turner does include ethnic others, they are stereotyped. The African American female on the far right of the third panel, for instance, is caricatured. With her round face and over-exaggerated lips, she resembles the mammy huckster type, as seen in the Johnson Family cartoon from the World's Columbian fair (figure 3.21).

Millet's mural cycle presents cultural difference without stereotyping. All of his examples receive equal treatment, and all are depicted with careful attention to historical accuracy. In other words, stylistically, they all look identical. The Chinese junk, for instance, is the same size, features the same amount of detail, and, depicted within its own panel, perhaps receives even more attention than the three boats (the Great Republic and the H. H. Cole) who share a single panel beside it. For Millet, the goal was accuracy

and authenticity. He wanted to portray ships as they looked, so that those who viewed them and recognized them would appreciate their form.

In this way, two key elements differentiated Millet's mural painting from those produced by his contemporaries in this period. First, Millet emphasized cultural difference in a way that was not overtly racist but was instead more complicated. While Turner focused on a purely American moment in his work, Millet depicted a global evolution, and paid careful attention to objects created by non-Western cultures. At the same time, while Turner emphasized stereotypes in his depiction of others, Millet presented them with thorough study and respect.

Secondly, Millet emphasized objects. While Turner focused on the depiction of human bodies and a specific event, Millet focused on true-to-life representations of ships. As I have argued in previous chapters, this focus on material culture was deeply rooted in an "object-based epistemology." Millet believed that it was through an engagement with things that audiences could be educated most effectively.

When Millet completed the Baltimore Custom House murals, he told a reviewer that he wanted to paint something different "from the customary representation: a group of young women in their nighties presenting a Pianola to the city of New York."<sup>313</sup> By focusing on cultural difference, he did just that and in turn, created a work that was unusual. Indeed, in some ways, Millet's work shares more in common with that of the Stieglitz circle or the Ash Can school, operating around this time, than with other Beaux-Arts mural paintings. Exploring issues relevant to the time, such as cultural difference, Millet's work was responding to its modern moment.

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<sup>313</sup> Baxter, "Francis Davis Millet," *Art and Progress*, 640.

Describing the “composite modernism” of the Stieglitz circle, Lauren Kroiz has argued that “operating in a milieu where boundaries of race and media were under construction and under pressure, the continual process of categorization, differentiation, and synthesis was precisely what fomented aesthetic change.”<sup>314</sup> In a work like *The Steerage* (1907) (figure 4.13), Alfred Stieglitz experiments with aesthetic properties—he organizes the composition into a series of shapes—but does so through a representation of immigrants. In this way, *The Steerage* operated as both modernist abstraction and as “straight” photography, in its un-manipulated, documentary quality. Though a different kind of project than Millet’s, Stieglitz’s photographs take on the subjects of urban immigrants and members of the lower classes as a means not just for formal experimentation but also to negotiate cultural diversity. It is safe to assume that Millet, too, working in New York and Washington, D.C. (he spent little time in Baltimore itself), witnessed new groups of people around him every day, and participated in the daily task of categorizing and differentiating them. Rather than ignore this reality, like most muralists, he embraced it and used his work to help viewers negotiate the differences around them. He used this theme of difference to explore new subject matter for American art. In this way, for Millet, like Stieglitz, “categorization, differentiation, and synthesis ... fomented aesthetic change.” Though Millet did not experiment formally, his subject matter and the modes of looking that inspired this work were grounded in a lived modern experience. This made his work, though not quite modern, certainly new and unusual.

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<sup>314</sup> Lauren Kroiz, *Creative Composites: Modernism, Race, and the Stieglitz Circle* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press; Washington, D.C.: The Phillips Collection, 2012), 3.

### **Engaging His Audience**

Millet concentrated on boats because he believed them to be the most relevant subject for the audience using the space. While he called attention to American supremacy in his emphasis on American types, he included a diverse range of vessels from around the world in order to present a fuller and more diverse history. Working under government patronage, Millet wanted to promote the patriotic and national ideals of the government (as he always had), but did so by emphasizing American imperialist policy rather than American history.

At the same time, he framed and organized his works in an unusual way, to promote a different kind of viewing. Anticipating that visitors would examine his murals through binoculars, Millet created a mural cycle that emphasized telescopic vision. He catered his work to those visiting the space in order to make it not just inspirational but also fun to look at. For Millet, getting the public excited about art was just as important as inspiring patriotic citizens.

### *Civic Art*

In this period, large-scale building projects were on the rise, thanks to the City Beautiful Movement. The purpose of this architecture was to promote beauty for its own sake, while at the same time increasing the quality of life. Supporters of the movement created large-scale building, park, and boulevard projects in cities like New York, Cleveland, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. The designs emphasized order, symmetry, and aesthetic principles, with the hope of encouraging civic virtue and social order. While

committees and organizations were formed in specific cities to oversee municipal projects, the federal government also began to construct public works in a more organized way. *American Architect* argued in 1909, “not since the time of George Washington has a president possessed in like degree both an appreciation of the value of art in our national life and the courage to throw the full weight of his influence to its forward movement.”<sup>315</sup>

The Baltimore Custom House was chosen as the fifth building to be designed under the Tarsney Act, an Act of Congress granting non-government-employed architects the right to compete for and design large-scale public buildings. A Washington, D.C., based partnership known for their urban mansions and, later, for designing the National Museum of Natural History, the architects used Hornblower’s training in Paris and the knowledge gained from European tours to apply French academic principles to American public architecture. The architects were awarded the commission after a competition with eleven other firms. After construction had been underway for a few years, the architects recommended that Millet be hired for interior decorations. In January, 1906, Supervising Architect James Knox Taylor agreed.<sup>316</sup>

In the 1870s, many professional architects believed that buildings created by the federal government were conservative and did not exhibit a unified set of principles. Members of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) waged a war against the Treasury Department at the end of the century in order to improve public architecture. Their

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<sup>315</sup> *American Architect* quoted in Antoinette J. Lee, *Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect’s Office* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 214.

<sup>316</sup> Records of the Public Buildings Service, National Archives, College Park, Maryland. Record Group 121, Letters Received, 1843-1910, Box 68, January 3, 1906.

protests were mostly ignored until the 1890s, when Supervising Architect James Windrim realized the professionals had a point. While in office (and out), Windrim helped garner support for a bill that would force the Treasury Department to hold competitions for architectural designs. Missouri senator John Tarsney drafted the bill, which, though signed in 1894, was not actually practiced until Lyman Gage, a close friend of Daniel Burnham's and a major supporter of the cause of American professional architects, took office in 1897. In practice, many architects believed that the Tarsney Act did much to elevate the status of American architecture. According to AIA President Glenn Brown, "Under the Tarsney Act it must be conceded that the work is immeasurably superior to any building done by the government from 1860 to 1896."<sup>317</sup>

The Tarsney Act was particularly successful during the tenure of James Knox Taylor. A former partner of Cass Gilbert, Taylor, working for the Treasury Department, slowly rose to Supervising Architect in 1897.<sup>318</sup> During his fifteen years as Supervisor, 31 federal buildings were designed under the Tarsney Act, while many dozens more were built by members of his office. Taylor's tenure as Supervising Architect attracted positive press coverage as well as positive responses from professional architects. He was known to be hands-off, and allowed architects mostly free reign over their projects. He encouraged the inclusion of sculpture and mural decorations, and was generally supportive in the hiring of professional artists.

Mural painting was a major element in many Tarsney designs—as it was in civic art more generally. According to critic Leila Mechlin, "There has been a veritable epidemic of mural painting, so that a public building without such adornment is now

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<sup>317</sup> Glenn Brown quoted in Lee, *Architects to the Nation*, 189.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, 197-200.



rather the exception than the rule.”<sup>319</sup> Hired generally by the architects themselves, muralists were commissioned to enhance the beauty and overall message of a work. Mural painting had not been particularly popular until the World’s Columbian, where it was celebrated for the beauty it added to otherwise dismal spaces, as well as for its unifying abilities. After the fair, government institutions funding civic buildings began to realize the potential power that mural painting could provide. By presenting images of allegory or history, viewers could be inspired by the nation’s ideals or past historical achievements. Artists like Turner and Blashfield were hired because their personal methodology worked well with the government’s own. Looking to Renaissance sources, many muralists hoped to symbolize ideals of justice, liberty, and peace in their work. In addition to the Baltimore Custom House, the Federal Building in Cleveland and the Baltimore Court House were also Tarsney buildings that featured mural paintings.

Mural painters believed that their work in civic buildings was crucial to the overall meaning of the design. They saw their paintings as an important form of civic art that inspired the public and developed well-rounded citizens. As Mechlin points out, they were educational and beautiful: “Not only have mural paintings contributed much to the cause of education. But they have also contributed to, we might almost say, constituted the chief architectural and artistic charm of more than a few of our public buildings.”<sup>320</sup> For others, they were democratic. According to Blashfield, public murals were “of the people, for the people, and by the people.”<sup>321</sup> Created for the edification of a large

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<sup>319</sup> Leila Mechlin, “Mr. F. D. Millet’s Decorations in the Baltimore Custom House,” *Architectural Record* 24 (August 1908), 99.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>321</sup> Edwin Howland Blashfield, *Mural Painting in America* (New York: 1913), 97.

audience, Blashfield believed this work was truly American in its ability to speak for the people.

In some ways, artists thought that mural paintings would reach an even bigger audience than other venues. Because of their status as “permanent” decoration, artists believed that murals would be seen by audiences for generations.<sup>322</sup> As an integral part of an architectural structure, many saw mural painting as having a potentially more powerful role to play than any other art form. Will Low, writing in 1902, argued:

The mural decoration ... is to last presumably as long as the building where it is placed, and its subject therefore cannot be trivial or ephemeral.... There are but a few of the qualities inherent in a successful mural decoration, and they may be and are violated at will in the detached picture born of a passing fancy on the part of the artist, or suggested by a prevailing level of taste on the part of the purchasing, determining public.<sup>323</sup>

For Low, because a mural painting was (theoretically) permanent, its style and subject matter could not reflect trends. Because it was going to last as long as the building did, its subject needed to be timeless. Millet’s decision to paint a cultural evolution was therefore not simply to educate a diverse contemporary audience but also to influence a future audience that was not yet born. For him, the audience for this type of public work was potentially infinite, because the building would (presumably) last for centuries.

And yet it must be noted that this notion of creating an art that would respond to diverse audiences, both present and future, was highly problematic. As Rosalyn Deutsche has argued, there is an inherent problem in art made for a singular “public.” Publics are

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<sup>322</sup> For critic and painter Royal Cortissoz, mural painting was, in a nutshell, “that permanent addition of painted color to a wall or other immovable portion of a building.” See Royal Cortissoz, “Mural Decoration in America—First Paper,” *Century* 51 (n.s. 29) (November 1895), 110.

<sup>323</sup> Will Low, “Mural Painting—Modern Possibilities of an Ancient Art,” *Brush and Pencil* 11 (December 1902), 166–67.

diverse, particularly in the United States, and it was next to impossible for artists to create works that were geared to the variety of groups that made up the population. According to Deutsche, the problem with art created in the context of early-twentieth-century government projects was that it ultimately served “to protect the exclusionary rights of private prosperity and legitimate state control of urban spaces.”<sup>324</sup> The very construction of work produced by the white elite males of the government enforced “authoritarian forms of power.”<sup>325</sup> Despite Millet’s altruistic project, his murals need to be understood in this context. Though he understood his work as being potentially viewed by all kinds of people, he geared it to a very specific audience.

### *Telescopic Vision*

The Call Room was a busy place, as people arrived from a variety of states and countries every day of the week. Ship captains, traveling from all over the world, entered the space to pay duties, and individual passengers would have come to the Call Room when importing or exporting personal goods. An article in *Harper’s Weekly* presents a how-to guide for shipping a car to Europe, which involved a visit to the Custom House to pay duties.<sup>326</sup> An article in *Life* described the somewhat sensational process of declaring goods at a custom house:

Every traveler arriving in this country from a foreign port is required to sign a “declaration,” which is a list of all the articles he has purchased abroad, the price paid for each article, no matter whether such article is dutiable or not. This declaration is submitted with the traveler’s signature, to the Custom House officials, who then proceed to examine the traveler’s

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<sup>324</sup> Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Chicago: Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996): xxi.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>326</sup> “How to Ship an Automobile Abroad,” *Harper’s Weekly*, February 22, 1908.

baggage and ascertain if he has been telling the truth or not. If he has not been telling the truth he may be put into jail, or at any rate have his goods confiscated.<sup>327</sup>

As these articles from *Life* and *Harper's Weekly* testify, Americans were fascinated by the experience not just of traveling but of getting ready to travel.<sup>328</sup> They were curious about the ins and outs of visiting a space like the Call Room, whether for their own travels or just out of curiosity. While customhouses had existed for centuries, more Americans were now able to afford travel, and so they became a space experienced by larger audiences. Because of this, magazines became a place to think about and prepare for these new experiences.

While many types of people entered the space of the Call Room, Millet geared his murals to those who undoubtedly visited it the most: ship captains. He did this by creating a mural cycle that emphasized not just boats but carefully researched representations of boats. Millet was a sailor and knew all kinds of vessels intimately, and he represented each example with the utmost attention to accuracy. A friend of his (and assistant) at the World's Columbian, James Hunt, recognized his sailing skills. In a memorial article about Millet written by Hunt after Millet's tragic death at sea, he described Millet's seafaring abilities while they were aboard the ceremonial Santa Maria. He explained how Millet held his own in the company of expert sailors. Hunt remembered, "In everything done aboard the vessel Mr. Millet was just like any sailor.

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<sup>327</sup> "Reflections on Our Custom House," *Life*, June 2, 1910, 1010.

<sup>328</sup> In terms of the Baltimore Custom House, an article in the Baltimore *Sun* reported that a member of Henry Walters's staff had to make a trip to the Custom House to declare the art objects being shipped from abroad. Walters personally visited the space to register his new yacht, *Narada*, in 1909. "\$67,000 in Art Here: Collection For Walters Gallery Released From Customs," *The Sun*, June 30, 1911, 16 and "Mr. Walters Pays \$16,450 Tariff," *The Sun*, October 20, 1909, 11.

He hauled on tack and sheet; knew every rope and every order that was given. A crew of strange seamen would not have known that he had been anything but a sailor all his life.”<sup>329</sup>

Millet did not want to disappoint the ship captains who would visit, and according to Hunt he didn’t. Hunt wrote in the same article,

Go you sages of the sea—man-of-war men, merchantmen, fishermen, whaler and coasters; take you marine glasses with you, and as you enter the “Call Room” look at that beautiful ceiling—the ten vessel making port on a hazy morning of summer sunshine. Examine the sail, rigging, eye clew-line, buntline, spilling-line, leach-line, tack and sheet; see the anchors on the bow ready to let go. Now cast your eyes around and look at that beautiful picture of the clipper-ship Empress of the Sea with her port tacks abroad, stun-sails on both sides, weather clew of main-sail hauled up, corjack furled, fore and aft staysails all draping, yards trimmed and braces hauled taut—everything that goes to show a masterpiece of seamanship!<sup>330</sup>

As Hunt describes, everything on the ceiling, from the “buntline” to the “leach-line,” was carefully depicted in paint. Upon first glance, audiences visiting the space were readily aware of this detail. According to the *Baltimore Sun*, on the first day the murals were open to the public, “The marine critics from Gaff-Topsail Corner were there early with binoculars and telescopes, but they failed to find anything wrong with the paintings.”<sup>331</sup> As the author indicates, some viewers looked closely at individual ships to check for accuracy. It was important to these ship captains that the boats be depicted accurately.

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<sup>329</sup> James Hunt, “Millet at Work: A Chronicle of Friendship,” Pt. 1, *Art and Progress* 4:11 (September 1913): 1093.

<sup>330</sup> Hunt, “Millet at Work,” Pt. 2, *Art and Progress* 5:1 (November 1913): 12–14.

<sup>331</sup> “Marine Murals on View: Custom House Paintings Admired By Many,” *The Sun*, May 5, 1908, 7.

What is perhaps most surprising about this comment is the fact that the sailors brought binoculars with them to view the work. The binoculars were such an important part of the viewing process that *The Sun's* author references them two more times in this short review. Hunt, too, encourages his readers to “take [their] marine glasses” when they visited the space.

Binoculars were an accessory associated with seamen. In articles in *Harper's Weekly*, sailors are often described with their binoculars or “looking glasses” at the ready.<sup>332</sup> By the early twentieth century, the sailor type had come to be known as an old white man in woolens and flannel, smoking a pipe and looking through binoculars. Dan Sayre Groesbeck illustrates this type in an image for a 1909 article titled “Marooned, A Ballad of Battledore” (figure 4.14). Here, a group of four old sailors gather together, dressed in pea coats, plaid shirts, and sporting long white beards—one of them smokes a pipe while another holds a pair of binoculars to his face. Binoculars were an important tool for sailors. Allowing them to magnify boats and land from a great distance, sailors relied on them at sea.

Many ship captains wore their binoculars regularly. Tied around their necks, they were an accessory, carried throughout every day. Millet, an avid sailor himself, would likely have known this about his viewers, and in this way anticipated his audience making use of these devices when viewing his work. Maybe he even encouraged it. This is suggested by the detail in hard-to-see places. There is no reason, for instance, that small panels high up on a wall need to be rendered with attention to

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<sup>332</sup> “Marooned A Ballad of Battledore,” *Harper's Weekly* (December, 11, 1909), 15; “The Incidental Joys of Ocean Racing,” *Harper's Weekly* (August 26, 1905), 1228–29; and “On the Trail of an Argosy,” *Harper's Weekly* (June 11, 1910), 22–23.

buntlines—these details would be literally impossible to see with the naked eye from the floor. As the *Sun* reviewer notes, “Mr. Millet devoted painstaking care to the execution of his work and on every painted ship, even the little fellows in the cove panels, he drew every line carefully and had every block in the right place.” Even the signature of the work is only visible with a viewing device. It is painted on the bow of the whaler in the ceiling panel and is impossible to see with the naked eye.<sup>333</sup>

The way that Millet presented the ships also relates to telescopic vision. He painted them in profile or three-quarters view against an empty sky and expansive sea. There is no context and nothing else in the frame except for the ships. Though shown at a distance, the views are close-ups. They are tightly cropped images that fill the entire frame, and which display every part of the ship. In many ways, this is the way a ship looks through binoculars. Sailors at sea used binoculars to identify boats they could not see with the naked eye. They pointed their binoculars at the boat in open water and then viewed them in close-up with their device.

The telescope, in the form of binoculars, was a visual aid necessary for spotting land, seeing approaching ships, and, sometimes, examining constellational maps. By 1908, binoculars could magnify eight times larger than regular vision, with a surprisingly sharp image. Essentially two telescopes side by side, the magnifying principle of modern binoculars was achieved through Keplerian optics, which used a convex objective and a positive eyepiece. In this method, the image produced was inverted, and therefore a prism was included to turn the image the right way.

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<sup>333</sup> “Millet’s Work Here: Artist Painted Mural Decorations In Custom House,” *The Sun*, April 17, 1912, 10 and “Marine Murals on View,” May 5, 1908, 7.

Advertisements for binoculars (figure 4.15) were found in the pages of *Harper's Weekly* and other magazines, suggesting that non-captain visitors to the Call Room likely possessed high-tech binoculars as well. As advertisements suggest, they were used for theater, hunting, regattas, and travel. In 1898 in New York, a pair of Triöder binoculars sold from \$44.50 to \$72.50.<sup>334</sup> Given that many visiting the Call Room were departing or about to embark on a boat ride, it is possible that they, too, brought binoculars with them into the space.

Millet geared his murals to a modern viewing experience. By painting his murals as he did, he called attention to the new forms of vision promoted by these new modes of transportation. At Baltimore, he not only anticipated the devices that visitors to a custom house would use but he catered to them, creating a work of civic art that was grounded in modern vision. In this way, Millet produced a mural program that was not only entertaining and enjoyable to look at but also relevant to contemporary experience. They were clearly something different from the standard, classical fare.

### **Imperialism in the Far East**

Another way to engage with his primarily American audience was by presenting American sailing technologies as the apex of civilization. Indeed, imperialism is at the root of Millet's mural cycle. This is clear from the choice of vessels depicted in the last section of the frieze (figures 4.4 and 4.5). The *St. Paul*, the final example, was a cruiser designed by the United States Navy, and was used during the Spanish-American War for transport and search from Cuba and Puerto Rico to New York. The Baltimore and the

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<sup>334</sup> Advertisement, *Harper's Weekly* (April, 30, 1898), 428.



Olympia, similarly, were two boats used during the Battle of Manila in the Spanish-American War. The Vermont was a member of the Great White Fleet, which sailed around the world in 1907. Each example is presented proudly sailing across a blue-green background. The sea around them is choppy, the sky is clear, suggesting a peaceful yet speedy trip through the ocean. While they are devoid of context, the panels present the ships themselves in detail, with careful attention paid to signifying elements—they are memorialized forever in paint.

The Baltimore, the Olympia, and the Vermont were obvious choices for the end of the frieze—a frieze that depicts the evolution of shipping beginning with Ancient Egypt, moving to Rome and medieval Europe, and ending in the United States. Not only had the United States just made use of its Navy to colonize Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines but Theodore Roosevelt, as President, made it his mission to actively build a bigger, stronger, and faster Navy. Indeed while Millet had imbued all of his civic art with an imperialist agenda, he does so most overtly at the Baltimore Custom House.

### *Imperialism at Sea*

The story of American imperialism is grounded in naval history. In the 1880s, America's Merchant Marine, the very subject Millet was celebrating in his mural cycle, was almost nonexistent. In 1882, the Navy had only one first-rate ship, 14 second-raters, and 22 third-raters.<sup>335</sup> While Americans had designed and sailed some of the fastest most profitable ships during the first half of the nineteenth century, high tariffs and high shipbuilding costs in the U.S. deterred American businessmen from entering the shipping

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<sup>335</sup> Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 270.

business. Those who did had ships built on foreign soil, and so the British, with the Germans not far behind, not only controlled the seas but shipbuilding as well.<sup>336</sup>

Americans were readily aware of these problems. Alfred Thayer Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, published in 1890, focused not only on the role of ships during wartime but also on their importance in commerce. Lamenting the current state of affairs, Mahan (figure 4.16) called for a revival of America's Merchant Marine. He wrote in an article in *Atlantic Monthly*, "Our self-imposed isolation in the matter of markets, and the decline of our shipping interest in the last thirty years have coincided singularly with an actual remoteness of this continent from the life of the rest of the world."<sup>337</sup> He believed in the importance of countries building their own fleets, and argued in *The Influence of Sea Power* that "it is the wish of every nation that this shipping business should be done by its own vessels."<sup>338</sup> Mahan believed that a revival of sea trade would influence the development of a war fleet. Many Americans read this book, and one in particular, Teddy Roosevelt, not only helped to popularize it but also put Mahan's views to the test, using him as an advisor during his time as Assistant Secretary of the Navy.<sup>339</sup>

As historian Ronald Takaki has argued, Mahan's book was written to teach a specific lesson.<sup>340</sup> Mahan believed that if America developed as a commercial sea power, it could become a colonial empire as well. By investing in small colonies as "coaling

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<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, "The United States Looks Outward," *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1890), 821.

<sup>338</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1773* ([S.l.]: Little, Brown and Company, 1890), 23.

<sup>339</sup> Roland, *Way of the Ship*, 258.

<sup>340</sup> Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 266.

stations,” boats could travel longer distances, and thereby begin trading and, over time, take over large tracks of land. Mahan believed that, by focusing on the land of the American West, the government had forgotten about the sea and all of its potential. With the frontier closing, he argued that it was time for the United States government to focus attention beyond continental America.<sup>341</sup>

Imperialism was seen as a natural given. According to Mahan,

The instinct for commerce, bold enterprise in the pursuit of gain, and a keen scene for the trails that lead to it, all exist; and if there be in the future any fields calling for colonization, it cannot be doubted that Americans will carry to them all their inherited aptitude for self-government and independent growth.<sup>342</sup>

Mahan argued that there was nothing inherently wrong with taking over vast areas of land, because American governments would cultivate them more successfully than others. Mahan believed that no culture had a God-given right to land. Anyone strong enough was capable of taking it away from the weak. It all depended on “political fitness.” According to Mahan, “inferior races” had always “fallen back and disappeared before the respite impact of the superior.”<sup>343</sup> As Takaki has argued, Mahan’s beliefs echoed John Winthrop’s argument that allowing the frontier to be occupied by Native American tribes meant that the land would be wasted. Mahan was a firm believer in the expulsion of Native Americans, and believed that it was up to the civilized Anglo Saxon race to make use of whatever land they could seize. This system, based on the Social Darwinist rhetoric of “survival of the fittest,” was a form of “race patriotism.”<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> Ibid.

<sup>342</sup> Mahan, *Influence of Sea Power*, 57-58.

<sup>343</sup> Captain A. T. Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1897), 166.

<sup>344</sup> Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 266.

For Mahan, the Far East was the best place to begin the American imperialist project. East Asians (with the exception of the Japanese) were understood as “savages” and “barbarians” in this period, and therefore Asia was understood as a continent desperately in need of civilizing.<sup>345</sup> Mahan said of the Chinese, after United States troops suppressed the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, that they were “children” and that they should be given a “good shaking” for behaving badly.<sup>346</sup> Millet himself wrote, in a letter to his close friend painter Lawrence Alma Tadema,

China is a hopeless country. The dirt and the filth and the noise and the harsh voices and the rags and the neglect and general wretchedness are awful. There are no roads anywhere, only pony trails, canals (like sewers) and wheelbarrow tracks. That’s why China is so backward and why the situation is so hopeless. There never has been any inter-communication between different parts of the country. Everything is topsy-turvy here.<sup>347</sup>

The Chinese, in particular, met with great racism in the United States. Immigrating in large numbers in the 1850s, and with the highest populations of any Asian group across the country—in 1900, there were 89,863 Chinese immigrants living in the United States<sup>348</sup>—Chinese Americans were described as uncivilized and low on the evolutionary ladder. As historian Ronald Takaki has pointed out, Chinese Americans were often compared to African Americans and Native Americans.<sup>349</sup> They were considered childlike and primitive, and faced racism because of their facial features and the color of their skin. Some white Americans argued that the Chinese were a threat to

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<sup>345</sup> Ibid.

<sup>346</sup> Mahan quoted in Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 275.

<sup>347</sup> Frank Millet to Lawrence Alma Tadema, November 3, 1908. Francis Davis Millet Family Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

<sup>348</sup> Koreans and Japanese entered the country later in the century; Indians entered in the early 1900s; and Filipinos did not arrive on the mainland in large numbers until the 1920s. Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*, updated and rev. ed., 1st Back Bay ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998), 111 and 29.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid., 100.

American purity. In 1878, California senator John F. Miller argued, “Were the Chinese to amalgamate at all with our people, it would be the least, most vile and degraded of our race and the result of the amalgamation would be a hybrid of the most despicable, a mongrel of the most detestable that has ever afflicted the earth.”<sup>350</sup> Others believed that the Chinese were taking their jobs. Building the Transcontinental Railroad, many white workers believed that the cheaper Chinese labor force was stealing their jobs. As a result, the American government issued the Chinese Exclusion Act, prohibiting the Chinese from entering the country to work. It soon was amended to exclude Chinese immigrants from work who were already living in the country.

Because of this understanding of Chinese and other Asian groups as “lesser than”, Mahan promoted the Far East as the best place to send and keep the “new navy.” In letters to Roosevelt, he instructed that the “best admiral” should be placed in the Pacific, not the Atlantic, because of all the potential of Asia.<sup>351</sup> Not only did he see the countries there as backward, he believed that Americans had no affiliation with Asia, and because of this saw it as open for the taking. He argued,

Considering the American states as members of the European family, as they are by traditions, institutions, and languages, it’s in the Pacific, where the westward course of empire again meets the East, that their relations to the future of the world become most apparent.<sup>352</sup>

Roosevelt listened carefully to Mahan. He respected his advice and suggested Mahan’s ideas to the Secretary of the Navy. He wrote to Mahan,

There is no question that you stand head and shoulders above the rest of us! You have given us just the suggestions we want. I am going to show your letter to the secretary first, and then get some members of the board

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<sup>350</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 101.

<sup>351</sup> Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 268.

<sup>352</sup> Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power*, 259.

to go over it...You probably don't know how much your letter has really helped me clearly to formulate certain things which I had only vaguely in mind. I think I have studied your books to pretty good purpose.<sup>353</sup>

Encouraged by Roosevelt by way of Mahan, the United States Navy began to build new ships. Once these ships were built, the government used sea power to do exactly as Mahan described. They made their way east, turning Hawaii into a “coaling station” on the way, and though they didn't make it to China they did take over the Philippines in the process. Indeed, though the Spanish-American War began as an attempt to free Filipinos from colonial rule, in the end Americans colonized them themselves. As Takaki has argued, American policymakers understood the takeover of the Philippines to be moral. It was an expression of “raw power” and “virility.”<sup>354</sup> The government promoted racism in terms of paternalism and patriotism: Filipinos needed the help of Americans to become “civilized.” And yet, what Americans did in the Philippines was brutal and terrifying, as they ruthlessly suppressed Filipino leader Emilio Aguinaldo's resistance and killed at least 16,000 natives.<sup>355</sup>

### *Millet's Imperialism*

Millet spent time in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War as a war reporter for the *London Graphic* and later published a book of this writing (figure 4.17). Sailing from San Francisco on June 29th, 1899, he lived in army camps for three months, covering the war and getting a sense of the natives. Millet arrived in Manila Bay a month after Admiral Dewey had seized it, and was there to witness firsthand General Meritt's

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<sup>353</sup> Theodore Roosevelt quoted in Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 268.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*, 277.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*

attempt to wrestle control of the land away from the Spanish. Millet supported the imperialist agenda of this war.<sup>356</sup> He believed that the Filipino natives needed the help of the Americans to establish their new government.

At the same time, he was realistic about the situation. Understanding that this experiment in colonialism would most likely be messy and complicated, he wrote, “it was not to be expected, of course, that this first attempt at conquest and colonization would be more than experimental and tentative, because there were no precedents in the history of the United States to serve as guides of action.”<sup>357</sup> For Millet, though, the situation in the Philippines was an “embarrassing attempt.” The problem, he argued, was that Americans needed to let the natives maintain some of their customs and slowly acculturate. He encouraged the American government to look at colonizers like the “English in the Malay peninsula” and the “Dutch in Java,” who were able to colonize people of the Far East successfully. He argued,

One great lesson taught by these colonies is that the only way to preserve amicable relations with the suspicious and hypersensitive Malay is to interfere as little as possible with the existing institutions of the country, trusting to time and to the gradual development of the influence of conciliation to bring about desired changes.<sup>358</sup>

Millet rationalized that if soldiers and government officials had paid more attention to the native ways of the indigenous populations, they might have a better chance of bringing them under their control.

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<sup>356</sup> It should be noted that Millet was friends with two figures who were part of Roosevelt’s inner circle and staunch imperialists—Henry Cabot Lodge and Elihu Root—both of whom spoke at the American Federation of the Arts meeting honoring Millet. Lodge and Root were also friends of Mahan so it is possible that Millet was friends with him as well. Roland, *Way of the Ship*, 258.

<sup>357</sup> F. D. Millet, *The Expedition to the Philippines* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1899), 214–15.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

It is this argument that potentially explains why Millet included so many non-Western examples in his mural cycle. The north wall features spandrels that depict a “Chinese rice boat” (figure 4.18) next to an “East Coast trader,” a “Peruvian balsa” preceding a “Bahia fishing boat,” and a “Naples trawler” coupled with a “Venetian fishing boat.” Similarly in the small panels, modern “Life Boats” come directly after “Alaskan canoes” (figure 4.19). Though Millet still presented the boats in the mural cycle in a hierarchy, with contemporary American examples at the apex, by juxtaposing different types with an eye toward cultural sensitivity, Millet made a clear visual argument about their difference. According to Millet, though they looked unusual to a Western eye, non-Western types were still worthy of study. Indeed, they were crucial parts of a larger, global history.

This was especially true in the case of the Chinese junk. Painted, as I have described, in three-quarter view in its own panel in the middle of the east wall, the junk is highlighted just as much as the European examples around it. Floating along the wall, the junk looks strong and quick as it seemingly moves through the panel. In this period, junks were interesting to most American audiences because of their exoticness.<sup>359</sup> By 1908, only one junk had ever sailed to the East Coast of America, the Keying (figure 4.20), back in the 1840s, and therefore most Americans on the East Coast never saw one first hand. Those living on the West Coast, however, likely saw junks more often, as they sometimes sailed back and forth between China and San Francisco. At the same time, junks were celebrated around the world for their strength, durability, and ability to travel

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<sup>359</sup> It should also be noted that junks were a type of vessel produced in other East Asian cultures as well; however, Millet’s indication that this is a “Chinese” junk suggests a specific history.



extremely far distances. The Keying, for example, sailed from China to Europe. In some cases, junks were associated with deep-sea fishing. Junks were also related to warfare—it was junks that fought the British at sea during the Opium Wars of the early nineteenth century.<sup>360</sup> To include a junk in a mural cycle about the history of sailing vessels was to call to mind its strengths.

Millet's personal views on imperialist practices explain why his non-Western examples were presented with such cultural sensitivity. Though Millet understood Asians as "barbarous," he still respected (at least some of) their cultural practices and objects. For Millet, it was okay to colonize a so-called "primitive" group, but it was not okay to wipe out their customs—some of which he saw as important to the development of specific technologies. Millet believed that ruling countries needed to respect cultural practices and allow foreign peoples to slowly acculturate. In this way, Millet's murals were deeply imperialist. They presented a specific form of imperialism that was practiced in certain British and Dutch colonies, where the underlying goal was slow acculturation.<sup>361</sup> Though he wanted to preserve customs—and did so by depicting nonwestern vessels in a culturally sensitive way—he still believed that certain foreign groups were in need of American intervention.

### **Learning by Looking**

The imperialist lesson presented in the Call Room was grounded in the "object-based epistemology" that Millet had espoused beginning with the Veteran's Room. In

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<sup>360</sup> Captain J. W. Collins, "The Fishing Crafts of the World," *Harper's Weekly* (August 16, 1890): 645-648 and John S. Sewall, "The Scourge of the Eastern Seas," *The Century* 58:5 (September, 1899): 783-79.

<sup>361</sup> Millet, *The Expedition*, 214.

both spaces, he focused on recreating objects—not scenes, views, or bodies. Like anthropologists, he believed in the power of the object to teach. Like curators, he organized those objects with the hope of imparting an educational lesson to his audience. At the same time, he employed visual strategies, such as miniaturization and standardization, in order to make the objects he presented more knowable and relatable.

### *Education Reform*

By the new century's start, education reformers believed that experiential knowledge might have a more profound impact than memorization and recitation. The schoolroom was no longer the only space for learning, as educators encouraged trips to libraries, museums, parks, and historical monuments. John Dewey, one of the leading pedagogical innovators, argued that a school should not be “a place set apart in which to learn lessons” but instead a “form of active community life.” The goal for these educators was “learning by doing.”<sup>362</sup>

Curators working in anthropology museums became particularly interested in these practices. For decades, they had been focusing on objects and the arrangement of objects as a means through which to study the history of humankind. They believed that “object lessons” could provide a clearer lesson than reading text. The new education movement provided curators with a new opportunity. With large numbers of school children entering these museums, curators were provided with an opportunity to

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<sup>362</sup> “The School and the Society,” in *The School and the Society and The Child and the Curriculum*, intro. Philip W. Jackson (1900, 1902; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 14; Scott Nearing, *The New Education: A Review of Progressive Educational Movements of the Day* (Chicago: Row, Peterson & Company, 1915); Annelise K. Madsen, “Civic Primer: Mural Painting’s New Education at the Library of Congress,” *American Art* 26:2 (Summer 2012), 72-74.

incorporate object lessons into school lessons. Franz Boas, overseeing the American Museum of Natural History's collections in New York City, was particularly excited about engaging school children through objects. Boas worked closely with school administrators in order to create exhibitions that would create "the strongest possible stimulus to the system of teaching in our Public Schools." Boas was particularly interested in creating exhibitions for immigrants, who may not have been able to read English and thereby could learn only through looking.<sup>363</sup>

Believing in the positive effects of this new "learning by doing" strategy, many muralists, too, hoped to aid educators by creating works of art that would educate. Annelise Madsen has pointed out that Blashfield saw mural painting as a way to educate the public. Referring to murals as "painted lessons," Blashfield believed that images could teach viewers about civic duty. According to Blashfield, this had long been the goal of mural painting. Even in Ancient Rome, murals "made living upon the walls" the history of nations and peoples. For largely illiterate publics, Blashfield argued, visual imagery served as the only way to educate populations about their history and civic responsibilities. Madsen argues that Blashfield believed art could inspire learning by looking.<sup>364</sup>

Millet, close friends with Blashfield, no doubt agreed with this philosophy. However, instead of creating visual lessons through historical scenes or allegory, Millet, like Boas and other anthropology museum curators, made use of singular objects. He studied them and recreated them, focusing great attention on detail and accuracy. It was

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<sup>363</sup> Ira Jacknis, "Franz Boas and Exhibits: On the Limitations of the Museum Method of Anthropology," in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 88.

<sup>364</sup> Madsen, "Civic Primer," *American Art*, 72, 80.

by carefully looking at them that the lesson could be reached. By comparing and contrasting sail design and rigging systems from one boat to the next, viewers might be able to grasp the differences and similarities of different cultural types.

### *Miniaturizing the Sublime*

Millet employed a number of other strategies in order to make these works educational for viewers. First, he standardized his examples of ships. In each section of the cycle, he made every boat the same size. Despite their size differences in reality, the Chinese junk and the Olympia fit the same dimensions along the frieze. This made sense for his project, in which he needed each example to be easily comparable to the others. Secondly, Millet made these boats small. He transformed into a miniature scale what was normally gigantic in life. By making tiny steamships and battleships, which on the seas were massive, almost monstrous, he made them less terrifying and more knowable. They needed to be small in order to teach audiences a lesson.

In light of the real thing—and of the giant boats that decorate the Call Room ceiling—the boats along the frieze, and especially in the spandrels and small panels, are miniaturized. They are shrunken from monstrous technological wonders to small images that are easy to classify and organize. Indeed, the lunettes measure seven by three and a half feet (figure 4.21). The frieze measures nine feet six inches long by four feet six inches high in the rectangular panels, and four feet by three feet eight inches in the square panels. The small panels and spandrels seem to range from two feet to under one foot (figure 4.22). In other words, the Mauretania (figure 4.23), the world's largest steamship,

and the Olympia (figure 4.24), a famous warship, measured around four feet tall, while Robert Fulton's steamship came in under a foot.

Steamships like the Mauretania and the Olympia, the culmination of Millet's evolution, were celebrated for their speed and strength in combination with their mass. Indeed, as in every other civic work created by Millet, it was through technological development that Millet proved America's supremacy in the history of mankind. Viewers in the early twentieth century could not help but be awestruck in the face of these immense manmade wonders sailing across the Atlantic in great numbers in this period. Americans in particular felt proud of steamship technology, given that its invention was generally attributed to an American, Robert Fulton. Henry Clay Frick remarked, "Nature herself seems to survey with astonishment, the passing wonder, and in silent submission, reluctantly to own the magnificent triumph, in her own vast domain, of Fulton's immortal genius!"<sup>365</sup> According to historian David Nye, steamships were a democratic technology. When invented in the early nineteenth century, they "hastened communications, knitted the union together, and stimulated the economy."<sup>366</sup>

However, the steamship also terrified many. Part of its appeal was that it was dangerously gigantic. Standing on or next to a steamship made viewers feel tiny and insignificant in comparison. As historian Stephen Kern has pointed out, steamships were part of the cult of speed.<sup>367</sup> Despite their large size, ocean liners were still attempting to break records with speed. This excited travelers just as it terrified them, for although

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<sup>365</sup> Henry Clay Frick quoted in David E. Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, c1994), 57.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>367</sup> Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), 110.

speed was exciting, it could also be dangerous. The novel *Futility*, published in 1898, for example, described the largest boat afloat (ironically, named Titan), which in an attempt to pursue speed records ran into another ship and cut it in two.

Because of their status as simultaneously awe-inspiring and terrifying, steamships represented what David Nye calls the “American technological sublime.” As such, steamships were used by the government as a national symbol of strength and power.<sup>368</sup> They were paraded in local rivers during civic ceremonies to demonstrate American ingenuity—particularly during the Hudson-Fulton Celebration in 1909. Images of steamships decorated stamps as a symbol of national strength. As Susan Stewart argues, “The gigantic is appropriated by the state and its institutions and put on parade with great seriousness, not as a representative of the material life of the body, but as a symbol of the abstract social formations making up life in the city.”<sup>369</sup> Steamships, therefore, were a symbol of American power and because of this, promoted social cohesion in the act of viewing them.

And yet, by making all of these boats small, Millet contains them. In Millet’s murals, these objects of the technological sublime become more legible, as viewers can see the parts of a monstrous steamboat all at once and therefore make more sense of its inner workings. According to Stewart, the form of the miniature presents “closure, interiority, the domestic, and the overly cultural.”<sup>370</sup> As opposed to the gigantic, which presents a world of disorder, the miniature creates a “mental world of proportion, control

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<sup>368</sup> David E. Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, c1994).

<sup>369</sup> Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 81.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

and balance.”<sup>371</sup> The culmination of the mural cycle is a gigantic manmade wonder, but it is made small so that viewers might know it and make sense of it more easily than in its incomprehensible size in real life.

It is worth mentioning that Millet chose not to include steamships or other modern vessels in the ceiling. The one area of the room that, though certainly not life-size, emphasized the enormity of boats, the ceiling featured only outdated modes of transportation. The reason for this speaks to the function of the ceiling. According to *The Sun*, “Mr. Millet will wisely leave the name off the ships and residents of different sections may claim the picture to be that of the ship that started their history.”<sup>372</sup> While the frieze, spandrels, and lunettes were meant to depict specific examples from history, the ceiling boats remained anonymous, so that viewers from all over might place them in their own national narrative. The ceiling panel was not meant to teach a lesson, but rather serves as an example of anti-modern practices that could remind viewers of pre-modern times. It was a nostalgia piece, something separate from the historical trajectory and educational lesson presented below. Not placing steamships in the ceiling suggests that Millet wanted steamships to be less awe-inspiring and more knowable and collectable.

### *Model Ships*

In some ways, Millet’s boats could be described as toy-like. Tucked into corners or in between rows of elaborate neoclassical decoration, the tiny fishing boats and lifeboats, no more than a foot tall, were even referred to by a writer in *The Sun* as “tiny fellows.” Made small, all the boats along the frieze or in the spandrels appear to be

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<sup>371</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.

<sup>372</sup> “Art for Custom House,” *The Sun*, April 20, 1907, 16.

devices for fantasy and play—objects of projection and imagination. In their small size, the actual labor and ideology invested in the real thing is eschewed and replaced by a sense of amusement.<sup>373</sup> Moreover, in their placement in spandrels, lunettes, and a frieze—the decorative registers of the room—the work functions as embellishment and could be, at first glance, interpreted as meaningless and purely ornamental.

In a similar way, Millet's miniaturized ships share much in common with scale models. While some models in this period were produced as objects of play, other were constructed for educational purposes and exhibited around the world. At the Smithsonian, the Peabody, the World's Columbian, and other exhibitions, models were created of ships and trains, but also of natural wonders of the world, indigenous villages, and archaeological practices. Museum curators included to-scale miniaturized versions of objects, places, and spaces that were too large to be taken in at a glance. The Ohio Serpent Mound, for example, was miniaturized by the Peabody Museum in an attempt to display the gigantic earthwork in its totality. At the World's Columbian, models of steamships and non-Western ships were displayed in miniature in the Transportation Building, so that viewers might see their inner workings up close (figure 4.25). Steamships were represented, as was a Chinese junk.<sup>374</sup> The purpose was to present a highly detailed version in miniature, so that it could be made legible in its entirety with the human eye.

Since the eighteenth century, models had been made for museums in an attempt to teach lessons about culture that could not be done in life. In scientific communities,

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<sup>373</sup> Stewart, *On Longing*, 60.

<sup>374</sup> Norman Bolotin and Christine Laing, *The World's Columbian Exposition: The Chicago World's Fair of 1893* (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, c1992), 96.



making things smaller was a specific means to an end. Through the act of miniaturizing, a gigantic monument could be contained so that viewers could study and learn from it. Indeed, to make the models for the Smithsonian, the museum hired architects and modelers Victor and Cosmos Mindeleff, who studied Native American villages and sites firsthand in order to produce highly accurate representations.<sup>375</sup> Making the gigantic small was a technique used by scientists in their attempt to display culture in a legible way.

In the context of the museum, not just anything was miniaturized; most often, it was practices and objects of indigenous cultures. While boats of all kinds were made small for maritime museums and world's fairs, indigenous boats were made small in even more venues. Collecting and miniaturizing non-Western objects (and people) was a practice in keeping with a larger ethnographic project, in which tourists bought and collected non-Western objects or photographs, displaying them in cabinets of curiosity or albums. By collecting miniaturized version of cultural objects, they could feel as if they "knew" the other and possessed a piece of their culture. Millet's smallest examples, tucked into the corners of windows and arches, were mostly nonwestern types. Devoid of context, these "tiny fellows" seem innocuous and possess-able. The "Alaskan canoes" and "Chinese rice boat" are truly toy-like, and because of this are grounded in the realm of fantasy even more so than those in the frieze and lunettes—a fact that furthers the imperialist message at the root of Millet's project.

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<sup>375</sup> Ira Jacknis, "Refracting Images: Anthropological Display at the Chicago World's Fair, 1893," in *Coming of Age in Chicago: The 1893 World's Fair and the Coalescence of American Anthropology*, ed. Curtis M. Hinsley and David R. Wilcox (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 282.

Looking again to display strategies employed by museums, Millet miniaturized his ships to make them easier to classify and see. By shrinking and organizing them as he did, Millet presents a carefully curated grouping of objects. His rendering of detail, as well as his self-conscious ordering of types, made the cycle a collection begging to be studied and interpreted. The viewer could examine each panel individually and then read them in sequence, visualizing the history of seafaring technologies along the way. By making these gigantic objects small and organizing them in a series, Millet presented a historical trajectory that would be impossible to see with the naked eye. And by making the indigenous examples even smaller, he visualized the hierarchical understanding of cultures he had supported and depicted throughout his lifetime.

### **“A New Thought”**

A collection of miniaturized boats presented in an evolutionary sequence, Millet’s murals were, as I have suggested, perfectly suited to the Call Room. Indeed it was Millet’s ability to fit his work so perfectly to the function of the space that made it so successful to critics, like Mechlin:

These decorations manifest inherently that they were designed for a particular purpose and not merely fitted to a chance need. They obviously belong where they are, and could no more be removed and replaced without loss of effect than, let us say, the wall and ceiling whereon they are set forth. And of how few mural paintings can this truly be said!<sup>376</sup>

For Mechlin, Millet’s work was one of the few produced in this period that achieved this effect. She continues:

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<sup>376</sup> Leila Mechlin, “The Ships of All Ages in F. D. Millet’s Mural Decorations in the Baltimore Custom House,” *Craftsman* (January 1 1909), 426.

The great trouble has been that the majority of modern mural paintings have been merely pictorial canvases fastened to a wall, and that painters and architects generally have not sufficiently appreciated the interdependence of their arts. This may explain a good many things—why, for instance, we have today, comparatively, so little good architectural sculpture, as well also so few really noteworthy mural paintings; and ... why the decorations in the Custom House at Baltimore are so eminently successfully.<sup>377</sup>

While Millet thought about creating paintings that blended into spaces and made reference to a specific audience, other artists focused on lofty ideals that aligned with those of their patrons. Not to say Millet ignored these ideals—he most certainly did not. However, he also believed that civic art needed to reach its intended audience. For him, this was the biggest problem with art in America. It followed fads and did not attempt to encourage directed engagement from viewers:

We are, as you know, a hysterical nation, more hysterical in many ways than the French. A catch phrase will elect or defeat a president; we worship the hero of the hour with fervor almost ferocious in its intensity; a novelty is irresistible, it may be bicycling, it may be golf, it may be bridge, but when it comes among us we rush after it with an enthusiasm which is as overpowering as it is ephemeral. This is one of our natural characteristics and art is no exception to the rule. At one time we would look at nothing but Richardsonian architecture, at another so-called Queen Anne was the rage and again Colonial, and each fashion has been followed for a time with persistent eagerness.<sup>378</sup>

What Millet saw, and what others did not see, was that allegory was essentially a fad.

Regardless of critical praise, the majority of patrons preferred the standard Beaux-Arts murals. Despite the fact that he organized the muralists and painted works at the World's Columbian, Millet was rarely hired to contribute to the major mural projects of this period. He did not work on the Boston Public Library, despite the fact that his two

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<sup>377</sup> Ibid.

<sup>378</sup> Frank Millet, "Conditions and Possibilities of Art in the United States," Yale University, June 1, 1904, 8, Francis Davis Millet and Millet Family Papers. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, New York, New York.

closest friends (at the time) did, and he was not asked to participate in the Library of Congress commission. Cass Gilbert only hired Millet to paint two murals for the Minnesota State Capitol as an afterthought.<sup>379</sup> The location of one of Millet's murals (and those by other mostly lesser known painters), the Governor's Room, is not even a public space (figure 4.26). Similarly, Millet's mural in the Cleveland Federal Building was made for a private office. The works that he was hired to create were therefore either housed in semi-public spaces or made for B-list projects. The buildings were not in major cities, and most were not designed by major architects. Millet worked on a small courthouse in Hudson County, New Jersey; the Baltimore Custom House; and the New Bedford Public Library. Meanwhile, Abbey, Blashfield, Turner, and Simmons—many of whom worked under Millet at the World's Columbian—were hired repeatedly to create works for buildings in major cities and by big-name architects like Cass Gilbert; McKim, Mead, & White; and George Post. In the Minnesota State Capitol, for instance, Simmons was commissioned to paint four works in the rotunda, the most public space of the building (figure 4.27).

This is not to say that Millet's work was not well received. Quite the contrary: Mechlin praised the Baltimore Custom House murals as “eminently successful.” Critic C.M. Price celebrated the Cleveland Postmaster's cycle as a “remarkable series of paintings.”<sup>380</sup> Upon Millet's death, Sylvester Baxter proclaimed, “Fine as his easel

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<sup>379</sup> Bailey Van Hook, “High Culture by the Square Foot,” in *Cass Gilbert, Life and Work: Architect of the Public Domain*, ed. Barbara S. Christen and Steven Flanders (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 122.

<sup>380</sup> C. M. Price, “The Late Francis Davis Millet: Notes on the Decorative Panels in the Cleveland Post Office,” *International Studio* 48 (1912), xxxvi.

pictures are it is as a great mural painter that his fame will last.”<sup>381</sup> At the same time, it was not as though Millet were difficult to work with. Hunt, for one, described how much people respected him at the World’s Columbian.<sup>382</sup> According to Price, he was “everybody’s friend.”<sup>383</sup> Henry Cabot Lodge, meanwhile, remembered:

Behind the fun and laughter, the humor and the wit, back of the intelligence and the knowledge, one was always clearly conscious of the strong, brave man, the man of force and character. These, in happy combination, were the qualities which ... grappled his friends to him. He could convince, persuade and lead. He could make other men do what he desires without any sense of compulsion.<sup>384</sup>

According to Blashfield,

He had upon his shoulders that round head of an Ancient Roman which we find so often in New England, the head of a born organizer and administrator ... he took in wide relations at glance, foresaw friction where likely to occur and was ready for it; and he patiently insisted upon the careful carrying out of ever necessary detail.<sup>385</sup>

If anything, he was hired not because of his work but because of his special ability to collaborate.

What the lack of high-profile commissions instead suggests is that patrons found something inherently troubling about Millet’s civic works. Unlike Blashfield and Cox, Millet completely eschewed allegory. Unlike Pyle and Turner, his history paintings emphasized global subject matter and presented history as a dynamic, chronological evolution, not as a static, singular event. In this way, Millet’s works were unique and different. They were eye opening in their cultural sensitivity and awe-inspiring in terms

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<sup>381</sup> Baxter, “Francis Davis Millet,” *Art and Progress*, 640.

<sup>382</sup> Hunt, “Millet at Work,” Pt. 1, *Art and Progress*, 1093.

<sup>383</sup> Price, “The Late Francis Davis Millet,” *International Studio*, xxxv.

<sup>384</sup> Henry Cabot Lodge, in *Francis Davis Millet Memorial Meeting*, ed. Glen Brown (Washington, D.C.: American Federation of Arts, 1912), 16.

<sup>385</sup> Edwin Howland Blashfield, “Frank D. Millet as Mural Painter,” *Art and Progress* 3:9 (July 1912), 649.

of their large number of canvases (a common feature of his projects).

While Millet himself announced that his work would be different from the standard fare, critics tended to agree. Some saw Millet's work as boundary pushing, and celebrated him for that fact. According to Mechlin, writing about the Baltimore murals: "If the art of this age is to survive it must reflect, if unconsciously, the spirit of our time though built on tradition. This, it appears, Mr. Millet has realized. He has ventured a new thought and happily."<sup>386</sup> Mechlin saw the importance in creating an art for this modern moment, and believed that Millet answered this call. By pushing boundaries within the framework of traditional methods (like realism and history painting), he was able to come up with a "new thought" or a new type of painting. The architect Arnold Brunner, who worked with Millet on the Cleveland Federal Building, also found his work different from that of other artists. Discussing Millet's work for the Cleveland Postmaster's office, he stated,

There is now being prepared by F. [D.] Millet, a noted artist, a frieze for the walls of this office. It is not going to be an ordinary mural painting but something unusual. It will depict the history of the mail service showing all methods of carrying mail from the old stage to the Modern Limited Express.<sup>387</sup>

For critic Sylvester Baxter, this "unusual" type of painting was a welcome change. "His masterpiece is his monumental work for the Baltimore custom house—a consummate development of a unique departure from the conventional traditions and one of the great achievements in decorative art on this continent."<sup>388</sup> Not only did Baxter find this work successful, he also saw it as a "unique departure" from the standard fare. He

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<sup>386</sup> Mechlin, "The Ships of All Ages," *Craftsman*, 433.

<sup>387</sup> "Nation Changes Quarters Here," *Cleveland Plains Dealer*, January 8, 1911.

<sup>388</sup> Baxter, "Francis Davis Millet," *Art and Progress*, 640.

agreed with Mechlin that this new age called for new types of painting, and that Millet answered that call. There was a spirit of change in the air as artists searched for new styles and new subject matter in this modern moment, and Millet's murals and his conscious decision to paint something different reflect that feeling.

While I am not arguing that Millet's murals were modern, I do think there were modern elements to them, and it was these elements that patrons, whether they realized it or not, found troubling. To see representations of Chinese ships, Indian mail delivery, and Native American farming practices (in the Cleveland Trust Company building) in Beaux-Arts buildings is strange to viewers in 2016 and must have been somewhat unsettling to viewers when the works were made—perhaps an experience somewhat akin to witnessing Africans marching through the White City.

In this way, Millet's works might be understood as an in-between step in the history of American art. They were not traditional, conservative civic art, but they were also not modernist. Millet does not experiment formally, but he does bring in new subject matter and tread new territory in terms of theme and organization (despite the clear imperialist undertones.) In this way, Millet's works should be understood as pre-modern. As Jo Ann Mancini has argued, modernism did not erupt spontaneously, but rather happened as the result of a number of movements in new directions. Millet's art can be thought of as an example of that type of boundary pushing.

Because of his emphasis on cultural difference and compositions inspired by ethnographic sources, Millet's work offered a "new thought" in American art. It looked different from the standard fare, and for this reason did not necessarily fit with patrons' or architects' mission for large-scale American architecture that emphasized historical

sources. Those funding and designing City Beautiful buildings wanted works that taught about American supremacy with all white subjects and that eschewed subjects pulled from modern life.<sup>389</sup> Unlike the work of Blashfield, Turner, and others, Millet's subject matter did not provide viewers with a full escape from modern life, but instead forced audiences to confront it.

In this way, Millet is an interesting character in the nineteenth-century western art world. He is unusual in choosing to depict global themes relevant to a modern moment in his civic art and yet he is typical in that he used those themes to promote an American imperialist agenda. While his colleagues emphasized American supremacy through a white-centered narrative, Millet emphasized white hegemony by aligning his work to a hierarchical understanding of "culture" and "evolution" presented by the anthropological community. Millet offered a new thought but it was one steeped in old ideology. Indeed, by attempting to promote himself as a cultural intermediary and as someone who could present a more accurate version of difference than those who had not witnessed foreign cultures first hand, Millet hoped his work would be understood by his primarily white audience as an "accurate" or "truthful" rendering of distinct cultural differences. Employing the rhetoric of empiricism and engaging with subject matter understood by his audience to be under the purview of science, Millet attempted to present his cultural evolutions as fact. In this way, Millet's civic art offered an argument about American imperialism that, despite its seemingly culturally sensitive content, was, in its status as an

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<sup>389</sup> There were works that dealt with industrialization and labor, such as John White Alexander's murals for the Carnegie Institute, but these still emphasized white subjects and white labor.



“objective record,” potentially more damaging to the public acceptance and equality of distinct races and ethnic groups than the nationalistic and white-centered representations depicted by his peers.



1. "Francis Davis Millet from a recent photograph," in Sylvester Baxter, "Francis Davis Millet: An Appreciation of the Man," *Art and Progress* 3: 9 (Jul., 1912): 637



2. Thomas Hastings and Daniel Chest French (bas reliefs), *Butt-Millet Memorial Fountain*, Tennessee marble base and granite column, 1913, President's Park, Washington, D.C.



3. Francis Davis Millet, *Mail Delivery* (the collection and delivery of the mails), oil on canvas, 1911, Postmaster's Office, Cleveland Federal Building, Cleveland, Ohio.



4. Millet, "Mail Delivery, India," detail of *Mail Delivery*.



5. Millet, "Rural Delivery, Broadway, England," detail of *Mail Delivery*.



6. Millet, "Balloon Post," detail of *Mail Delivery*.

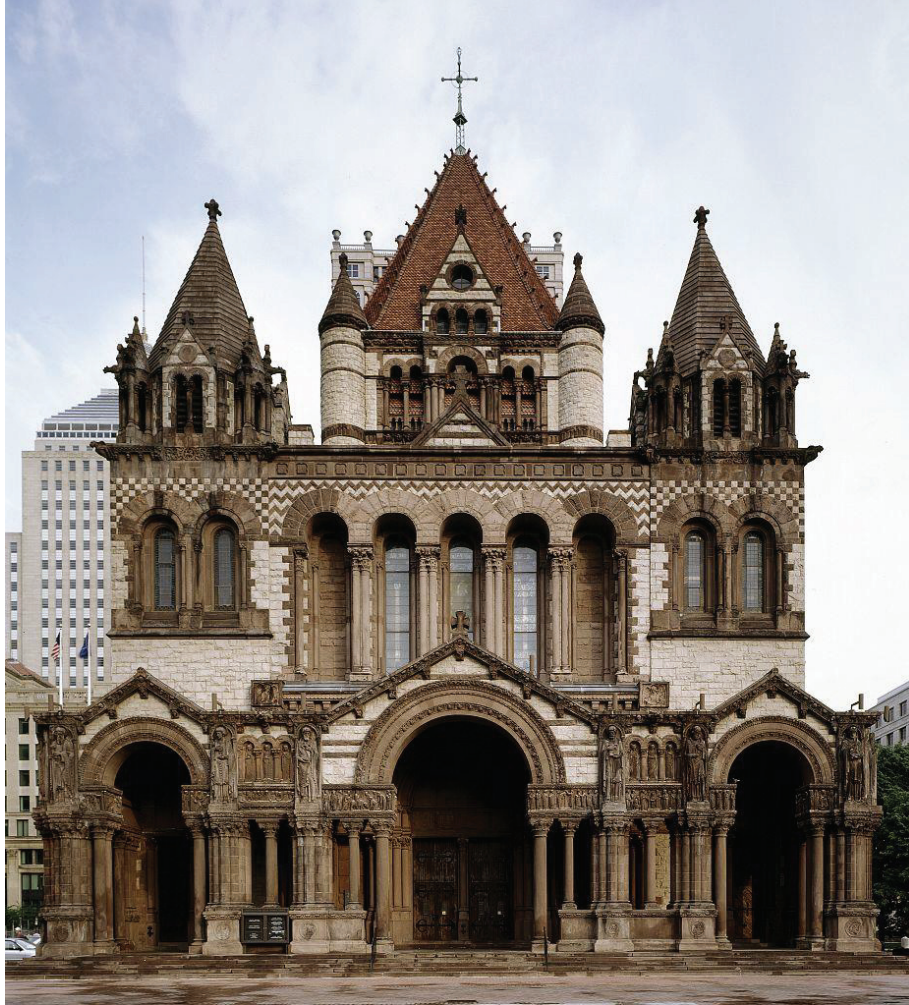


7. Edwin Howland Blashfield, *The Law*, oil on canvas, 1910, Cleveland Federal Building, Cleveland, Ohio.



8. George Willoughby Maynard, *Francis Davis Millet*, oil on canvas, 1878, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.





9. Henry Hobson Richardson and John La Farge, et al., Trinity Church, 1877, Boston, Massachusetts.



10. Trinity Church, Interior.



11. Portrait of Edward Burnett Tylor in “Biographical Sketch of E. B. Tylor,” *Popular Science Monthly* 26 (December 1884).



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

12. W. Curtis Taylor, *Frederick Ward Putnam*, cabinet card, 1884.



13. *Franz Boas*, photogravure, circa 1915.



14. Thomas Eakins, *Portrait of Frank Hamilton Cushing*, oil on canvas, 1895, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma.



1.1 Louis Comfort Tiffany & Associated Artists, Veteran's Room, Seventh Regiment Armory, New York, New York.



1.2 Millet and George Yewell, frieze, north wall section, c.1880, Veteran's Room.



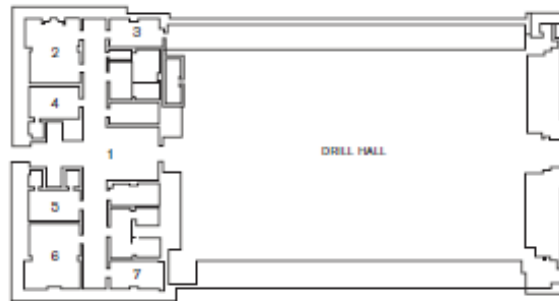


1.3 Charles W. Clinton, Seventh Regiment Armory, 1879.

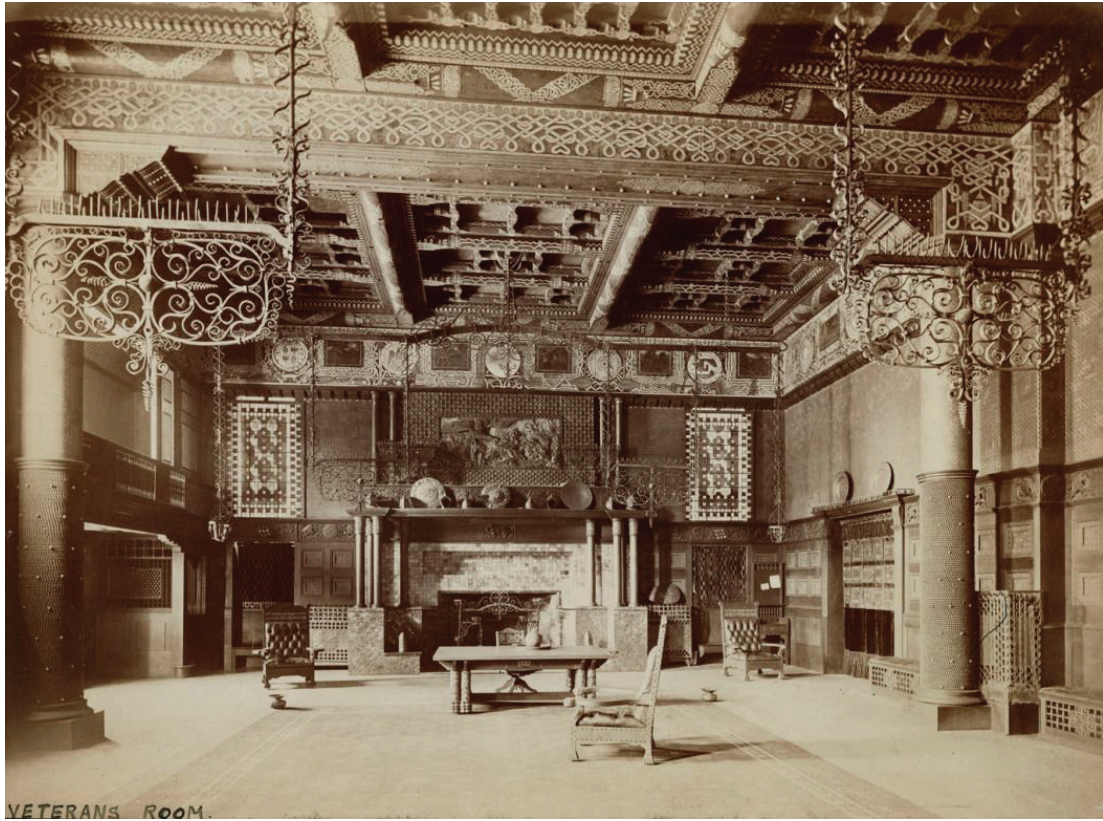


1.4 Clinton, Seventh Regiment Armory, today.

### FIRST FLOOR RECEPTION ROOMS



1.5 Clinton, Plan (Veteran's Room is #2), Seventh Regiment Armory.



1.6 Veteran's Room, c.1880, archival photograph, the New-York Historical Society, New York.



1.7 Herter Brothers, Reception Room, Seventh Regiment Armory.



THE VETERAN'S ROOM, SEVENTH REGIMENT ARMORY.—DRAWN BY CHARLES GRAHAM.—[SEE PAGE 414.]

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1.8 Charles Graham, "The Veteran's Room, Seventh Regiment Armory," in *Harper's Weekly* (June 25, 1881): 414.



1.9 Frieze, north wall detail, "Civil War Soldiers."



1.10 Frieze, center of the north wall, “Pro Patria et Gloria.”

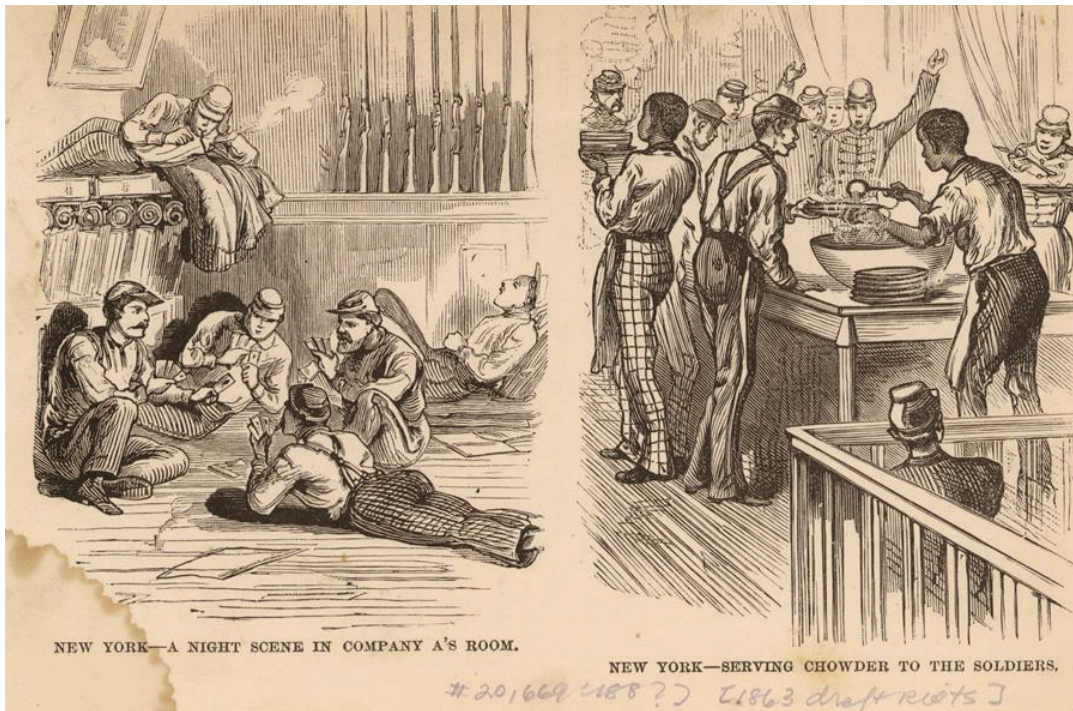


1.11 Frieze, north wall detail, “Native American warfare.”





1.12 "New York—The Riot in Lexington Avenue," in *Pen and Pencil Sketches of the Great Riots*, by Hon. J.T. Headley (New York, E.B. Treat; Philadelphia, H.W. Kelley; [etc.] 1877).



1.13 “New York—A Night Scene in Company A's Room; New York—Serving Chowder to the Soldiers,” in *Pen and Pencil Sketches*.



1.14 Main Arsenal, 1847, Springfield, Massachusetts.



1.15 W. St. John Harper and C.D. Weldon, “Lawn Tennis at the Seventh Regiment Armory,” in *Harper’s Weekly* (December 10, 1881): 894.



1.16 Thurs de Thulstrup, “The Music Festival in the Seventh Regiment Armory,” in *Harper’s Weekly* (May 21, 1881): 335.



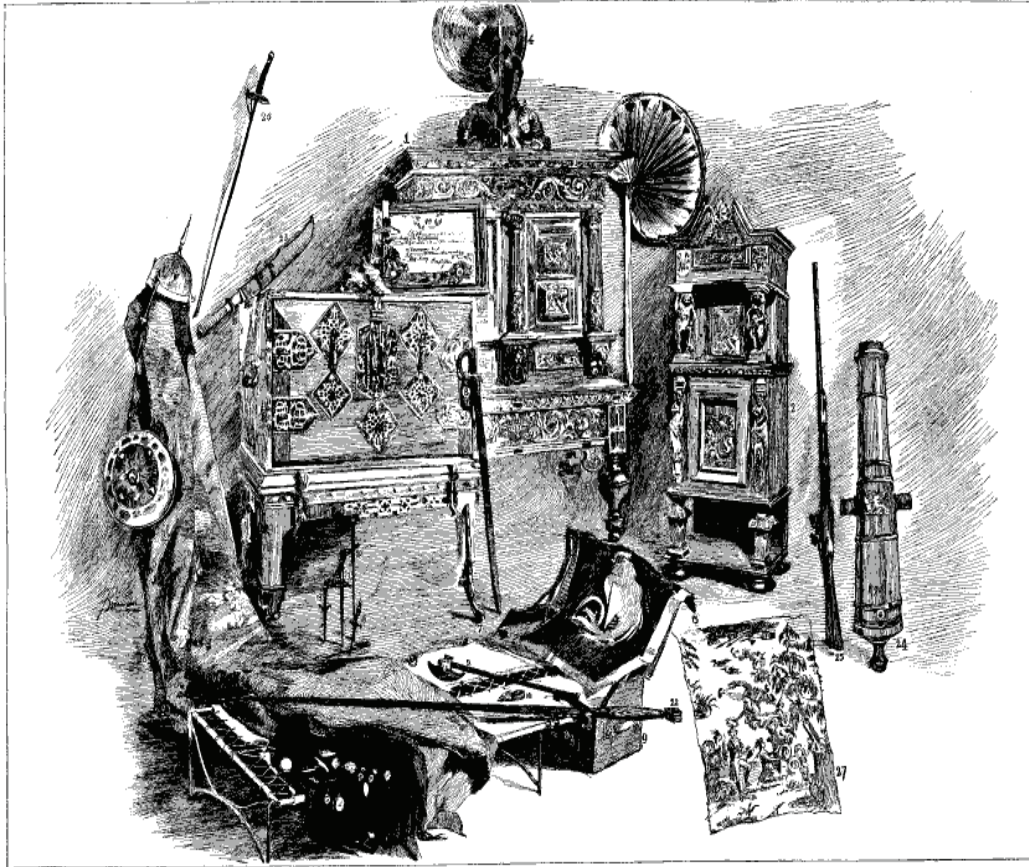
1.17 John Quincy Adams Ward and Richard Morris Hunt, *Seventh Regiment Memorial*, bronze and marble, 1874, Central Park, New York.



1.18 Clark Mills, *Lieutenant General George Washington*, bronze, 1860, Washington Center, Washington, D.C.



1.19 "Organ of Muskets," Springfield Armory, Springfield, Massachusetts.



COMPANY G'S OLD CURIOSITY SHOP AT THE SEVENTH REGIMENT ARMORY FAIR.—[See Page 783.]

1.20 “Company G’s Curiosity Room at the Seventh Regiment Armory Fair,” in “The Seventh Regiment Armory Fair,” *Harper's Bazaar* (December 6, 1879): 783.





1.21 Springfield Model, 1863, c. 1863.



1.22 Remington Rolling Block rifle, 1868-73, the New-York Historical Society, New York.



1.23 Homer, *Sharpshooter*, oil on canvas, 1863, Portland Museum of Art, Portland, Oregon.



1.24 *Buffalo Bill Cody*, cabinet card, c. 1875.



1.25 Harpoon Display, c.1890, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, United Kingdom.

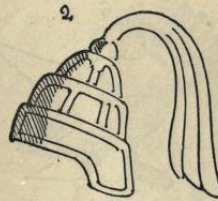


1.26 Millet and Yewell, north wall detail of Veteran's Room frieze.

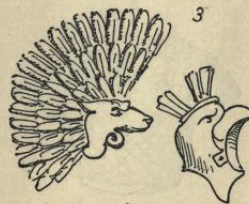
1. American helmet, drawn from a bas-relief of Palanqué. The figure in this bas-relief, which is mentioned in M. de Waldeck's work, is represented sitting with the left leg folded under the body, similar to the statues of the god Boodha, or the Chinese god Fo.



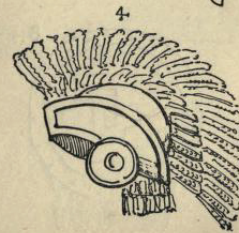
2. Mexican helmet drawn from a bas-relief of great antiquity at Hochicalco, in the province of Quemaraca, Mexico.



3. Two Mexican helmets drawn from a Mexican manuscript of the beginning of the fifteenth century, the property of M. de Waldeck, in which is described the conquest of Ascapusala.



4. Mexican helmet in solid gold, ornamented with feathers, of the fifteenth century. It was part of a royal suit, destroyed in Mexico by fire.



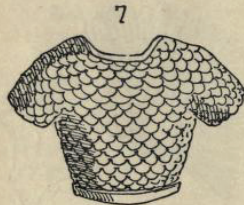
1.27-29 Figures 2, 3, 8, 10, and 11 in Auguste Demmin, *An Illustrated History of Arms and Armour from the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (London, G. Bell & Sons, 1877): 89-91.



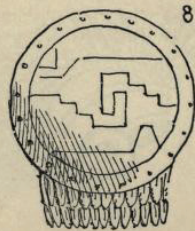
5. Mexican helmet in leather, wood, leopard skin, and feathers, of the fifteenth century.  
*From a Manuscript.*



6. Mexican helmet in wood, leather and feathers, fifteenth century.  
*From a Manuscript.*

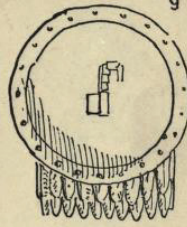


7. Mexican corslet of scales of mother of pearl (Jazeran or Korazin) of the fifteenth century. This fine piece of defensive armour was part of a royal suit, mentioned on the preceding page at fig. 4, as having been destroyed in Mexico by fire.

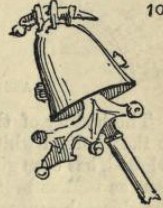


8. Buckler or small round Mexican shield, 25 inches in diameter, of gold and silver, and ornamented with feathers. It was part of the same suit of the fifteenth century, which was burnt. The hieroglyphic ornaments have not hitherto been explained.

9. Buckler or round Mexican shield, 25 inches in diameter, composed entirely of leather, and ornamented by the hieroglyphic sign which among the Mexicans stood for a hundred, and which here indicates that the shield belonged to a centurion or captain over a hundred men.



10. Ensign or Mexican standard in gold, surmounted by a grasshopper, or locust, 12½ inches long, fifteenth century.

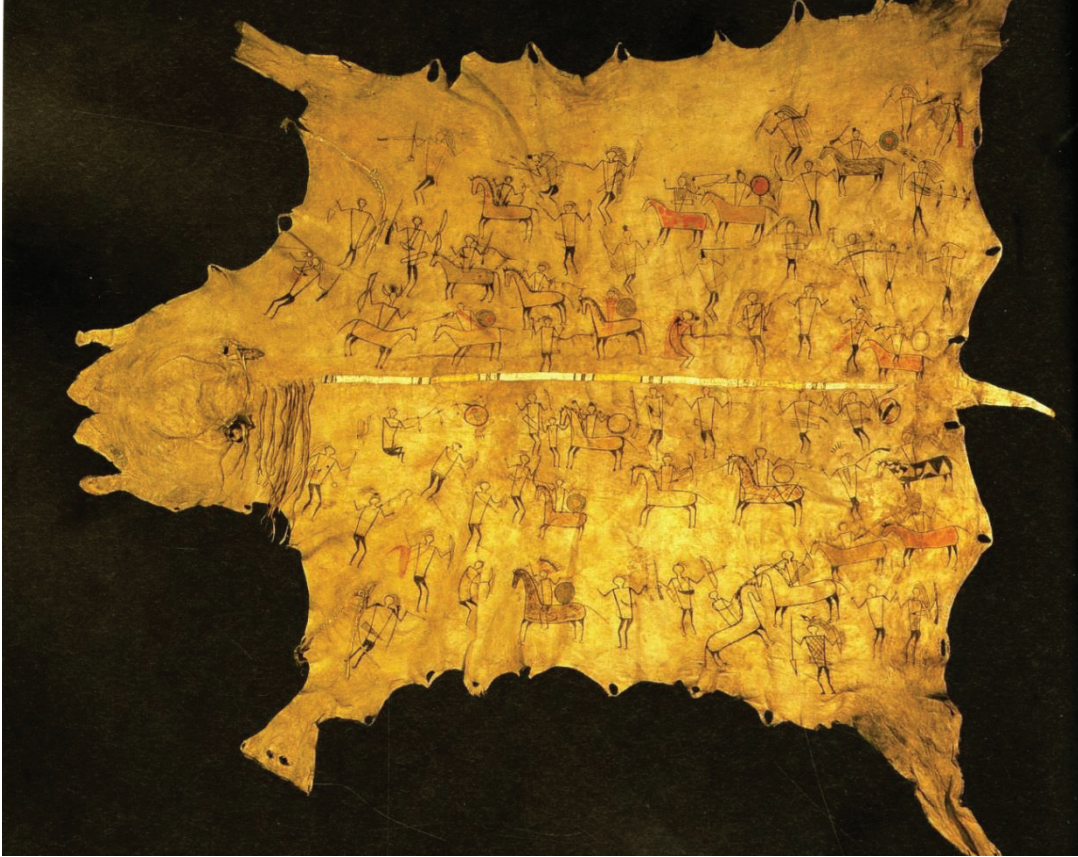


11. Mexican ensign in gold, surmounted by an eagle's head, life size, fifteenth century.



For American offensive weapons in wood and obsidian, see the end of the chapter on polished stone weapons.





1.30 *"Fort Mandan" Robe*, buffalo skin, c. 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century, Peabody Museum, Harvard University.



1.31 "Fort Mandan" Robe, detail.



2.1 Millet, *A Cosey Corner*, oil on canvas, 1884, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Alfred Parsons

F. D. Millet

Francis Engelhart

2.2 Frontispiece from F. D. Millet, *The Danube: From the Black Forest to the Black Sea* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1892).



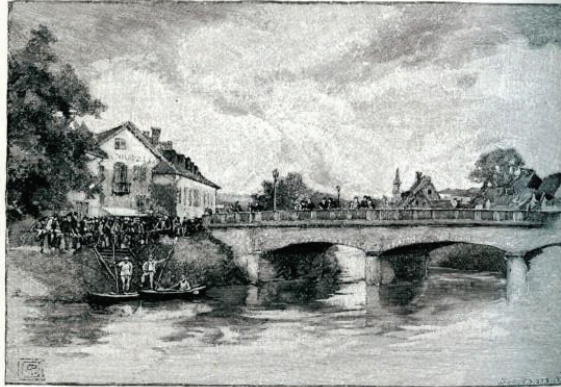
2.3 Map of Eastern Europe

Forester who stood with me by this monument that the real source of the Danube was higher up, but he regarded my statement as outrageous. "Gott in Himmel!" said he, piously. "Here lives the prince, here is his palace, here is the official statement cut in the stone. What more do you want?"

I was silenced, but could not help feeling that if an enterprising promoter could

all directions, and the scenery a little of all, from the grandest to the prettiest.

To us, however, the value of Donaueschingen consisted mainly in the fact that it held our three canoes, and that they were to be launched here on their voyage down the Danube. And, for that matter, the people of the town appeared to share our feelings, for as we worked upon our tiny craft in the court-yard of the Gast-



THE START—DONAUESCHINGEN.

secure some other prince, get up a stock company, hire a spring further up, build a summer hotel, call the place "Danube High Spring," or "Danube Source Original," carve it in stone, and make the rival prince hold court at the summer hotel, in three seasons Donaueschingen would be bankrupt.

Nevertheless, we rejoiced in considering this place the source, for even if there are others, none of them is more picturesque, more venerable, more clean, or more full of kindly people. The prince has given the town a park, every bit of which is full of beauty, and as the little town seems built upon it, one cannot move from the front door without feeling that here at least the delights of country life are joined with those of a little city. It is a place to spend a long summer with one or two friends addicted to pedestrianism or the bicycle, for the roads are excellent in

haus zum Schützen, we gradually became the centres about which a large proportion of the population, both male and female, hovered and asked questions. The host took great interest in our work, mainly, we hope, from personal sympathy—perhaps also because of those who came many remained to talk it over in his beer-room.

Among a people so famed for wood-work and clocks as those of the Black Forest it was not surprising that they should enjoy a novelty that appealed directly to their most widely practised craft. The three little boats were alike in dimensions, weight, and rig, all being made on the banks of the East River, New York. The weight of each is eighty pounds net, to which is added that of two masts and sails, a brass folding centre board, a nickel rudder that drops nine inches below the keel, camping kitchen,

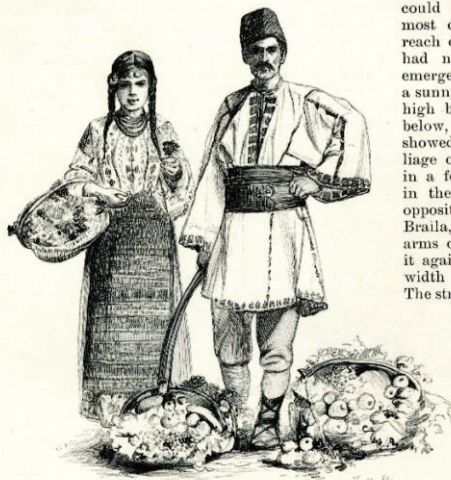
2.4 Alfred Parsons, "The Start—Donaueschingen," in Poultney Bigelow, "From the Black Forest to the Black Sea," *Harper's Monthly* 84:501 (February, 1892): 330.

ed by fences of the same material. How human beings can exist in these fever-infested marshes will always remain a mystery to us. We found a reasonably solid landing-place on a little island near one of these stations, and a short distance above the little hamlet of Gura Ghirlitza. The botanist, whose duty it was to gather drift-wood, brought back from his rambles a great bouquet of wild flowers—mellilot, looestrife, convolvulus, blue veronica, chicory, tamarisk, snapdragon, and many others.

Early the next forenoon we landed at the village. The whole population gathered around the canoes and studied them with intelligent curiosity. They were the first natives since we passed the Bulgarian frontier above Widdin who had shown any particular emotion at the sight of the novel craft, and our hearts warmed to them in consequence. Perhaps it was partly on this account that we liked the village, for, after all, it was only a small collection of low, whitewashed, roughly thatched

cottages, straggling along crooked, dusty streets, partly shaded by small trees, and everywhere enclosed by fences of dry reeds. But there were a good many bright flowers in the tiny gardens, luxuriantly growing squashes and gourds were climbing all over the thatched roofs, the clean white linen garments of both sexes were refreshing to look upon, and the brilliant aprons and elaborate red embroidery worn by the women made rich spots of color in the warm sunlight. It was well for us that we went away from Gura Ghirlitza in an agreeable frame of mind, for a persistent head-wind blew straight up stream, no matter how the river turned and twisted. We passed scores of Turkish vessels dashing along up the choppy current with a great splashing at the bows, and others trying to work down river by the force of the stream. For several hours we struggled against the gale and the rough sea, between banks with few signs of human life and scarcely a rod of cleared land, and in the afternoon passed through miles of unbroken forest, extending in every direction as far as we could see. From this the most desolate and deserted reach of the whole river we had navigated, we at last emerged quite suddenly into a sunny open country, with a high bluff a short distance below, where tall chimneys showed above the dense foliage on a large island, and in a few moments we were in the main stream again, opposite the bustling town of Braila, where the straggling arms of the river unite, and it again assumes its normal width and majestic aspect. The stream was crowded with

vessels of every description, from the native lotkas to the great English freight propellers, whose ugly iron hulls towered high over all local craft. On the shore opposite the town scores of Turkish vessels were made fast to the bank,



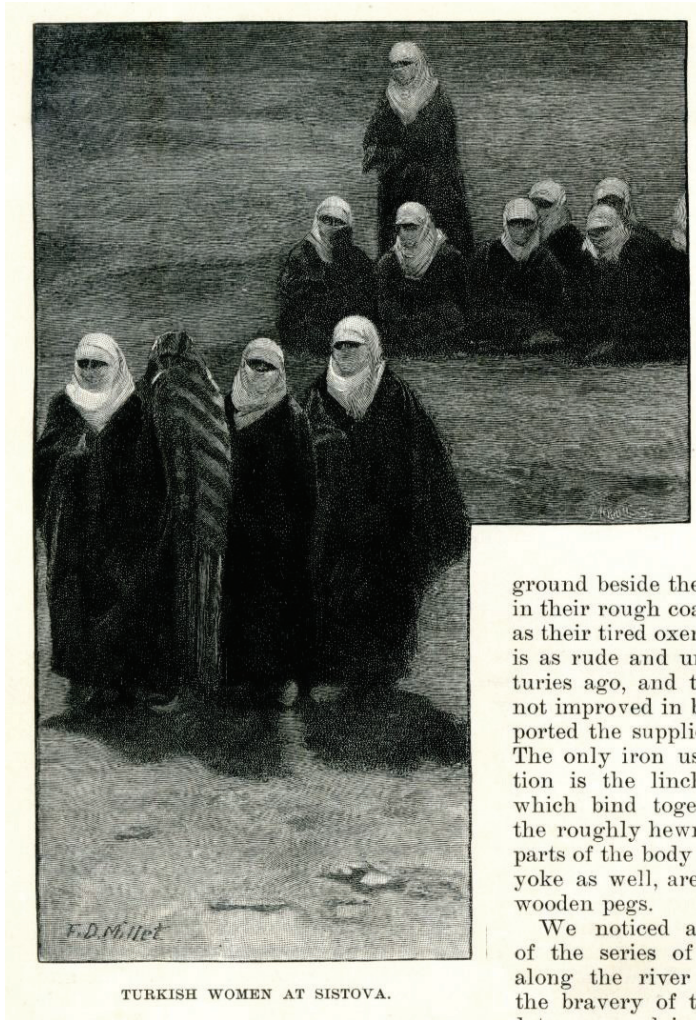
ROUMANIAN PEASANTS SELLING FLOWERS AND FRUIT.

2.5 Millet, "Romanian Peasants Selling Flowers and Fruit" in F. D. Millet, "From the Black Forest to the Black Sea," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 85:506 (July, 1892): 274.



2.6 Millet, 'Max Schneckenburger, Author of "Die Wacht Am Bhein,"' in "From the Black Forest," (February, 1892): 334.

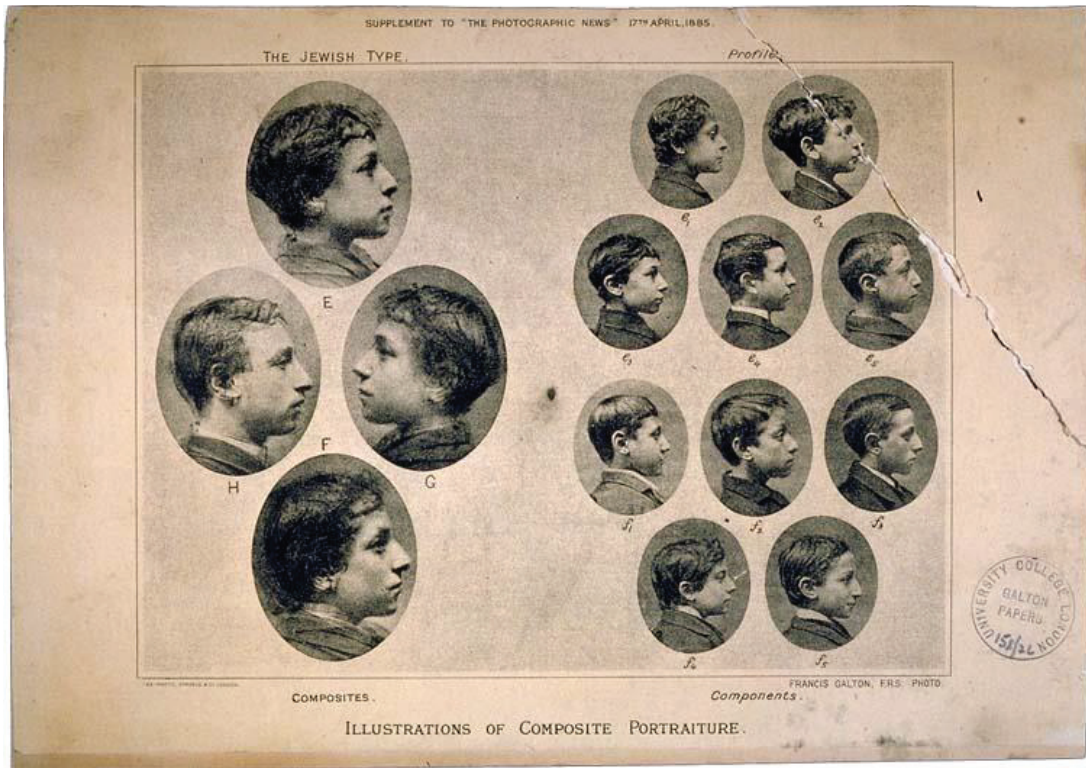




ground beside their  
 in their rough coats  
 as their tired oxen  
 is as rude and un-  
 turies ago, and they  
 not improved in  
 ported the supplies  
 The only iron  
 tion is the linch-  
 which bind together  
 the roughly hewn  
 parts of the body  
 yoke as well, are  
 wooden pegs.

We noticed at  
 of the series of  
 along the river  
 the bravery of the

2.7 Millet, "Turkish Women at Sistova," in "From the Black Forest," (July, 1892): 268.



2.8 Francis Galton, "Illustrations of Composite Portraiture, The Jewish Type," in *The Photographic News* (April 17, 1885).



MOLDAVIAN PEASANTS—A WINDY DAY IN THE DELTA.

sketching materials, and our two young allies, who had been educated in Odessa, and understood our position, joined their voices to ours, but all in vain. Not an article must be removed from the canoes, not even a sketch-book, and, furthermore, we must promise not to sketch anything before we would be allowed to go into the village. Seeing the place even with this restriction was better than dangling our heels from the edge of the quay all the afternoon, and we accepted the invitation of one of the fish-merchants to drink tea with him, and strolled off into the village.

The houses are low and solidly built, and most of them have one peculiar feature—a row of columns in front sup-

ported a projection of the roof. They stand closely together along straight thoroughfares, which are little better than canals of mud, being only a few inches above the level of the river. The foundations of the houses are raised a foot or two above these sloughs, and roughly-hewn plank sidewalks supported by piles extend everywhere in front of the buildings, even into the narrow side alleys, where fishermen's huts are huddled together in the marsh among reeds and willows. Two great white churches, enclosed by neat palings, occupy the middle of wide, neglected squares, and look bleak and bare and uninviting. The house we visited was of one story, but long and deep, and comfortably, even luxuriously, furnished, and the drawing-room, where we took un-

limited tea and sweets, after the Russian custom, might have been in Vienna or Bucharest, with its parquet floor and ornate furniture. The young merchants, who frankly told us they were Hebrews, although their types of face did not betray this fact, gave us detailed information about the village, the life there, the character of the people, and the extent of the fish business. From them we learned that Vilkoﬀ counts about 4000 inhabitants, of whom at least 1500 follow the hazardous occupation of fishing for sturgeon in the Black Sea. Five merchants, all of them Jews, divide the trade in fish and caviare between them, and practically own the place, and also the

porting a projection of the roof. They stand closely together along straight thoroughfares, which are little better than canals of mud, being only a few inches above the level of the river. The foundations of the houses are raised a foot or two above these sloughs, and roughly-hewn plank sidewalks supported by piles extend everywhere in front of the buildings, even into the narrow side alleys, where fishermen's huts are huddled together in the marsh among reeds and willows. Two great white churches, enclosed by neat palings, occupy the middle of wide, neglected squares, and look bleak and bare and uninviting. The house we visited was of one story, but long and deep, and comfortably, even luxuriously, furnished, and the drawing-room, where we took un-

2.9 Millet, "Moldavian Peasants—A Windy Day in the Delta," in "From the Black Forest," (August, 1892): 464.



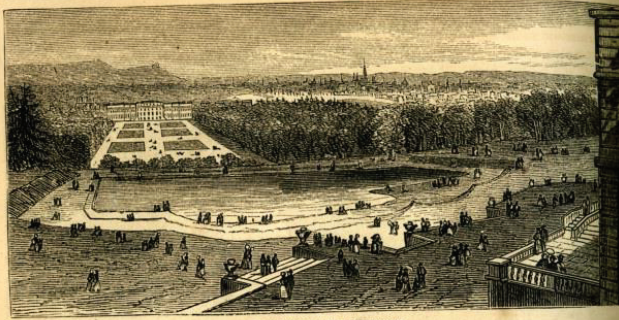
ALBANIAN MALE COSTUME.

on a line, then it becomes perfectly fantastic. The climax of my impressions about it was reached, I think, a little later, at Athens, when I beheld the guards walking their beats before the King's palace, and before the simple house of the Crown Prince opposite; they are soldiers of the regular army, and they held their muskets with military precision as they marched to and fro, attired in ordinary overcoats (it happened to be a rainy day) over the puffed-out white skirts of a ballet-dancer. The Greek costume seems a bravado in whimsicality. One can describe it in detail; one can say that it consists of a cap with a long tassel, a full white shirt, an embroidered jacket with open sleeves, a tight girdle, the white kilt or fustanella, long leggings with bright-

colored garters, and, usually, shoes with turned-up toes. The enumeration, however, does not do away with the one general impression of men striding about in short white ballet petticoats.

In spite of their skirts, the Greeks have as martial an air as possible; an old Greek who is vain, and they are all vain, is even a fierce-looking figure. All the men have small waists, and are proud of them; their belts are drawn as tightly as those of young girls in other countries. From this girdle, or from the embroidered pouch below it, comes a gleam which means probably a pistol, though sometimes it is only the long narrow inkhorn of brass or silver. Besides the Albanian, there are other costumes. One, which is frequently seen, is partly Turkish, with baggy trousers. The Greek men are vain, and with cause; if the women are vain, it must be without it; we did not see a single handsome face among them. It was not merely that we failed to find the beautiful low forehead, full temple, straight nose, and small head of classic days; we could not discover any marked type, good or bad; the features were those that pass unnoticed everywhere. I speak, of course, generally, and from a superficial observation, for I saw only the people one meets in the streets, in the churches, in the fields, olive groves, and vineyards, on the steamers, and at the house doors. But after noting this population for two weeks and more, the result remained the same—the men who came under our notice were handsome, and the women were not. The dress of the women varies greatly. The Albanian costume, which ranks with the fustanellas or petticoats of the men, is as flat, narrow, and elongated as the latter are short and protruding. It consists of a sheathlike skirt of a woollen material, and over this a long narrow white coat, which sometimes has black sleeves; the head is wrapped in loose folds of white. This was the attire worn by the girls who were at work in the fields. On Christmas day I met a number of Corfiote women walking about the esplanade arrayed in light-colored dresses, with large aprons of white lace or white muslin, and upon their heads white veils

2.10 "Albanian Male Costume," in Constance Fennimore Woolson, "Corfu and the Ionian Sea," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 85:507 (August, 1892): 364.



VIEW FROM THE GLORIETTE.

crown and sceptre, and opposite lies the only son of Napoleon, with a simple cross and inscription carved in the stone.

There is something exceedingly touching in the history of the unfortunate duke, who, during his final illness, thus composed his own epitaph: "Napoleon Francois Joseph Charles Bonaparte: born King of Rome—died lieutenant in the Austrian artillery." Handsome, accomplished, brave, the inheritor of a splendid name and dazzling glory; loved almost to idolatry by the country in which his childhood was passed; a magnificent future stretching before him—fate frowned upon his brilliant prospects, gave him a weak constitution, wretched health, bitter disappointment, and was only kind in leading him to an early grave. He breathed his last at Schönbrunn, in the chamber once occupied by his father, and in the neighborhood of the imperial chateau where he was wont to take his solitary walks.

He seems to have been completely blasé from his childhood, and of so melancholy a temperament that scarcely any thing gave him pleasure. Every thing was done to cure him of his gloomy indifference, and, when all else had failed, he met in one of his lonely rambles a beautiful peasant girl, with whom he fell in love at first sight. She appeared to return his affection. Her society aroused him from his lethargy, and endowed him with new life. She first taught him, it is said, the nature of happiness, and by her presence the dreary emptiness of his being was delightfully filled. Peasant as she was, she was graceful, accomplished, witty, and, to his fond fancy, she was as a goddess on the earth. He revealed to her all the sources of his discontent, poured into her confiding ear the secretest of his thoughts and the sacredest of his feelings. She was the single break of blue in his clouded sky, and in that blue was set the star of hope.

One evening he was in the city, and attended the opera. When the ballet came on, among all the dancers suddenly flashed a form of wondrous beauty and grace, agile as a fawn, lithe as a spirit, and the theatre echoed and re-echoed with welcome to the new divinity of the dance. The pale youth flushed, and his heart beat quick.

Was he dreaming, or was the sylph-like creature bounding and whirling on the stage his beloved Marie, whom he had preferred before all the ladies of the court?

He rubbed his eyes and leaned forward, his very soul burning in his face. He could not be mistaken. The lovely and guileless peasant whom he had worshiped and admitted to the innermost sanctuary of his spirit and the magnificent dancer of the opera were one and the same. The blazing theatre grew dim; the tumultuous applause was no longer heard; the unhappy prince gasped, struggled, swooned, and amidst much excitement was borne to his carriage.

The charming dancer who had fascinated him was the famous Fanny Elssler, then at the beginning of her extraordinary conquests and career. She had allowed herself to be used by his relatives as a bait to ensnare the young duke's affections, in the hope that through her some interest in life might be awakened. The ingenuous and handsome boy pleased her, no doubt. Her vanity was gratified at the expense of his final faith. He never recovered, it is said, from this sudden and terrible shock, and she—was liberally paid.

The chateau of Schönbrunn, a short distance southwest of the city, a favorite residence of the imperial family, merits, with its beautiful gardens, the fame it enjoys as an Austrian Eden. The palace has three stories, the first opening on a broad balcony on both sides of the building, and approached by magnificent marble steps. The interior is noted for its handsome staircases and

2.11 "View from the Gloriette," in "Down the Danube," 818.

lady chambers, elegantly furnished and elaborately finished. They contain a luxuriant wilderness of satin hangings, tapestry, mirrors, mosaics, porcelain, and the costliest objects of art. The gallery of portraits of the Hapsburg family—many of them said to be historical—is interesting, though it does not convey the impression that royal natures are marked by royal lineaments. The gardens are on three sides of the palace, those on the right and left, abounding in rare plants and choice fruits, being reserved for Francis Joseph, his relatives, and friends. The public garden, behind the chateau, is charmingly laid out, and contains a number of marble statues, illustrating historical and mythological subjects. At the extremity of the parterre in the centre is a small lake ornamented with naiads and dolphins, while around it are terraces, grottoes, fountains, and delightful walks, including a curious labyrinth.

The renowned Gloriette occupies an elevation in the rear of the palace. This colonnade is decorated on both sides with Roman trophies, and has in the centre a large reception-room for visitors. From the roof and from the terrace in front is seen Vienna in sumptuous panorama, with the ever-present spire of St. Stephen's—a perfect poem carved in stone—and convents, castles, and the heights of Kahlenberg gray and gleaming through the purple distance. The palace of Schönbrunn (beautiful fountain)

was the residence of Napoleon when he signed the treaty of the same name; and in one of the avenues of the garden the fanatical student, Stapps, tried to assassinate the great captain, and was afterward shot because he proudly refused to ask for mercy from the man he regarded as the enemy of his country.

The Prater, the Champs Élysées and Hyde Park of Vienna, by no means answers to expectations which may have been raised by the citizens. This park is intersected by five avenues, diverging in different directions from the Prater-Stern, a circular space at the end of the Jägerzeil. The fashionable drive, on the same island of the Danube as those pleasant and popular places of resort, the Leopoldstadt and Augarten, presents a very animated scene during the season, showing the fairest faces and the fullest purses of the capital to whatever advantage prancing steeds and handsome carriages can command. Some of the avenues are bordered with rustic gardens (*guingettes*), where persons of the middle class go to dine at the small tables under the trees, and to indulge in the various games and amusements of which the Viennese are so fond.

The citizens are distinctively a pleasure-loving and recreation-enjoying people, and on Sundays and holidays crowd the cafés, restaurants, and gardens, so numerous in and out of town. The Viennese outdo all the Germans in their pursuit of all kinds of



DINING AT THE GUINGETTES.

2.12 "Dining at the Guingettes," in Junius Henri Browne, "Down the Danube," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 45:270 (November 1872): 819.

to be a French one, translates the passage. The ship, therefore, is now an island; its deck is a chapel; its masts are trees. Of late, the belief that Corfu is the Scheria of the Odyssey has been attacked. But any one who has seen the groves and gardens of this lovely isle, who has watched the crystalline water dash against the rocks at Palæokastrizza, who has strolled down the hill-side at Pelleka, or floated in a skiff off the coast at Ipso—any such person will say that Corfu is at least an ideal home for the charming girl who played ball, and washed the clothes on the shore, king's daughter though she was.

One wonders whether the princesses of to-day (who no longer dry clothes upon the shore) amuse their leisure hours with Homer's recitals concerning their predecessors. One of them, at any rate, has chosen Corfu as a place of sojourn; the Empress of Austria, after paying many visits to the island, has now built for herself a country residence, or villino, at a

distance from the town, not far from Nausicaa's stream. The house is surrounded by gardens, and from the terrace there is a magnificent view in all directions; here she enjoys the solitude which she is said to love, and the Corfiotes see only the coming and going of her yacht. I don't know why there should be something so delightful, to one mind at least, in the selection of this distant Greek island as the resting-place of a queen, who takes the long journey down the Adriatic, year after year, to reach her retreat. The preference is perhaps due simply to fondness for a sea-voyage, and to the fact that a yacht lying at Trieste, lies practically at Vienna's door. Lovers of Corfu, however, will not be turned aside by any of these reasons; they will continue to believe that the choice is made for beauty's sake; they will extol this perfect appreciation, and will praise this modern Nausicaa.

The casino of the Empress is not the



IN THE GROUNDS OF THE NEW VILLA OF THE EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA.

2.13 "In the Grounds of the New Villa of the Empress of Austria," in "Corfu and the Ionian Sea," 361.

full moon in May, but the two boys whose duty it was to repeat certain long prayers belonging to the ceremonials in the estufa had died, and novices had to be trained up in their places. Since the two prayers had to be committed word for word as they had been said for centuries, it was a long task, and the dance had to be postponed to the full moon of June.

Meanwhile the time passed quickly for us. During the day a mild hum of industry pervaded the place. The Zufis take

ing very nice turtles. The vessels to be burned were arranged carefully on the ground, and a circular, dome-shaped structure of dried sheep's dung built up around and over them. This fuel is preserved carefully in hard-pressed, flat blocks, and is kept corded up for use. It gives an intense heat, and a kiln is baked in two or three hours.

Archæologists have been puzzled by the occasional discovery of fragments of hard pottery with glazed decorative lines, and



MAKING POTTERY.

life easily, and never overwork, therefore they find no necessity for a periodic day of rest, but they are not lazy. Their wants are simple, and their work is ample to satisfy them. One of the most interesting things was to see them weave their fabrics on their hand-loom, producing beautiful designs by the nice calculation of the eye, but with no regular measurement. Our principal excitements during the week were the searching out of attractive blankets, either Navajo or Pueblo, and the opening of kilns of new pottery. Each family makes all its own pottery, as a usual thing, and every day kilns were burning all over the place. The news that a finely decorated olla had been seen going into a kiln in a certain street was enough to set us agog, watching to see it come out freshly burned. One household had a special reputation for making fine ollas, another for small ware, another for figures of animals, and one woman was famed for mak-

theories have been formed that among the ancient Pueblos the art of glazing their pottery was known. But Mr. Cushing has discovered that this glazing is accidental, occurring only in the broken pieces of old pottery used to cover the articles in the kiln and protect them from the falling of the structure when it has mostly burned away. These fragments are made harder by the second firing, which also glazes certain mineral pigments used in their decoration.

Another interesting industry was the grinding of meal or flour. A row of girls, sometimes half a dozen or so, is often seen at work. They all kneel beside and over a series of bins, each of which has a bottom of smooth stone hollowed in a semi-circular shape. Each girl holds a bar of stone in her hands, and grinds the corn by rubbing it up and down with a motion much like that of a washer-woman at a scrubbing-board. The meal, ground coarse

2.14 Willard Metcalf, "Making Pottery," in Sylvester Baxter, "The Father of the Pueblos," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 65:385 (June, 1882): 83.



attendance. The herald answers for the newspaper in Zuñi, for all proclamations and items of news deemed of general importance are announced in this way.

After dusk on the evening of the council dark figures with blankets wrapped about them—for the evening air is always cool—enter the Governor's house silently as shadows. A grave salutation and a grasp of the hand, and they seat themselves in the large room used for the councils. One evening about a hundred of the leading men were thus assembled, sitting on a sort of bench running along the side of the room, or squatting on their haunches in a circle. On the floor, in the midst of the circle, the Governor had strewn a lot of corn husks, and a bag of fine-cut being set out, cigarettes were rolled, and a constant smoking was kept up. The air would have been thick enough had not the large fireplaces given such excellent ventilation. The women and the young men gathered respectfully around the doors and windows and listened. As the evening wore on, the room grew warm, and the men gradually shed their garments, until about half the assemblage sat with naked bodies of a ruddy bronze hue. As it grew late, some arose and glided silently out of the room. But it was an important matter they were talking about, and the most of them staid until it was settled at a small hour of the morning. The subject was discussed earnestly and gravely, no emotion being shown either in the face or in the manner of speaking, although some would occasionally betray their excitement in a trembling voice. It was a will case under discussion, and the Governor sat motionless and speechless, being the judge from whose decision there could be no appeal. Early in the evening the two caciques who were present arose to go. In response to Mr. Cushing's question, Lai-ui-

ai-tsai-lun-k'ii said, "Though it is our place to elect your Governor, it is not for us to say anything that may influence his judgment." Would that all public men had as nice an idea of the proprieties of politics! It is not the voice of the people



CHIEF ON HORSEBACK.

that chooses the Governor of Zuñi, but the caciques.

The pueblo Indians have been repeatedly characterized as fire-worshippers. But with the Zuñis, at least according to Mr. Cushing, the principal object of their worship is water, just as was stated by Coronado. And well may they worship it, living as they do in the midst of a sun-

2.15 Metcalf, "Chief on Horseback," in "Father of the Pueblos," 87.



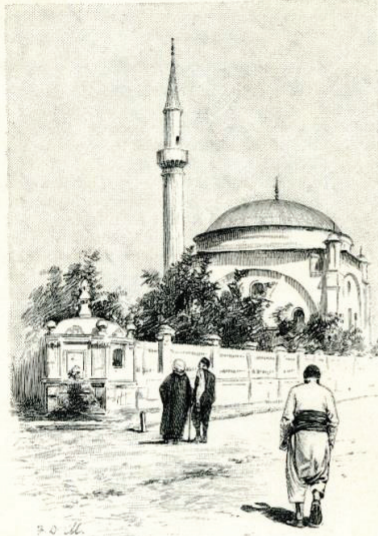
A Bulgarian.

Those who visited the Bulgarian Curiosity Shop will recognize in the above the manager of the place.

2.16 "A Bulgarian," in *Oriental and Occidental Northern and Southern Portrait Types of the Midway Plaisance: A Collection of Photographs of Individual Types of Various Nations from all Parts of the World who Represented, in the Department of Ethnology, the Manners, Customs, Dress, Religions, Music and Other Distinctive Traits and Peculiarities of their Race, with Interesting and Instructive Descriptions Accompanying Each Portrait* (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Publishing Company, 1894): unpaginated.



2.17 Frederick Arthur Bridgman, *The Siesta*, oil on canvas, 1878, Private collection.



MOSQUE IN SILISTRIA.

and we heard singing, laughter, and constant merry chatter among the people as we passed. But in Bulgaria these cheerful sounds no longer came to our ears; villages near the river were as silent as the grave; the peasants at the landing-places stared at us stupidly as we went along, and no one ever hailed us pleasantly or showed any intelligent interest in our fleet.

Russian monuments are seen on several hills between Sistova and Rustchuk, about thirty-five miles below, and scarcely a mile of the river but has some interesting history in connection with the struggle along the Danube in the early part of the summer campaign in 1877. By a curious coincidence, we happened to camp the afternoon we left Sistova near the very place where, fourteen years before, on the same date, the writer had crossed the river at the end of a long courier's ride, described in the pages of this Magazine not long since. It is not strange, therefore, that as we paddled

down the beautiful calm reach the following morning the familiar lines of the landscape stimulated a flow of reminiscences of the campaign. Nearing Pyrgos, and in sight of the monument on one of the great rounded hills where the battle was fought in which young Sergius Leuchtenberg, the cousin of the present Czar, was killed, we were startled by the unmistakable sound of the grunt of a Gatling-gun and the rattle of small-arms. We could not at first believe our ears, each of us thinking this dramatic and suggestive accompaniment to the tales of the war was a mental distortion of ordinary noises brought about by our preoccupation with the subject. However, as we paddled along, increasing our stroke in our growing excitement, we discovered that the sounds came from the hills near Rustchuk, and although we could see no smoke, we could accurately distinguish the reports of rifles in irregular scattering succession, like the prelude of a great battle. Our mystification increased with every moment, and we hastened

on past the low willow-fringed shores on the Roumanian side, studying the rocky bluffs across the river and the billowy summits of the bare hills to find a solution of the enigma. The sounds ceased as suddenly as they began, and as we rounded a wide bend full of islands, and came in sight of the minarets of Rustchuk and the great buildings in Giurgevo on the low hills far across the marshes opposite, we met a small Bulgarian gunboat with a machine-gun at the bow, and discovered at the same time, on a broad plateau under the old Turkish redoubt back of the town, the summer encampment of the garrison. What we had heard was, undoubtedly, the morning target practice on land and the trial of the machine-gun on the river.

Rustchuk is the most important Bulgarian town on the river, and situated as it is on the main route to Constantinople, *viâ* the Rustchuk-Varna Railway and the Black Sea, and only two hours by rail from Bucharest, is one of the best-known cities on the lower Danube. It is at pre-

2.18 "Mosque in Silistria," in "From the Black Forest," (July, 1892): 274.



2.19 “The Irish Frankenstein,” in *Punch* May 20, 1882.



TURKS AT WIDDIN.

vessels, and in many ways distinctly marks a new phase of river life, and an abrupt political, ethnographical, and philological frontier as well.

The flag-ship of our tiny fleet had put in at Widdin a few hours before we arrived, and the Admiral, who had exhausted all the time at his disposal, was here obliged to give up the cruise, to his own intense disappointment, and the infinite regret of all three. The curiosity of the long-shore natives had been quite exhausted over the first arrival, and we therefore landed without causing a flutter of surprise, and exciting only a little interest. When we drew up our canoes on the shore just above the steamer landing, we were interviewed at once by a smart-looking young officer in white Russian cap and tunic, and red-trimmed brown trousers of Bulgarian homespun,

and armed with sabre and revolver, who politely requested the temporary loan of our passports, and, after we had given them up, told us we were free to go where we chose. We were not long in finding our way to the busiest thoroughfare of the town, a long street with low houses, and a continuous line of small shops and cafés, mostly like deep alcoves slightly raised above the level of the pavement. Hundreds of country people, having disposed of their produce in the great market-place near the citadel, were now busy shopping. The women in this section of Bulgaria wear a short, scant chemise of homespun linen, with full long sleeves, often richly embroidered, a bright-colored apron reaching to the hem of the chemise in front, and another of similar stuff, but very full and stiffly plaited, hanging no lower than the bend of the knees behind. They braid their hair in one long piece down the back, and fasten an embroidered white kerchief around their heads, with fresh flowers and ornaments of various kinds. Uncouth rawhide sandals and thick shapeless socks, often brilliant orange in color, protect their feet and ankles. The men here, as in most other districts, wear what may best be described as a clumsy imitation of the Turkish dress, usually made of brown woolen homespun, trimmed with black braid, and, in place of fez, a black sheepskin cap, often varying in shape, but seldom in color.

Among this gay and bustling crowd, sad, pallid-faced Turkish women and mournful, dejected-looking men stalked like spectres, or laggardly with apathetic shopkeepers. Mounted policemen, very like Cossacks in appearance, galloped recklessly through the multi-

tude, and a numerous force of men on foot, in neat brown uniforms, watched with active vigilance every unusual stir among the people, and quelled with rough and ready authority every incipient disturbance caused by too much slivovitz (plum brandy). We strolled across the market-place and over the moat into the great citadel, and passing the inner gate, were in a quarter as characteristically Turkish as the remotest corner of Stamboul. The huddle of people in the narrow, crooked streets; the curious shops, and the open manufactories of all sorts of articles; the latticed windows, tumble-down fountains, and half-ruined mosques; the close, musty smell, and general squalor and worn-out appearance—all were unmistakably Turkish, and everything indicated extreme poverty and a condition of life which excited our heartiest sympathies. Intense love of locality binds this people to the place, and, isolated by religion, language, and customs, with no rights of citizenship and no common interests with their neighbors, they endure with the patience characteristic of their race the aggravating tyranny of the Bulgarians.

Three fresh languages assailed our ears in Widdin, and we plunged without preparation from the tangled maze of Roumanian and Servian into the quagmires of Bulgarian, Turkish, and modern Greek. We expected to hear two new languages here, but were surprised when we took our luncheon in a restaurant to find the bill of fare written in Greek, and to hear the waiters shouting orders in this lispng speech. We were now well across the line that separates the Orient from the Occident, and within touch of Constantinople and Athens. The markets gave us abundant evidences that we had reached a milder climate. Grapes were delicious,

plentiful, and cheap, the best varieties costing less than two cents a pound. Tomatoes, egg-plant, and sweet-peppers were larger and better than we had seen before, and melons and green corn were almost out of season. Fresh meat was



BULGARIAN PEASANT TYPES.

about five cents a pound, and caviare, for which delicacy Widdin is celebrated, was readily obtained, but at a price very little lower than in any other market. Knowing that we had a rather desolate part of the river before us, we laid in a good supply of stores of all kinds, except wine, which, we learned, was easily to be obtained at any village, and, when the town had gone to sleep at noon, sought our passports at the police headquarters; but the official in charge of this department

2.20 Two page spread in "From the Black Forest," (July, 1892): 262-263.



3.1 *Bird's Eye View of the World's Columbia Exposition, Chicago, 1893*, Rand McNally and Company, c.1893.



MR. MILLET (ON STEPS) AT WORK ON A DECORATION FOR THE CEILING OF THE NEW YORK STATE BUILDING

3.2 “Mr. Millet (on Steps) at Work on a Decoration for the Ceiling of the New York State Building,” in Hunt, “Millet at Work: A Chronicle of Friendship.” Pt. 1, *Art and Progress* 4: 11 (September, 1913): 1091.





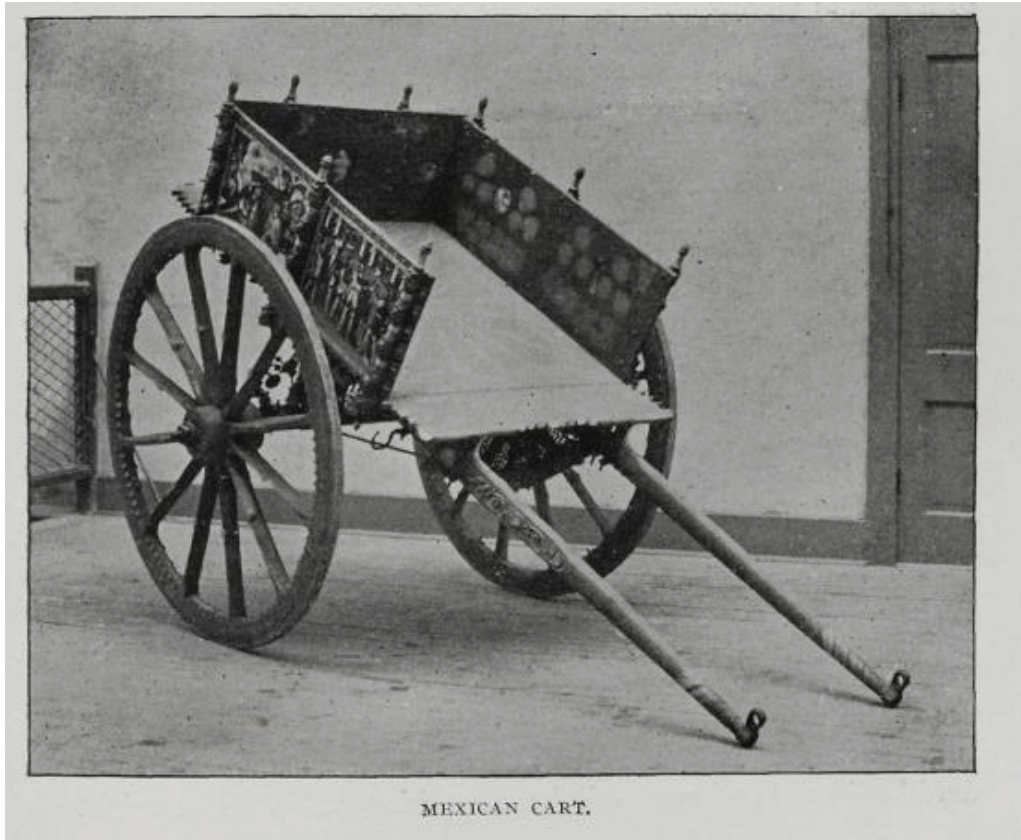
THE COURT OF HONOR.

3.3 *Court of Honor and Grand Basin of the World's Columbian Exposition*,  
photogravure, c.1893.



TYPES OF THE ARABIAN VILLAGE.—ON THE MIDWAY

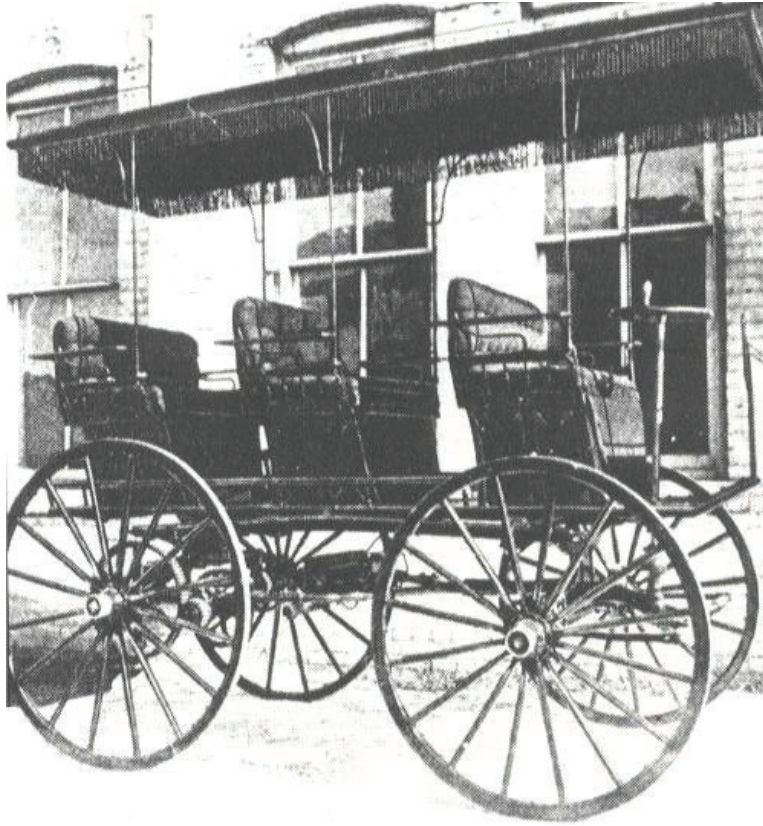
3.4 “Types of the Arabian Village—on the Midway,” in C. D. Arnold and H. D. Higinbotham, *Official Views Of The World's Columbian Exposition* (New York: Published by the Department of Photography, World's Columbian Exposition Co., 1893): plate 112.



3.5 “Mexican Cart,” in Trumbull White and Wm. Igleheart, eds., *The World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893: A Complete History of the Enterprise, a Full Description of the Buildings and Exhibits in All Departments and a Short Account of Previous Expositions* (Philadelphia; St. Louis: P.W. Ziegler & Company, [1893]): 287.



3.6 Wood Brothers, Lincoln's Carriage, 1864, Studebaker National Museum, South Bend, Indiana.



3.7 “Electric Car” in *Western Electrician* (February 1891).



3.8 “The Boat Parade on Transportation Day at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Illinois, 1893,” in *The Dream City-World's Fair Art*, Series 7 (N. D. Thompson Publishing Company, 1893).

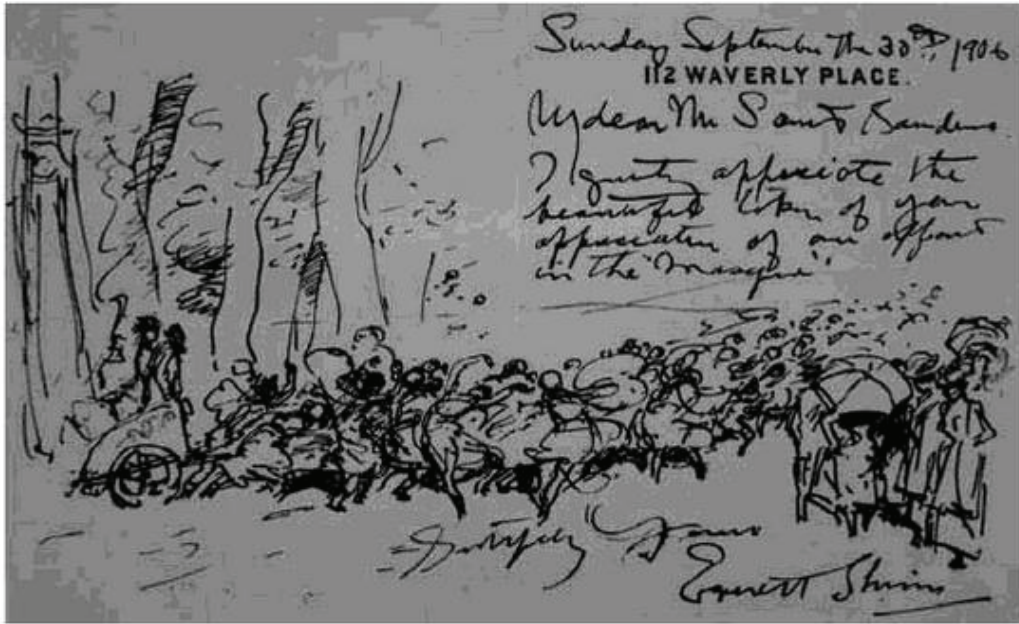


3.9 “The Midway Plaisance World’s Fair,” in *Harper's Weekly* (May 13, 1893): 444-445.



3.10 *Industrial Parade, Con. Centennial, Phila., Pa., 1887*, stereo card, c.1887.





3.11 Everett Shinn, Sketch of the procession, *A Masque of "Ours"*: The God sand the Golden Bowl, letter to Augustus Stain-Gaudens, 30 September 1906, reprinted in Annelise K. Madsen, "Private Tribute, Public Art: *The Masque of the Golden Bowl* and the Artistic Beginnings of American Pageantry," in Herman C. du Toit edited, *Pageants and Processions: Images and Idiom as Spectacle* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009):175.



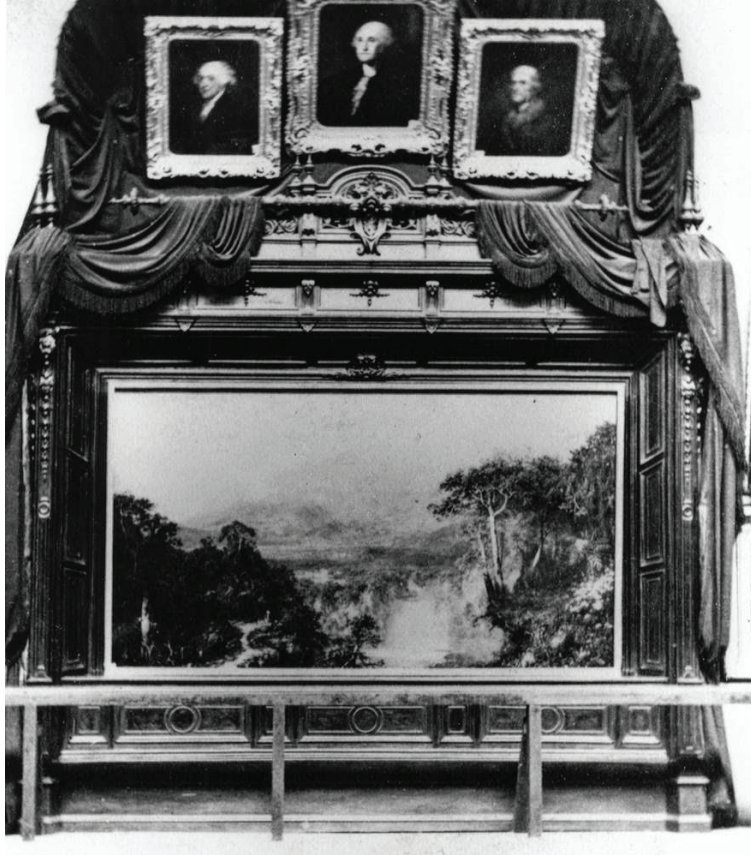
3.12 "Spoils of Jerusalem" detail, Arch of Titus, concrete and white marble, 82 A.D., Via Sacra, Rome.



3.13 Phidias, frieze east, Parthenon, marble, 443-438 B.C., Athens, Greece.



3.14 William Henry Jackson, "Chicago Day, June 1, 1893" in *The White City (as It Was); World's Columbian Exposition 1893* (Chicago, The White City Art Company, 1894).



3.15 Frederic Church's *Heart of the Andes* as exhibited at the Metropolitan Sanitary Fair, 1864, stereograph, c.1864.



3.16 Edouard Manet, *A View of the 1867 Exposition Universelle*, oil on canvas, 1867, Nasjonal Museet, Oslo, Norway.



DAHOMY VILLAGE, ON THE MIDWAY.

3.17 “Dahomey Village, on the Midway,” in *Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: World's Columbian Exposition Press, 1893): plate 110.



3.18 “Xavier Pene[?] with Dahomeyan Villagers,” in Trumbull White and William Igleheart, *The World’s Columbian Exposition Chicago, 1893* (Philadelphia and St. Louis, 1893): 581.



No. 25.

PUCK BUILDING, Jackson Park, Chicago, October 23, 1893.

PRICE 10 CENTS.

# World's Fair Puck

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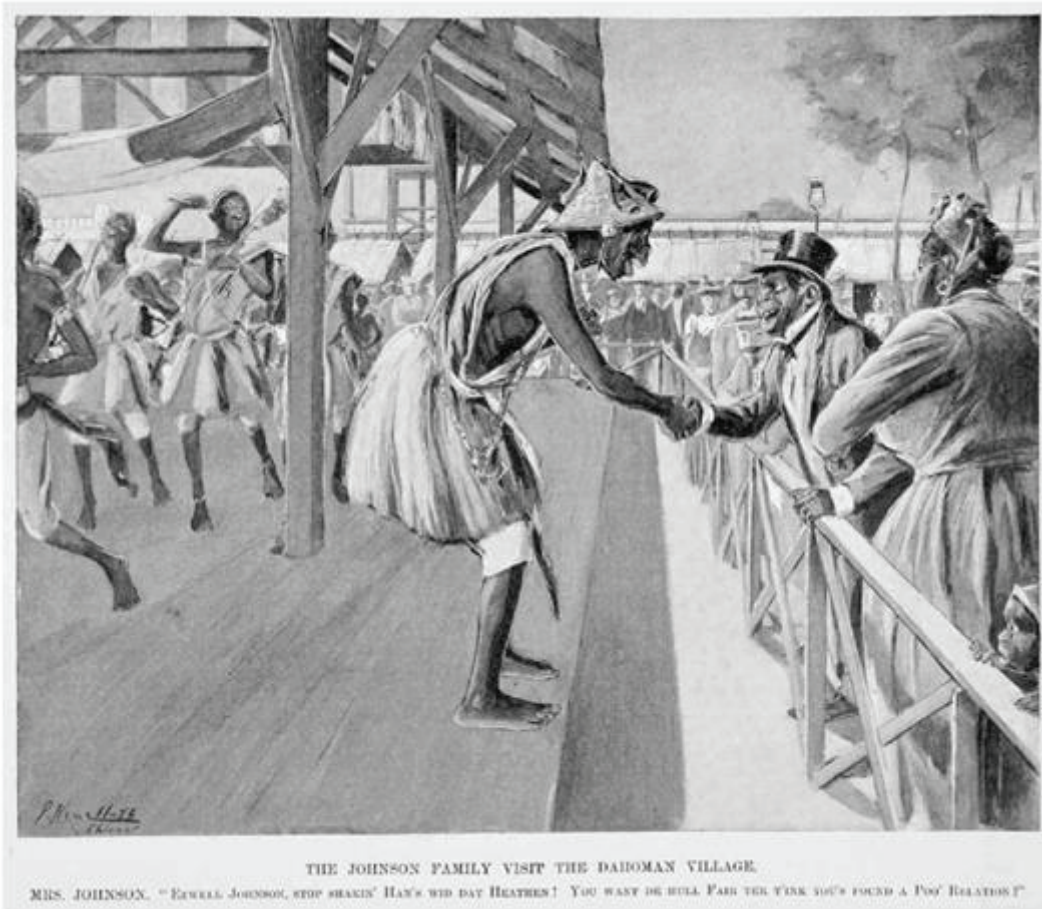


## A PRIVILEGED RACE.

ANABEL.—Just look at those African women! I should think they'd hate to go out with such scanty clothing.

MADGE.—Well, you know, people with their complexions don't tan easily.

3.19 "A Privileged Race," in *World's Fair Puck* 25 (October 23, 1893): cover/289.



3.20 Peter Newell, "The Johnson Family Visit the Dahomian Village," in *Harper's Weekly* (August 19, 1893): 707.



THE JOHNSON FAMILY VISIT THE GREAT WHITE CITY.

PATERFAMILIAS (entering the gate at the head of the procession). "GREAT LAX, GLORIAS! I'D A GIBEN DAT SPOTTED MULE OR MINE FOR DE CONTRAC' OB WHITEWASHIN' DES YER PLACE!"

3.21 Newell, "The Johnson Family Visit the Great White City," in *Harper's Weekly* (July 15, 1893): 681.



3.22 Millet, *Turkish Water Seller*, oil on canvas, 1875, private collection.

# WESTERN WHEEL WORKS



**Black Hawk Light Roadster.**  
23 inch, double diamond frame, 1 1/2 lbs.  
-W. W. W. Pneumatics \$125.



**Crescent No. 2, Full Roadster.**  
25 inch, 41 pounds, 1 1/2 lbs.  
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25 inch, 44 pounds, 1 1/2 lbs. -W. W. W. Pneumatics \$125.



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24 inch, double diamond frame, 1 1/2 lbs.  
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**OUR MEN'S YOUTHS' and BOYS' Pneumatics for \$135, \$100, \$85, \$65, \$50. Cushions for \$85, \$70, \$50, \$35, \$25.**



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24 inch, double diamond frame, Cushion \$125.



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35 Barclay Street, New York.

**A Correction from the New York Bicycle Club.**  
Extraordinary Meeting: The New York Bicycle Club on Monday, the 10th of August, 1893, for the purpose of considering the proposed amendment to the constitution of the club, which was adopted by a vote of 10 to 1. The proposed amendment was as follows: "The New York Bicycle Club shall be a club of gentlemen and shall be organized for the purpose of promoting the interests of the bicycle and of providing for the amusement and recreation of its members." The amendment was adopted by a vote of 10 to 1. The club is now organized and is open to all gentlemen who are interested in the bicycle.

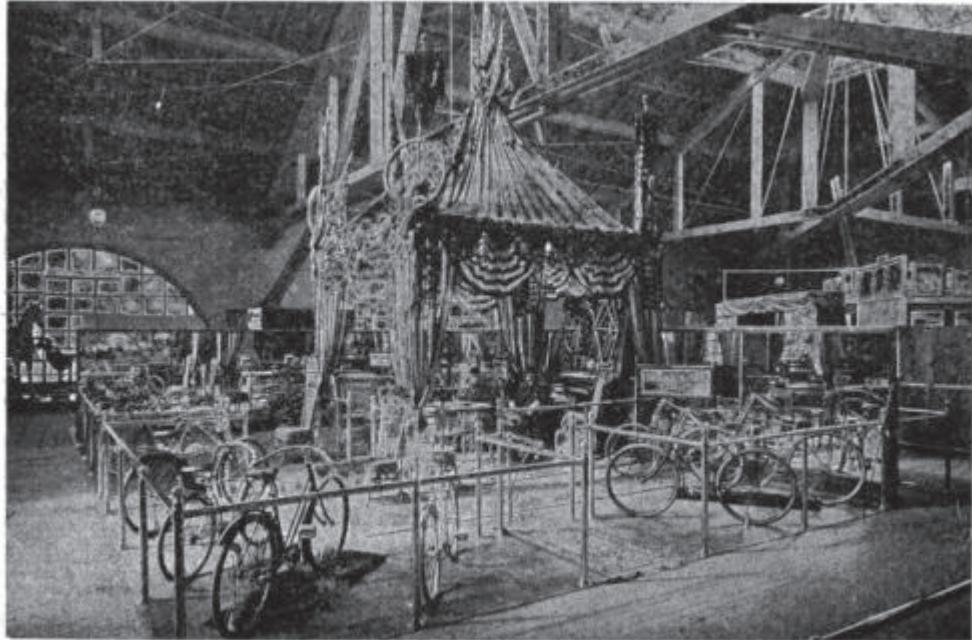
**What Terrell and Gerry were told.**  
The reporter inquired of the cycling friends and knew of their visit, and inquired of them the same. They were told that they were going to New York to see the "W. W. W." bicycle. They were told that they were going to see the "W. W. W." bicycle. They were told that they were going to see the "W. W. W." bicycle.

**St. Augustine's Tourney.**  
The bicycle club of St. Augustine, Florida, is now organizing a tourney for the purpose of promoting the interests of the bicycle. The tourney will be held at St. Augustine, Florida, on the 10th of August, 1893. The club is now open to all gentlemen who are interested in the bicycle.

**Benton's A. C. C.**  
The Benton Athletic Club is now organizing a cycling club for the purpose of promoting the interests of the bicycle. The club will be open to all gentlemen who are interested in the bicycle. The club is now open to all gentlemen who are interested in the bicycle.

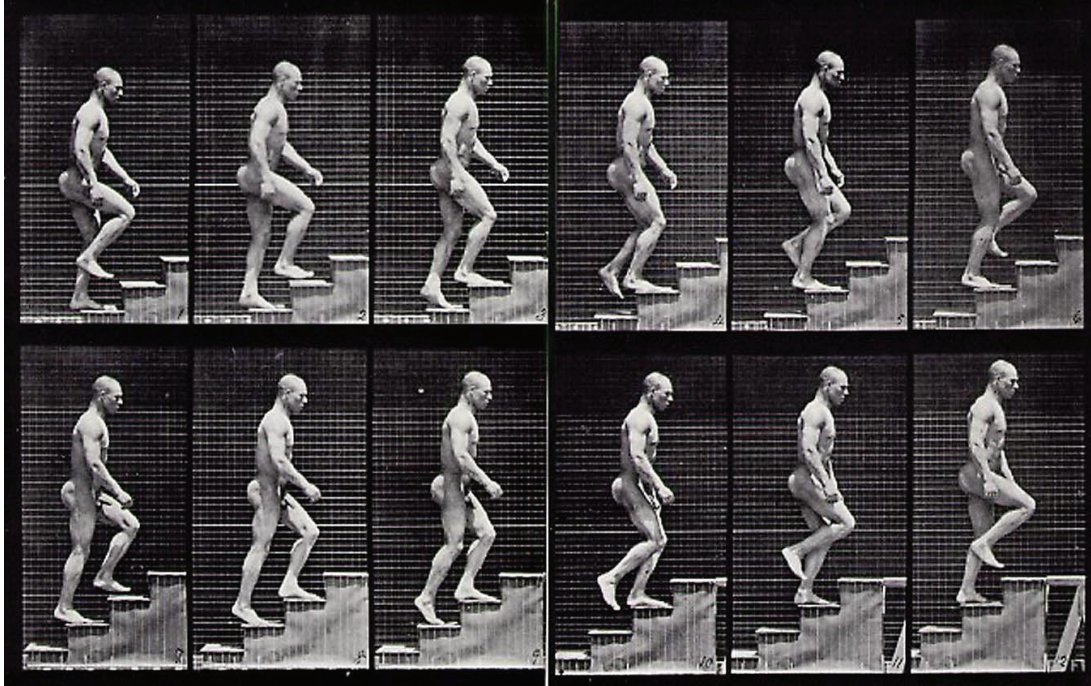


3.24 Underwood and Underwood, *Bicycle Club, World's Fair Dedication Parade, Chicago, USA, 1893*, stereo card, c.1893.



The Western Wheel Works.

3.25 "Western Wheel Works," in Rand, McNally & Co., *A Week at the Fair: Illustrating the Exhibits and Wonders of the World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co., 1893): 54.



3.26 Eadweard Muybridge, *PL 6 Walking (Ben Bailey)*, collotype 1884-6, Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts.





3.27 “Transportation Building,” in Rand, McNally & Co., *A Week at the Fair: Illustrating the Exhibits and Wonders of the World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co., 1893).



3.28 Powhatan Quarry Life Group, World's Columbian Exposition, 1893, archival photograph, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.



3.29 Charles Comte and Felix-Louis Regnault, "Negress Walks," 1895, modern print from original glass plate chronophotographic negative, Collection of the Cinémathèque Française, Paris, France.



4.1 Hornblower & Marshall, Call Room, United States Custom House, 1903-1907, Baltimore, Maryland.



4.2 F. D. Millet in his studio with assistants, photographs, 1907, Millet Papers, Smithsonian.



4.3 Millet, Ceiling, Call Room.



4.4 Millet, 'The "Priscilla," a Long Island Sound Steamer, 1894, a six-masted schooner, 1895,' 'A Great-Lakes Schooner, the "Amasa Stone," a Great-Lakes ore carrier,' and "The "Olympia," Admiral Dewey's flag-ship; the "Vermont," the "Baltimore,"" frieze, south wall detail, Call Room.

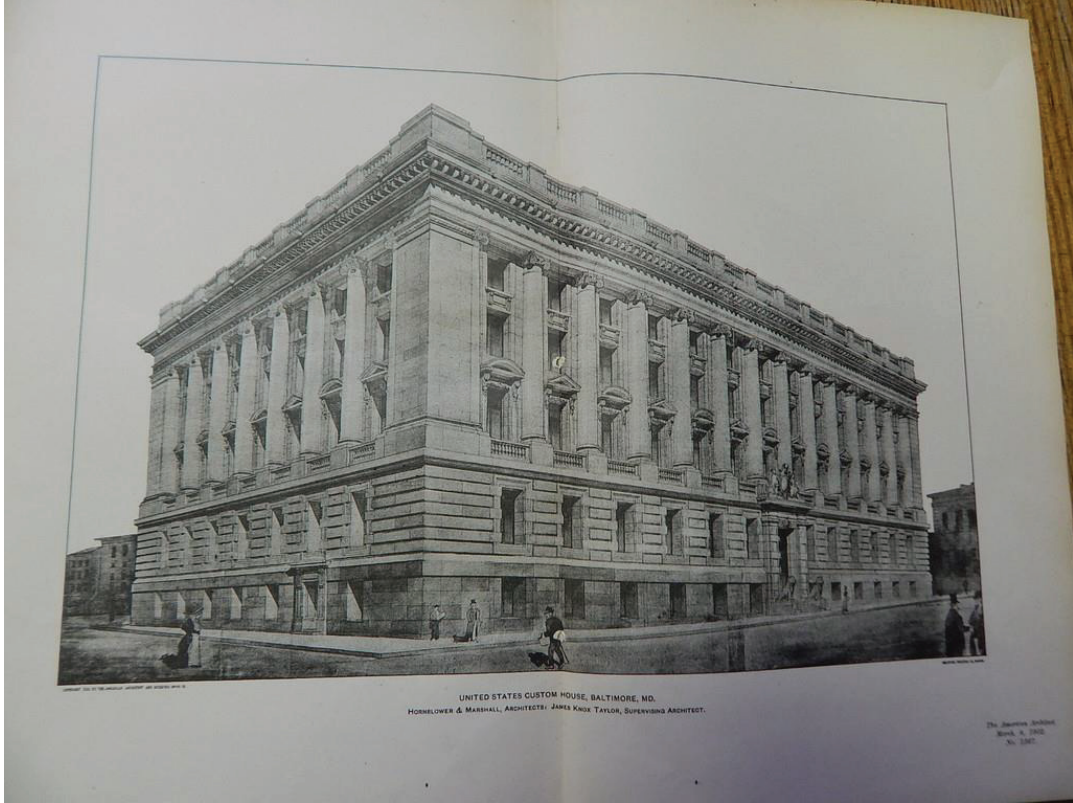


4.5 Millet, 'The Cup-Defender, "Reliance,"' and 'The Steam Yacht "Kanawha," the "St. Paul" of the American Line,' frieze, south wall detail, Call Room.



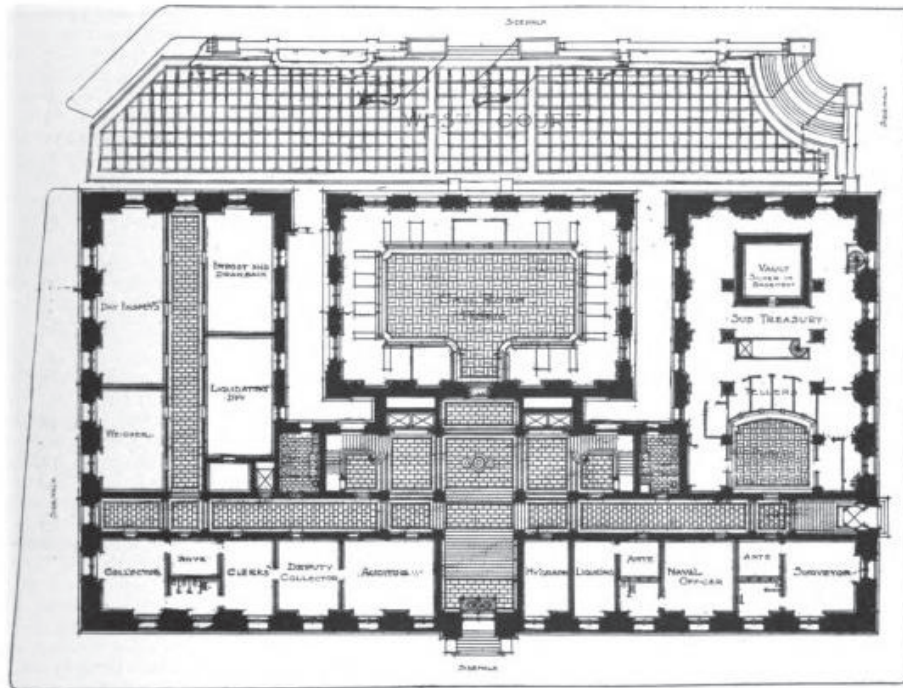


4.6 Millet, "A Liverpool packet and tug, 1840," "The "Great Republic," the first large vessel to use double topsails, 1853; the schooner "H. H. Cole, 1843," "A Chinese Junk, 1825," frieze, east wall detail, Call Room.



4.7 Hornblower & Marshall, Custom House.

genuine antique—such irresistible opportunity and reward say that they are spurious. Beware especially of Sheffield



PLAN OF FIRST STORY AS EXECUTED, NEW CUSTOM HOUSE, BALTIMORE, MD.

has been offered the forger that now, thanks to his pro- plate; it is practically all modern, or old pieces plated

#### 4.8 Hornblower & Marshall, Plan, Custom House.



4.9 Wyatt & Nolting, Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse, 1896-1900, Baltimore, Maryland.



4.10 Blashfield, *General George Washington Surrendering His Commission at Annapolis, Maryland on December 23, 1783*, oil on canvas, c.1903, fourth floor courtroom, Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse.



4.11 Charles Yardley Turner, *Burning of the "Peggy Stewart"*, oil on canvas, 1904, west wall of the east lobby on the second floor, Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse.



4.12 Millet, "An Irrawaddy Rice-Boat, 1800," frieze, north wall detail, Call Room.



4.13 Alfred Stieglitz, *The Steerage*, 1907, printed in or before 1913, photogravure, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



# Marooned

## A Ballad of Battledore

By Burges Johnson  
 Decoration by Dan Sayre Groesbeck

As I was riding along the shore  
 I came in the town of Battledore,  
 Whose towers rose of sand and rock  
 Built by the church where the road dips down  
 To the sunset shores of the little town,  
 I came on a group of grizzled tars  
 Apeering through old barricades.

"I've a real story that is worth telling,  
 Of what is the reason you play your part?"  
 They turned at that, and they looked me over,  
 Those silent sea-dogs of Battledore,  
 And one to another, "I reckon that  
 He wants to know what we're looking at."  
 They whispered a moment, with head and brow,  
 For a stranger here and yet not dead!  
 But in an act of their profession,  
 And so I like to let him see to look upon  
 The dead who've been recently here and gone."  
 "Hurry," I murmured, "Yours jarns mabbed!"  
 And that is the tale that our fishermen told.



"New Pearce was sitting on a distance o'line—  
 He was all of us from from here!"  
 But Fish he wanted he could not get the  
 For the reason Pearce is a romantic one,  
 But many one of us neighbor folk  
 Have one one of us from a wreck,  
 Waitin' for chance time to come,  
 And Cap'n Fish them over the rocks,  
 Drippin' wet in his pants an' socks,  
 And he would he'd swim in a sea-line track  
 Clear out for the Four Mile Head an' back,  
 'Til some one should be seen understand  
 We was intent with nautical about that end,  
 He was all motion, an' we water that  
 He was all motion, an' we thought he had  
 But Pearce piped up, an' he was, we be,  
 "Did you have a word that fish could say?"  
 "You had?" we fish—"With this very head  
 I wrote my initials on the sand."  
 Then he turned away, alone departed,  
 And he turned him when his pants was dried,  
 And only said that was the group  
 As they around Cap. Fish's group,  
 When we come Pearce, with his shirt  
 Soaked through,  
 An' he was, we be, "I have seen that last  
 An' of some one doubt, I like who he got,  
 For I wrote 'E.F.' on a horse-shoe shoe head,  
 And the fish was right, an' the man in  
 'Til we all got out of there better die,  
 An' we should that for a fact  
 The time he came when we'd get for set."




"Cap'n Hank Pearce of Battledore  
 (I was not all here on this very shore)  
 A possible man—when his hands was tied—  
 But he thought a bit too much with pride,  
 Just over the street, not for away,  
 'Til Cap'n Fish's embargo lay,  
 The finest mortar's got over me,  
 This town of Battledore some be,  
 That were the mortar's mortar,  
 For start in mortar, each other's tails  
 (Except for each hole mortar as come  
 As a matter of course in a man's own home),  
 'Til Cap'n Fish and his neighbor Pearce  
 Did started quarrelin' within doors,  
 They each was all at once, an' so,  
 An' I reckon making mortar in  
 But we got a sack of their daily bread,  
 And they might come to their cryin' head,  
 We turned a committee on ways an' means,  
 For since their time to some other means."



"Last Monday mornin' we took them two  
 In a day-head with a shovel over,  
 And we covered 'em out for them four mile sands,  
 What we put 'em off, an' we shook their hands,  
 An' we left 'em a pair of mittens clean,  
 For a dead head, an' a few groceries,  
 And we found ourselves by a solemn oath  
 We'd make of us never 'em, one or both,  
 An' we see, "New Pearce till you finish in here,  
 An' then by his both sides form, of course,"  
 The spokesman passed, and he aimed his glass  
 Out where the shaly vessels pass,  
 Grassy that group of silent tars,  
 Passed around the barricades,  
 And I watched an' yes, with a shad' hand,  
 (Except the last message of an old man,  
 "At length we solemnly shook his head—"  
 "There's six days gone, an' I bet they're dead!"  
 I looked at them, and they looked to me,  
 And then they silently turned to me,  
 And I spoke the truth that my heart desired,—  
 "It was justice, handshaken to me."  
 Then I took up my journey along the shore  
 Away from the village of Battledore.

4.14 Dan Sayre Groesbeck, "Marooned: A Ballad of Battledore," in *Harper's Weekly* (December, 11, 1909): 15.



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**12 1/2c. Printed Cotton Grenadines, for 5c. a yard**  
They cost the maker nearly double our present price. They are in the same handsome printings which you find in the very choicest of the Grenadine Laines. The patterns are principally floral—light graceful, dainty summery designs of flowers and leaves on black grounds. There are also many patterns of dots, stripes, and figures in white on grounds of navy blue, black, and heliotrope. Five Cents a Yard, only.

**16c. Quality Striped Piques, at 10c. a yard**  
It is whispered in mercantile circles that Piques are bound to become scarce before the summer is over, for the demand for them is great and growing. That makes this chance all the more important. They are very pretty goods, *self-dressed* in cadet and Yale blue, cardinal, and black.

**Some Important Silk Prices**  
We have twenty-two thousand yards of the choicest kinds of summer silks here, which we offer to you at less than the regular importer's wholesale prices. You can buy by the yard at less than we can usually buy by the thousand yards in foreign markets. All are French and Swiss goods, rich in check and small plaid patterns, new and pretty and desirable. A few hints of price and pattern follow, but samples will tell more.

At 50c. a yd.—1000 yards of rich colored Jacquards; the richest ever in silk with a little more; 18 colors.  
At 45c. a yd.—500 yards of checked Taffeta, triple-colored checks on white grounds; 12 patterns.  
At 40c. a yd.—1000 yards of rich plaid Taffeta; double color on white, and colored grounds; 14 new styles.  
At 40c. a yd.—1000 yards of evening silks. Jacquard, satin, in white, and pink, turquoise, olive, yellow, lilac, and coral.  
At 30c. a yd.—400 yards all silk satin fabric; printed with white dots on lavender, violet blue, navy blue, marine blue, cardinal, brown, and heliotrope grounds.  
At 25c. a yd.—600 yards field Taffeta, in navy blue and white, 3 stripes blue and white, as styles bonnet plaid, 3 stripes shepherd's checks, 5 styles Bob Vogt.  
At 25c. a yd.—1000 yards rich figured Taffeta from France. All black, the figures are small, the styles are elegant; 30 patterns.  
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At 20c. a yd.—600 yards rich black and white Folia Taffeta. Styles of stripes, white Folia Taffeta. Styles of stripes.  
At 20c. a yd.—500 yards rich broadened plaid Taffeta. Colors are pink and black, with white, blue and black with white. Chequer and black with white, navy and black, with white, coral and black, blue and black with white, and so on.

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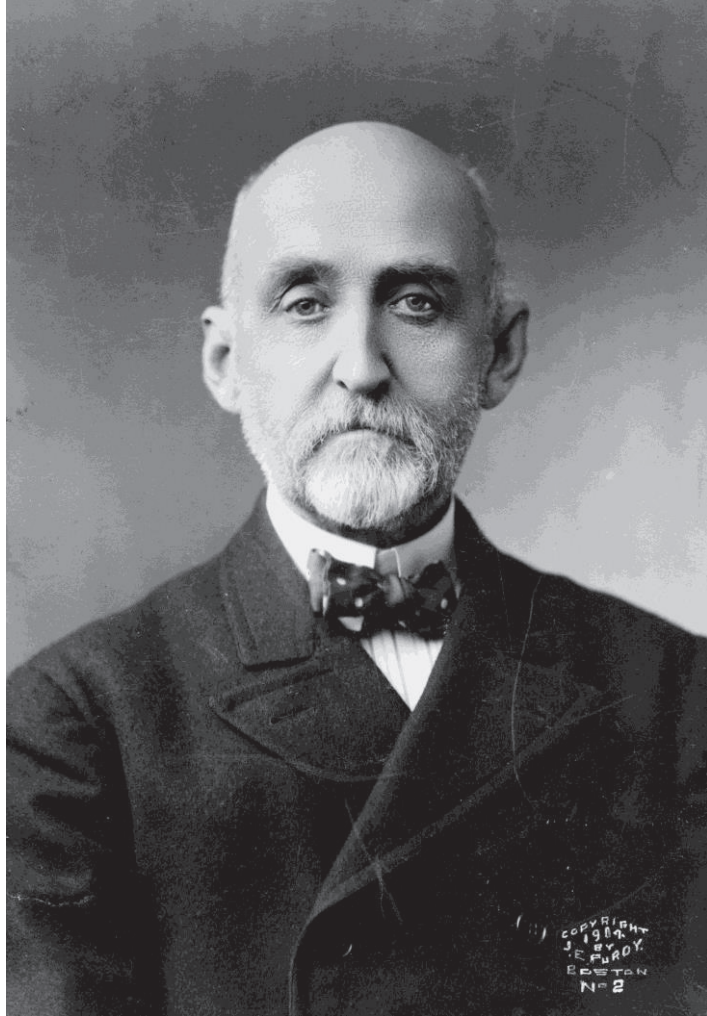
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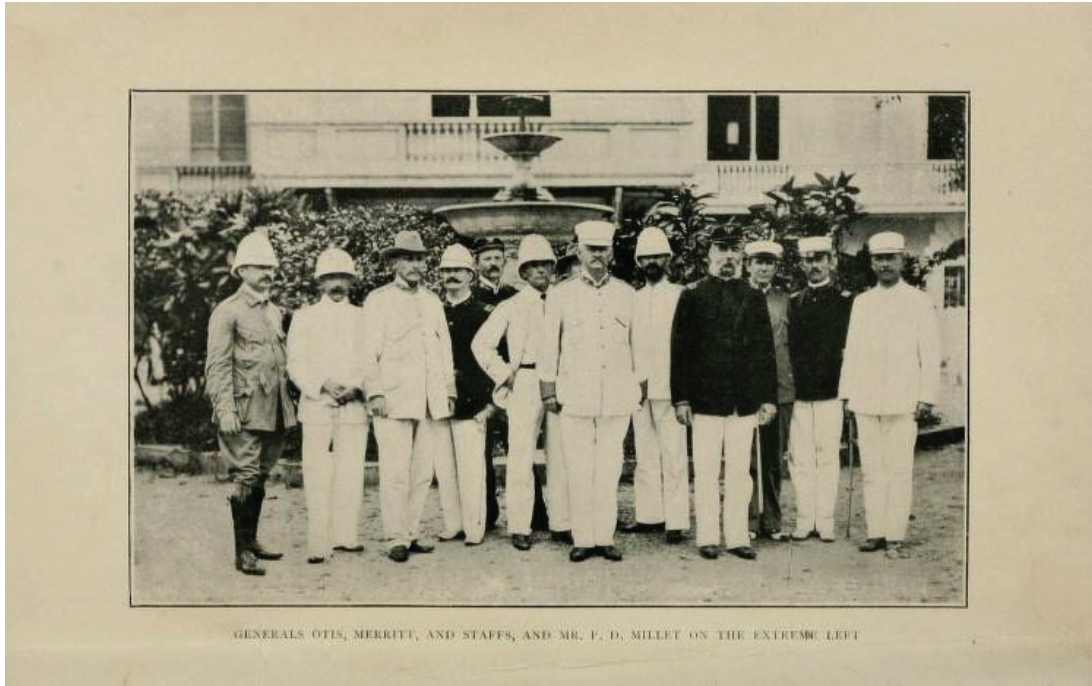
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4.15 Trieder Advertisement, in Harper's Weekly (April, 30, 1898): 428.



4.16 J.E. Purdy, *Alfred Thayer Mahan*, silver gelatin print, c. 1904.



4.17 Frontispiece, in *The Expedition to the Philippines* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1899).



4.18 Millet, “A Chinese Rice Boat,” spandrel, north wall detail, in Leila Mechlin, “The Ships of All Ages in F. D. Millet’s Mural Decorations in the Baltimore Custom House,” *Craftsman* (January 1, 1909).



4.19 Millet, “Alaska Canoes, Modern,” narrow panel, east wall detail, Call Room.



4.20 *Chinese Junk Keying*, watercolor, c.1846, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London.

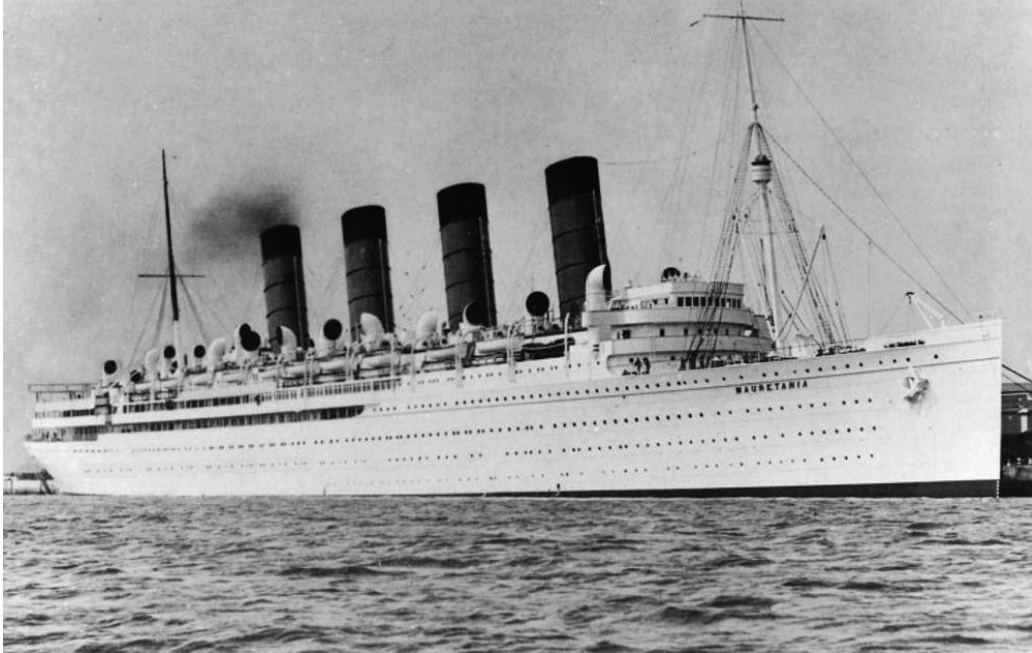


4.21 Millet, 'The "Mauretania," the Steam Yacht "Corsair" and a tug,' lunette, east wall detail, Call Room.



4.22 Millet, 'Fulton's "Clermont," the First Steamboat on the Hudson, 1807,' ceiling frame, north side, Call Room.



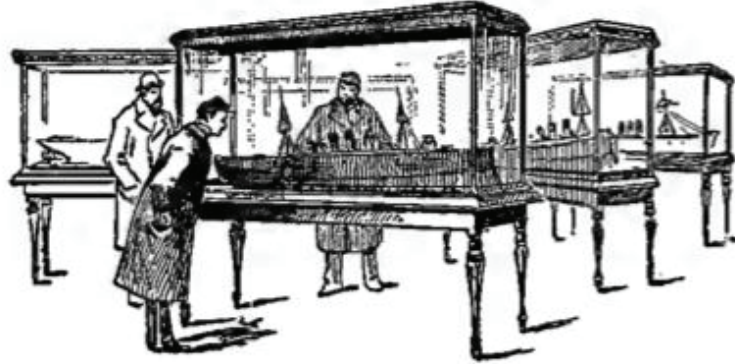


4.23 R.M.S. Mauretania, launched 1906.



4.24 U.S.S. Olympia, launched 1892.

historical exhibit deserves special mention. This is the oldest railway in the world, having been opened to general traffic, from Baltimore to Ellicott's Mills, a distance of 14 miles, May 24, 1827, six months earlier



Models of British Ships.

than the Liyerpool & Manchester Railway, the first in Europe. The "York," costing \$4,000, their first locomotive, is shown; also

4.25 "Models of British Ships," in McNally & Co., *A Week at the Fair: Illustrating the Exhibits and Wonders of the World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: Rand, McNally & Co., 1893).



4.26 Cass Gilbert, Governor's Reception Room (Millet's *Treaty of the Traverse de Sioux* is on the back wall), c. 1905, Minnesota State Capitol, St. Paul, Minnesota.



4.27 Edward Simmons, *Civilization of the Northwest*, oil on canvas, c. 1905, Rotunda, Southwest Corner, Minnesota State Capitol, St. Paul, Minnesota.

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