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## The Difficult Unity of the Mediterranean in the Works and Expeditions of Bory de Saint-Vincent (1778–1846)

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**ABSTRACT:** For a long time consigned to oblivion, the figure of the soldier and naturalist Bory de Saint-Vincent has been during recent years the subject of a renewed but timid interest. This recovery is justified especially for his role as leader of the French missions in the Morea and Algeria, which replicated the military-scientific model that started in Egypt. Indeed, this leadership and the works of anthropology or botany that he produced as a result are now considered key elements in the process of construction of a modern unitary representation of the Mediterranean. These recent contributions, however, often do not consider other of his works that offer a much more complex and contradictory image of his thought. This article offers a review of recent interpretation by giving examples of his works on the Iberian Peninsula and the Canary Islands. It aims to show his representation of the Mediterranean not as a homogeneous and linear process but as the result of an ambivalent approach that led to both a unitary image and a simultaneous internal differentiation of the region.

**KEYWORDS:** Bory de Saint-Vincent; Mediterranean; Scientific-Military Expeditions; Anthropology; History of knowledge

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**RESUMEN:** *La difícil unidad del Mediterráneo en los trabajos y expediciones de Bory de Saint-Vincent (1778–1846).*— Durante largo tiempo relegada al olvido, la figura del militar y naturalista Bory de Saint-Vincent ha sido en los últimos años objeto de un renovado aunque tímido interés. Esta recuperación se justifica especialmente por su papel como líder de las misiones francesas en Morea y Argelia, que reprodujeron el modelo de expedición científico-militar planteado en Egipto. Precisamente, este liderazgo y los trabajos de antropología o botánica que él mismo llevó a cabo en dichas misiones se consideran actualmente como elementos fundamentales en el proceso de construcción de una moderna representación unitaria del Mediterráneo. Estas aportaciones recientes, sin embargo, no suelen considerar otros trabajos del militar-naturalista que ofrecen una imagen mucho más compleja y contradictoria de su pensamiento. En este artículo se ofrece una revisión de la reciente interpretación presentando ejemplos de sus trabajos en la península ibérica y las Canarias. El conjunto pretende mostrar su representación del Mediterráneo no como un proceso lineal y unívoco sino como el resultado de un acercamiento ambivalente que provocó tanto una imagen unitaria como una simultánea diferenciación interna.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Bory de Saint-Vincent; Mediterráneo; Expediciones científico-militares; Antropología; Historia del conocimiento

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the last thirty years there has been much debate regarding the nature and character of the notion of 'Mediterranean'. Many of those contributions continued the path opened by Fernand Braudel, exploring the continuity and connections of social processes on a regional scale. This approach stresses the manifestations of cultural homogeneity across the region, interpreted as the product of a long history of exchanges and conflicts within favorable geographical conditions. This leads to the consideration of the Mediterranean as a unified entity. However, since the eighties, several scholars have increasingly manifested doubts over that unitary vision. A starting point could be set on the works of the anthropologists Michael Herzfeld (Herzfeld, 1984, 1987) and João de Pina-Cabral (Pina-Cabral, 1989, 1992). They criticized the illusory image of unity of the Mediterranean which they consider just the product of a process of homogenization resulting from the marginalisation of southern territories in north-European nineteenth century romantic representations. Since then, many other scholars have insisted on the problematic nature of the notion of Mediterranean. They explore the idea of the Mediterranean as a discursive product resulting from the colonial or geopolitical interest in the region during nineteenth century. Great focus has been made on the role of French interventionism in the region for the emergence of that unitary image (Ruel, 1991). Such was the case of a couple of international meetings which tried to elucidate the role of the nineteenth century French scientific-military expeditions for the formation of the modern image of the Mediterranean (Bourguet et al., 1998, 1999). It was argued then that the expeditions in Egypt, the Morea and Algeria followed a model under state-patronage set by the Napoleonic quest in Egypt, which involved the submission of scientific production to national interests and that led to the construction of a unified image of the Mediterranean according to the French political ambitions in the region. This idea has gained much attention, being the object of multiple reviews and commentaries, including the adoption of the term 'territorialization' to describe such a process (Ortega Gálvez, 1996; Schmitz, 2002).

As a result of the previous debate, several recent contributions have suggested new ways to tackle the Mediterranean dilemma. Such is the case of the work by Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell (2000) which acknowledges the objections posed by the critics to the unitary vision of the Mediterranean, proposing a more nuanced and conciliatory approach to the history of the region based on multiple processes of connectivity within diversity. The effort to re-establish the ontological certainty of the Mediterranean has continued in the form of sophisticated projects that assume contingency and diversity as a main feature of Mediterranean history (Harris, 2005),

that explore material culture searching processes of mobility and connectivity originating multiple, conflictual and hybrid expressions of identity (Van Dommelen and Knapp, 2010) and also other more conventional approaches (Abulafia, 2011).

While it could be stated that the controversy concerning the Mediterranean has resulted in historical accounts which integrate a reflexive approach to their own assumptions, it seems that there is still a certain lack of understanding between the two stances. From my point of view, this is partially due to an insufficient knowledge regarding the modern process of scientific representation of the Mediterranean. Current accounts on the discursive elaboration of the modern concept of the Mediterranean tend to describe it as a rather straight forward process, without acknowledging its internal conflicts and alternatives. I have explored elsewhere several aspects of this issue, adverting on the frequent ambivalence and complexity within that discursive elaboration (Cañete, 2006, 2010). The aim of this article is to gain more insight on the contingencies of that process of scientific representation, describing its frequent changes, overlaps and partiality. This description in terms of nonlinear constructivism could offer a more nuanced vision of the situation helping to mitigate the incomprehension between the two sides of the Mediterranean debate. For that goal I will rely on the works of the French naturalist, soldier and traveler Jean-Baptiste Bory de Saint-Vincent. The importance of Bory the Saint-Vincent for this matter seems evident since his was appointed as director of the French scientific expeditions to the Morea and Algeria and was a leading figure in the elaboration of an extensive review of the Egyptian expedition. After a brief overview of his personal trajectory, I will expose the significance and particularities of French expeditions. Next, I will offer a view of Bory's works including not just the ones directly connected to those expeditions but also other related to his activities in various territories such as the Iberian Peninsula or the Canary Islands. This analysis will try to set the study of discursive construction of the Mediterranean on a wider frame, reconsidering some important aspects. Finally, I will suggest a redefinition of the Mediterranean debate based on the main conclusions of my analysis.

## THE WEIGHT OF OBLIVION

One could say that the life and work of Jean-Baptiste Bory de Saint-Vincent (Agen, 1778-Paris, 1846) was as significant as it was its oblivion. His multiple experiences as naturalist, anthropologist, soldier, traveler or politician during the first half of nineteenth century, set him as an important figure of the scientific and intellectual arena. That position allowed him to lead or participate in the main French scientific endeavors of that period. His relevance

continued just until his death, when almost everything regarding his life and legacy suddenly vanished. It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that his name started to regain some attention. A key event was the compilation of his correspondence by the local erudite and fellow countryman Philippe Lauzun (Lauzun, 1908). Just after this publication various contributions were dedicated to review his work, especially as a botanist (Sauvageau, 1908; Bornet, 1909; Maryllis, 1910). This renewed interest even inspired a biographical essay (Lacroix, 1916) and, years later, the edition of his diaries by one of his descendants (Romieux, 1934). However, all these contributions focused mainly on his naturalist side, usually praising his classificatory achievements. Apart from this naturalistic interest and with the exception of another biographical portrait (Role, 1973), the figure of Bory de Saint-Vincent has virtually remained unknown for other disciplines in which his work was involved. It has not been until recently that we could count on a systematic study of his work by Hervé Ferrière (Ferrière, 2006, 2009). This recent interest has meant not only a greater depth but also a diversification of the disciplines concerned over his work. Thus, there have been specific contributions dedicated to his work as an orientalist (Ferrière, 2008), geographer (Castañón Álvarez and Quirós Linares, 2004) and, even, his role as a promoter of alternative origins of humankind (Vidal-Naquet, 2006: 105).

The reasons under that sudden disappearance from the scientific scene after his death are varied. His role as a main figure of poligenism, which assigned a different origin to every human race, was certainly a disadvantage when that theory was almost definitely rejected a few years after he passed away. He was also identified as an amateur, closely connected to eccentric ideas and methods, and lacking a definite position in scientific institutions. From a particular point of view, all these objections are certainly pertinent. However, these are just significant from a presentist perspective, which considers the relevance of scientific theories and ideas upon their resemblance with dominant criteria at the time when the statement of validity is produced. It tends to under-represent 'superseded' scientific profiles or statements, preventing the evaluation of their relevance according to their particular historical context and their corresponding system of interests and retribution. In this regard, the case of Bory de Saint-Vincent is quite paradigmatic.

Since he was young he developed a strong interest on the natural sciences, complementing a certain autodidactic formation with personal connections and the participation in local scientific societies. Those interest and contacts accompanied him throughout his military career, setting him as a suitable candidate for exploratory missions such as the Baudin Expedition (1800–1803), sent for the study of the African archipelagos and the mapping of the coast of Australia. Apart from his controversial resignation

before the mission was ended, his participation permitted him to elaborate some ideas concerning the Canary Islands or the Réunion. His naturalist and cartographic work was well received during that time allowing him to strengthen his connections with academic institutions on a national scale. Later on, he was appointed for the Spanish Napoleonic War (1808–1814) where he was in charge of the elaboration of a detailed cartography of the Peninsula. His favourable position towards liberal political ideas and his participation as a member of the parliament during the Hundred Days relegated him to a period of exile during the Bourbon Restoration. He dedicated the time spent in Belgium and Prussia to continue his naturalist activities (botany, zoology and geography) reinforcing his scientific and political ties with exiled Frenchmen and foreign academics. Once back in France in 1819 he undertook a prolific scientific career, publishing various works based on the data and experiences gathered during the previous years. He dedicated several works to the Iberian Peninsula, including his *Guide du voyageur en Espagne* (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1823). He directed the edition of the *Dictionnaire classique d'histoire naturelle* (1822–1831), which included contributions from a wide range of intellectuals and academics such as Geoffroy de Saint-Hilaire, reaching great success during that time. Another of his works during that period was *L'homme (homo), essai zoologique sur le genre humain* (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1825b), an essay extracted from his *Dictionnaire* where he summed his previous knowledge presenting a classification of humankind. This anthropological work, which received great attention and had several editions, was set in a naturalistic fashion, following his linnean approach to classification and his poligenist ideas, but also including multiple references on the culture and customs of the different peoples. All those works and his previous exploratory experiences, combined with his favorable position in the political and social arena rewarded him with the role of director of the section of "physical sciences" of the expedition to the Morea (1829–1831), as part of the French intervention in the Peloponnesus during the Greek War of Independence. The following years were dedicated to the enormous publication of the result of that expedition. By the end of that decade he was again appointed as the sole director of the Scientific Expedition in Argelia (1839–1842), which was his last main endeavour before his death.

By the time he passed away, many things had changed. Poligenism, which he eagerly defended, was certainly on decline. The institutionalisation of scientific activities was tenaciously promoted, defining a neat professional career and the adequate procedures for promotion. Under that new light Bory's legacy was obviously shaded with darkness. However, if we consider the particular setting in which his career developed a different image could be obtained. By the

time he initiated his works amateurism was still a common feature of scientific activities. His activities coincided with a transformation of exploratory strategies from the narrations and contributions of single travellers to collective state-patronized missions. This process was accompanied by the development of unified instructions which sought to provide a source of homogeneous and useful information (Amstrong, 2005: 236–242). Even collective missions experimented their own transformation from maritime enterprises usually limited to coastal recognizance to terrestrial exploration related to occupation or intervention in foreign territories and hence reaffirmed on their scientific-military character. Under these circumstances, the career of Bory de Saint-Vincent seems quite paradigmatic. An almost self-taught scientific, precociously connected to academic networks, his military career and family ties allowed him to participate in his first maritime exploration. Those relations and his accumulated experience set him as an ideal participant in later exploratory missions. A man of action in a time in need of disciplined fieldworkers with a scientific-military profile. Even if after his death that profile was seen as tremendously awkward, during his life it was relevant enough to reward him with the leading role of the most important exploratory French missions of that time (Bourguet et al., 1998, 1999). Concerning his scientific ideas, even if these were later on completely rejected, it is also certain that most of them were of common use during his lifetime. That is the case of poligenism which was not only of common use during that time but also competed in equal terms with monogenism. The importance of Bory the Saint-Vincent as promoter of poligenist ideas assured him a prominent position in the scientific panorama of that period. We also have to consider that probably many of his contributions that were still of great importance after his death were not attributed to him precisely due to his marginalization. That is the case of the term Iberian Peninsula which he firstly introduced and that is still wrongly attributed to Alexander von Humboldt (Castañón Álvarez and Quirós Linares, 2004: 199).

The previous considerations show to which degree the recovery of the works and legacy of Bory de Saint-Vincent is pertinent. As we have seen, this is specially so in the case of the process of modern scientific representation of the Mediterranean. Thus, any serious evaluation of that process should acknowledge his works. But, before, it will be necessary to present a brief overview of the model of exploratory missions under which relies much of the current interpretation of that process.

## MEDITERRANEAN EXPEDITIONS

The series of explorations starting with the one in Egypt has been the subject of great attention almost since their beginning. Curiously, it was Bory de

Saint-Vincent himself one of the ones who initiated the study of those particular missions with a historical account in ten volumes of the Egyptian expedition (Bory de Saint-Vincent et al., 1830–1844). More recently, there have been contributions dedicated to the study of each one of the missions separately (Dondin-Payre, 1991; Laurens, 1997). However, there have been also proposals for the study of their common features (Broc, 1981). These contributions have certainly signalled important details on the characteristic and development of those missions. However, the main interest for us here relies on those which have proposed their connection as a unified exploratory model. Even if that model is frequently extended to other missions such as the one in Mexico (1864–1867) during the French-supported Empire of Maximilian I or the one in Senegal (1857–1861) which continued the exploration of Algeria, we will focus here on the ones that have being connected to the formation of the modern image of the Mediterranean. Thus, as it has been widely suggested the series of Mediterranean expeditions correspond to those of Egypt (1798–1801), the Morea (1829–1831) and Algeria (1839–1842). It is commonly agreed that they all shared the principles set by the Egyptian expedition. The context of the Egyptian expedition wrested on a previous intensification of the interest on the Mediterranean region during the eighteenth century, leading to an increase on the promotion of gathering of information and travels by the French government (Amstrong, 2005). At the end of that century, rivalry between France and the United Kingdom over the control of Mediterranean routes and the conflict with the Ottoman Empire set the Egyptian and Near Eastern territories as a geostrategic objective. However those political intentions were embedded in the ideological framework of Late Enlightenment which established a universal project of social transformation and progress under the guidance of Reason and Civilisation. Hence, intervention in the Egyptian territory was conceived as an opportunity to restore the lost civilization to an allegedly decadent society. That very ideological framework resulted on the necessity to document every single social or natural element of the territory. The resulting project integrated scientific and military action in a single territorial intervention supported by the state. It was conceived as a systematic exploration including all sciences and disciplines, which were expected to produce valuable and useful knowledge about the region (Silvera, 1975; Laurens, 1997: 25–26). Precisely, those are the main traits which determined the exploratory model. The connection between scientific knowledge, military action, national interest and universalistic rhetoric would be also found in the Greek and Algerian expeditions. The application of a continuous strategy of scientific representation and accountability subjected to the interest of the *mission civilisatrice* has been pointed out as the source of a



unified image connecting those different territories. As Benedict Anderson signalled in his work regarding the formation of imagined communities, the systematic application of modern devices of knowledge and control (Census, Map and Museum) would result on a specific way to “think about” a certain territory (Anderson, 1991: 184). The case of the Mediterranean explorations would then represent a particular application of the wider ideology of modernity in dispersed fields of experimentation contributing to a “territorialisation of knowledge” and hence favouring their unification under a single category (Schmitz, 2002: 144).

Previous contributions have explored the way in which a certain unified image of the Mediterranean emerged through those exploratory missions. These have also focused on the personal contributions by Bory de Saint-Vincent to that matter. In particular, we find works that cover the fields of scientific specialisation in which Bory excelled: botany and anthropology. Regarding botany and geography Maroula Sinarellis (1998) defended Bory’s progressive construction of a unified image of the Mediterranean through his works. Considering the arbitrary nature of any geographical delimitation, Sinarellis suggested how before those works the recurring image of the Mediterranean was focused on its significance for European history, which imposed a neat boundary with North-African territories. This was corresponded by naturalistic classifications which established a clear-cut difference between botanical species in both shores of the Sea. The disruptive nature of Mediterranean Sea was also part of the first works by Bory. That is the case of his work dedicated to the Canary Islands (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1803) where he situates the formation of the Mediterranean as a catastrophic event following the collapse of Atlantis and a sudden flooding. His works after the exploration of the Morea insisted on that idea of the problematic nature of the Mediterranean, adding a poor view of the flora and maritime species across the region which defined a somewhat deserted and obstructive image of the sea. This negative view would completely change after the Algerian expedition defending a continuity of botanical species in both shores of the Mediterranean but also a emphasizing its richness and usefulness. In that moment, the event of the formation of the Mediterranean, although still sudden, is not regarded anymore as negative but, instead, as reinforcing the continuity between Europe and North-Africa (Sinarellis, 1998: 306–310).

The anthropological works in relation to a unified image of the Mediterranean have being explored by Ann Thomson (Thomson, 1998). She has also splendidly presented the gradual transformation of those views. All the successive contributions by Bory concerning the anthropology of Mediterranean population were built upon his poligenist approach, stressing the anatomical characteristic and were affected

by numerous alterations of his classificatory scheme. In his early work about the Canary Islands he developed the idea previously defended by Buffon that the archipelago and the rest of Atlantic islands were the remains of the mythical continent of Atlantis. He argued its native inhabitants, the Guanches, were the descendants of the population of that lost continent which after the collapse had migrated to North-Africa and the Iberian Peninsula which were originally connected. In that work atlanteans hold a positive image, being the remains of a lost civilization that extended up to Egypt and Europe. That positive view changed completely after his experience in the Spanish War. He still defended the true nature of Atlantis and his inhabitants but he argued that they just reached the Iberian Peninsula which was then joined to Africa and separated from Europe. He defended this idea by claiming the African character of the Iberian population. That divided view of the Mediterranean continued after the Greek expedition although integrating the aboriginal population of Greece on the European side, stressing their potential to recover the once lost civilization. The difference between North-African/Spanish and European population remained during the preparations of the Algerian expedition. In the project for the mission, Bory stressed the indomitable character of North-African population, which remained impervious to any kind of civilization. That picture changed after the exploration when Bory claimed the necessity to revise all his previous assertions. Then he defended that North-African population was divided in three groups. Arabs and blacks were late arrivers. Berbers were the truly native population of the region. In this time, their character as descendants of the Atlantean people recovered its positive status, which was again connected to the origin of the European population and hence stressing the common ancestry of the population of both shores of the Mediterranean and the necessity to reestablish civilization to North-African brothers.

These contributions regarding the works of Bory de Saint-Vincent have certainly offered a valuable approach to the formation of a unified image of the Mediterranean. They have also presented glimpses of the ambiguous and contradictory nature of that discursive elaboration. However, it is my view that those ambiguous elements could be explored further on. For that goal it will be necessary to consider several objections to the model of the Mediterranean expeditions. First of all, as it has been signaled (Lepetit, 1998), the series of explorations though integrating a shared model also presented important differences. Even if they all were set under state-patronage, each of them depended on a different ministry. The varied administrative situations certainly corresponded to diverse scenarios in which each mission was developed. For example, that is the case of the Greek expedition that took place in an already

pacified territory, after the war of independence, with no intentions of a permanent occupation, whereas the Egyptian and, above all, the Algerian expeditions developed in a combative atmosphere of desired perpetuation. However, the differing organizational situations could also be traced considering that in each case the initiative was variously distributed between the academies, the military and the politicians. It has been also argued that the equation connecting the scientific and the military should be nuanced. Thus even if there was a programmatic intention to subordinate scientific activities to the military, as it was the case in Algeria, that objective was never fully achieved, which was frequently the cause of continuous conflicts (Nordman, 1996: 132). This is not only the case at the fieldwork but also during the process of elaboration of the publications which, despite the control established by the government and the military, frequently resulted in contradictory narratives (Lepetit, 1998; Nordman, 1998). Apparently those conflictual situations were not an exception just ascribable to collective expeditions. It is also the case of the funding provided to individual projects by the *Services des Missions* during nineteenth century which show that even if there were general objectives such as the Mediterranean region, the particular topics and individuals which were financed depended on the political configuration of every precise moment (Heffernan, 1994). The idea of a strict and programmatic determination of the scientific production of Mediterranean missions is also undermined by the fact that, frequently, the science in intervened territories influenced metropolitan agenda (Osborne, 2005).

Considering all those objections, it becomes evident that any affirmation regarding the scientific productions of the series of Mediterranean explorations should rely on a wide interpretation of the phenomenon integrating both similarities and differences. The interpretation then should not focus on a conscious construction of a previously defined narrative according to the interests and intention of the politicians and the military but, instead, on a common ideological framework which, apart from particular stances, stimulated and determined all missions. The conviction over the benefits of the civilizing mission accounts for the formation of an interventionist attitude towards those territories and the necessity to obtain a detailed and overarching knowledge of the region. That knowledge was not exclusively conceived as a source of useable information for the control of those territories. It was genuinely perceived as a key feature of the process of civilization and hence favourable to the communities involved. This is particularly so if we consider how the statistical methods that were applied on the terrain were previously developed as administrative devices for the city of Paris (Lepetit, 1998: 102–103) or how the cartography of the Peloponnesus was established in direct comparison with the one of France. It could also

explain why, despite the differences between the multiple collectives and interests involved in those missions, they all shared an array of elements that made possible the emergence of certain key ideas. As I have already argued (Cañete, 2010: 21), that ideological framework was based on the concept of civilization, but civilization itself was a notion construed upon the self-representation of the social groups benefited by the transformations imposed by that system. These were particular groups even within Europe and, hence, the application of the concept of civilization provoked tensions and exclusion within Europe. Another characteristic of that ideological system is that it frequently adopted an ambiguous discursive structure which constantly oscillated between rejection and assimilation. It follows that the Mediterranean missions, and their scientific representations, were set upon a general ideological system of social transformation that determined interventionism and the deployment of administrative and scientific devices that resulted on a particular and ambiguous way to “think about” the territory.

## BORY'S MEDITERRANEAN

Considering the previous objections, several considerations could be presented. First of all, I would like to propose the integration of the experiences of Bory de Saint-Vincent in the Iberian Peninsula and the Canary Islands as part of the series of exploratory endeavours that led to the unified image of the Mediterranean. It could certainly be argued that those missions do not match the traditional criteria for the integration in the model, this is: a terrestrial exploratory activity projected and supported by the state of a scientific-military nature. However, if we consider the previous remarks which resituate the differences and similarities of the missions under the light of a general ideological system, there is room for a reassessment. Thus, it appears that the discursive construction leading to the formation of a unified image of the Mediterranean was not the product of a conscious and meditated elaboration during otherwise very dissimilar explorations. Instead it was the result of an interventionist process led by the ambiguous application of civilising practices and devices. The case of the Iberian Peninsula suits quite well this interpretation. It is significant that for the justification of the military intervention in the Peninsula we find the same arguments that were raised during the Egyptian campaign. They focused on the beneficial effects of the occupation, the necessity to re-establish civilisation to an oppressed people subjected to despotic rulers and a parasitic clergy. Even there were explicit comparisons between the Spanish peasants and the Egyptian fellahs (Bonaparte, 1821: 291, 314, 332–333). It could also be considered that the cartographic expeditions led by Bory de Saint-Vincent which also served for collecting botanical and anthropological

data were explicitly supported by Marshal Soult the head of the French army in the Peninsula and were composed by several specialists (Castañón Álvarez and Quirós Linares, 2004: 183). It has also been signalled that it was precisely his experience in the Peninsula which determined much of his position during the Algerian expedition (Ferrière, 2008: 129). Regarding the case of the Canary Islands it is certain that it did not correspond to a terrestrial mission but nonetheless it was part of a collective exploration under state patronage with a scientific-military character that replicated the spirit of the Egyptian exploration (Ferrière, 2008: 48). It is also important if we take into consideration that it resulted on the first systematic naturalistic elaboration by Bory de Saint-Vincent. In that initial work we firstly find the arguments regarding the mythical continent of Atlantis, the irruption of the Mediterranean Sea and the migration of peoples which will constitute the key elements for the general narrative in which all subsequent elaboration were based. Finally, the most important argument for the integration of those explorations in the Mediterranean model is none other than the participation of Bory de Saint-Vincent himself. As it has been argued, Bory de Saint-Vincent is the true red string of the history of the French scientific-military expeditions during that time. He represents the continuity within an otherwise heterogeneous and ever-changing array of situations (Ferrière, 2009: 217). This is particularly so if we acknowledge that he was a key part of the discursive elaborations which led to an integrated view of the Mediterranean. It is time now to have a look at the ambiguities and contradictions of that process.

In the first work of Bory de Saint-Vincent after his participation in the Baudin expedition we find a continuity with the themes and interests of the previous century. His considerations concerning the Canary Islands situate us with an ancestral civilization inhabiting the mythical continent of Atlantis which migrated to North-Africa and Europe after a sudden collapse. This scheme owed much to the elaborations of Buffon and Bailly during the previous century. It also preserved the sense of the Atlantean civilization as the Golden Age which had to be recovered. This idea, which related the origins of Europeans and Egyptians with the Atlantean population was a common feature of those times and, in certain way, acted as a projection of the civilizing aspirations of the Enlightenment (Ferrière, 2009: 62). The positive and integrated view of the Mediterranean was probably still present just before his arrival to the Iberian Peninsula. In one of his letters to his colleague Léon Dufour he comments the similarities between Peninsular and North-African botanical species (Lauzun, 1908: 135). During his period in Spain, he frequently remarked the similarities between the Iberian Peninsula and the North-African territory in a positive manner (Ferrière, 2009: 101–104). It was probably

the unexpected defeat of the French army along with the failure of the civilizing intentions which altered this previous positive and assimilating vision. In several fragments of his diaries dating from the last moments in Spain we find negative statements regarding the population, depicted as a superstitious people subjected to despotic rulers (Romieux, 1934: 13–14). In another letter to Dufour dated on 1817 he explicitly states the racial inferiority of Spanish population (Lauzun, 1908: 182). Even if Bory de Saint-Vincent maintained a vivid attraction to a somewhat exotic image of the Iberian Peninsula expressed in his extensive commentaries on antiquities and bull-fighting (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1821a, 1821b), he nevertheless continued reproducing negative statements. Thus, in his most important works concerning the Iberian Peninsula he defended the original linkage between that territory and North-Africa and its physical separation from the European continent. In his regard that original connection (and disconnection) determined the African character of the Peninsula. He underlines the similarities between botanical and faunal species, defining a common natural region. But, more importantly, he defends the connection between Peninsular and North-African populations based upon their common origin in the Atlantean continent (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1823: 232–239; 1826: 116–135). The previous positive image of the Atlantean population was then replaced by a negative consideration which resumed the marginalization of both North-African and Peninsular communities. Bory's equation of both territories in negative terms was a manifestation of a common attitude of the writers in that period (García-Arenal, 1999). That attitude was the outcome of a progressive marginalization of those regions in contrast to the European civilized model (Thomson, 1987: 2–9, 144–146; García Cárcel, 1992: 121–162).

The scheme of a divided Mediterranean which included the Iberian Peninsula as part of the African continent was the basis for the anthropological synthesis that Bory elaborated during those years. It was firstly published as the entry "Homme" of his *Dictionnaire classique d'histoire naturelle* (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1825a), appearing immediately after as a single work (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1825b). Continuing with his poligenist view he defended the existence of fifteen different human species each one with a different origin. The population around the Mediterranean basin was divided between the European species ("la plus belle") and the Arabic species. The Arabic species was signaled as been affected by continuous religious exaltation and fanaticism that determined his moral character. He divided that species in two different races, the Atlantic at the Western part of North-Africa, the Iberian Peninsula and the Canary Island and the Adamic at the Eastern side of North-Africa and the Near-East. The Atlantic race is defined in aggressive terms, stressing the idea



of degeneration and relating that population with the proliferation of piracy. The origin of the other race, the Adamic, is located in Ethiopia from where it expanded towards the Arabian Peninsula and the Near-East.

The divided nature of the Mediterranean was an integral part of the view of Bory de Saint-Vincent in the years before the Greek expedition. As we have seen in the summary of the works by Sinarellis and Thomson a certain divided image continued after the exploration. The resulting works of the expedition in the Morea integrated the Greek territory in the European area, reproducing the idea that was already present in his classificatory synthesis a few years before. An example of the multiple conflicts that the process of representation generated becomes apparent from the fact that the European integration of Greece was simultaneous to its differentiation from the Ottoman Orient even if the latter was also part of the Mediterranean. The simultaneity of multiple relations of assimilation and exclusion frequently resulted in contradictions. That could be the case of the situation after the Greek exploration when we find the simultaneous defense of an anthropological divide and a botanical similarity (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1823: 207) in both shores of the Mediterranean. Precisely that was the situation just before the Algerian expedition. While Bory maintained an anthropological divide stressing the aggressive and uncivilized character of the Algerian native population (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1838a: 10) at the same time he defended the necessity to increase the knowledge concerning the similarities and utility of Mediterranean natural species (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1838a: 9; 1838b). That picture changed after the exploration was finally over. In that moment Bory de Saint-Vincent offers his last important scientific contribution in the form of a hypothesis of the anthropological distribution in North-Africa (Bory de Saint-Vincent, 1845). He proposed the separation of the population in the Maghreb between late-comers (Arabs and blacks) and native population (atlanteans). He once again proposed the narrative of the lost continent of Atlantis but at that time he recovered the sense of his first work on the Canary Islands. He restored the positive view towards the atlantean population making them the ancestors of the European population and civilization and hence reestablishing a unified image of the anthropological distribution across the Mediterranean. However, at the same time that integration was produced, other differences were established. The assimilation of the native population was just one of the outcomes of an ambiguous discourse which resulted in narratives of exclusion and inclusion (Cañete, 2006). The assimilation of Berber communities was the basis for the formation of the so called 'kabyle myth' that connected the origins of Berber and European communities as a manifestation of the potential towards civilization of the former (Ferrié

and Boëtsch, 1990; Boëtsch and Ferrié, 1996). However it also resulted on the exclusion of Arab communities from that civilized picture and hence their difficult integration within that newly integrated Mediterranean.

## A DIFFICULT UNITY

The previous analysis has shown several important elements in need of serious consideration. First of all that, despite the oblivion in which he was relegated after his death, Bory de Saint-Vincent played a mayor role in the scientific panorama of the first half of the eighteenth century and the series of French explorations in the Mediterranean. It has also shown the complex and variable nature of those scientific-military expeditions. Due to that complexity and the different situations involved it seems necessary to establish a wider view which could integrate the discursive elaboration of a unified image of the Mediterranean. It has been proposed that the discursive elaboration was not the result of a conscious program spanning five decades but, instead, the result of a common ideological system that motivated interventionism as well as an ambiguous approach to the territories concerned. Considering that interpretation it has been suggested the integration of other exploratory activities which previously have been excluded from the series of missions related to the unified image of the Mediterranean. Finally, the detailed analysis of the works of Bory de Saint-Vincent that resulted from those exploratory activities had showed that the construction of a unified image of the Mediterranean was far from being a homogeneous and lineal process. Instead it has resulted on a complex and contradictory phenomenon with both integrations and exclusions. Oddly enough his first work manifested an integrated view of the region. After that there were multiple integrations and exclusions depending on the particular interests during or after each of the interventions. We found then the exclusions of the Iberian Peninsula and the integration of the Greek territory which fragmented even more the traditional dichotomy between European and North-African territories. It was not until the outcome of the Algerian expedition that a unified image of the Mediterranean emerged. However, this was so due to the exclusion of other communities such as those related to an Arab cultural tradition. The integration needs also to be carefully assumed since, even after the last exploration, the differences and exclusions were a common feature of the representations of Mediterranean cultures. That was the case of the continuous associations of the Spanish culture with an African character and their differences with the European civilizing model.

As a conclusion we could evaluate the validity of those arguments for the current controversy regarding the notion of the Mediterranean. As we saw in the introductory section, that controversy opposes those



defending that the idea of a unitary Mediterranean is a discursive construction to other which claim the historical and cultural validity of the notion. From my point of view, the previous analysis clearly shows that the process of elaboration of a unitary image of the Mediterranean was itself far from unified. Hence, the discursive Mediterranean defended by the constructivist is not far from the complex, variable and unstable Mediterranean of the realists. Probably the best way to integrate both views is to recall the words of the architect Robert Venturi when he defended a new interpretation of architectural forms: “It must embody the difficult unity of inclusion rather than the easy unity of exclusion” (Venturi, 1966: 23). Likewise the Mediterranean as a construction of both historical and discursive character should be defined by its difficult unity.

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