



Empire of Landscape: Space and Ideology in French Colonial Algeria

John Zarobell

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Emerging in the realm of popular entertainment, Jean-Charles Langlois's *Panorama of Algiers* (1833) drew an audience in much the same way that the arcades drew consumers. Just as the consumption of material goods never fully satiates the consumer, the landscape of Algiers, as represented in Langlois's panorama, kept the French coming back for more. This monumental painting—the result of Colonel Langlois's involvement in the 1830 siege of Algiers—offered a French audience a spectacle of the furthest reaches of the French empire. To witness Langlois's paintings and other representations of colonial landscapes that followed was to perceive the endless diversity of the ever-expanding French colonies.

Marrying an investigation of the imperial context with close analysis of French images of nineteenth-century Algiers, *Empire of Landscape* offers a new position on visual culture and the social history of art. John Zarobell not only considers the way paintings, photographs, prints, maps, and panoramas of the unpopulated Algerian landscape were tied to the social and political developments of their time, but also argues that the images themselves produced historical transformations of place, space, and perception that continue to affect us today. *Empire of Landscape* offers a unique basis for understanding the intersections among colonialism and the colonized, geography, place, politics, and the resonating propagandistic impact that images of landscape had in the nineteenth-century French colonial world and beyond.

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