Into the Unknown Country:
Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet Journey down the Mississippi River, 1673-76

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Introduction

Father Marquette raised his calumet as the expedition approached an unknown Indian village. The peaceful intent the calumet represented did not seem to be working as the Quapaw encircled his canoe and prepared to attack: “In vain I showed the calumet, and made them signs that we were not coming to war against them. The alarm continued, and they were already preparing to pierce us with arrows from all sides, when God suddenly touched the hearts of the old men, who were standing at the water’s edge. This no doubt happened through the sight of our calumet, which they had not clearly distinguished from afar; but as I did not cease displaying it, they were influenced by it, and checked the ardor of their young men.”¹ The calumet, or peace pipe, saved the French. Without it, the expedition that opened the Mississippi to French trade and colonization would have met a premature end in the muddy river. Fortunately for Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet, it did not. Their encounters and exchanges with Native Americans matter because their expedition was part of the broader contest for empire and wealth between the Spanish, English, and French—all of whom wanted to control the vast wealth that flowed down the Mississippi.

Europeans in Indian Country

In 1671, Governor Frontenac of Quebec declared that the Midwest was part of the French Empire.² Marquette and Jolliet learned of this edict at the Sault Sainte Marie mission. Marquette and Jolliet discussed the possibility of an expedition down the Mississippi and were granted

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permission after Jolliet traveled to Quebec to talk with Governor Frontenac. They wanted to explore this area to see its possibilities for French colonization. French empire-building developed in contrast with the English but especially the Spanish, who had established an earlier foothold in the Americas. According to the Black Legend, the Spanish were especially brutal colonizers who used violence, enslavement, and rape as tools in their conquest of Native Americans, especially the Aztec. During Spanish colonization, the cross accompanied the sword as Franciscan missionaries attempted to convert native peoples to Catholicism. Priests established missions in Central and South America, and California, where they tried to convert Indians by resettling them, forcing them to adopt Spanish culture, and treating them as slave laborers. Not all missionaries accepted these practices. Bartolome de las Casas advocated for an end to the worst abuses by soldiers and priests, including enslavement and sexual exploitation of Indian women.

The Spanish crown also sent explorers—known as conquistadors—into North America. These were heavily armed military forces led by men like Hernando De Soto, who went on a violent rampage through the lower Mississippi River Valley, roughly the same area that would be visited by Marquette and Jolliet. De Soto’s journey began in modern-day Florida and proceeded through Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas. De Soto and his army pillaged countless native villages for food, clothing, women and slaves. De Soto’s men spread disease,

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causing massive depopulation of Native Americans. Although De Soto’s and Marquette and Jolliet’s journeys were separated by 120 years, tribes like the Quapaw remembered De Soto’s heinous acts, which made them distrust all Europeans, including the French.

The French took a different approach to Indian relations. In the early 1600s, the French began to trade with native peoples in the Saint Lawrence River Valley, including the Abenaki, Iroquois, and Huron. They attempted to build their New World Empire through the fur trade, which became their main source of wealth. French fur traders—the *courier du bois*—set out into the *pays d’en haut*, or Indian country, which included the northeast and Great Lakes, with trade goods and guns to exchange for furs. Being a fur trader was a dangerous job because traders travelled alone with little support from French colonial officials. They had to hunt and portage their canoes to reach the interior, and many times they depended upon Indian guides for assistance and protection. Some of the traders married Native American women, who provided material support, companionship, biracial métis children, and kinship ties.

The French adapted to Native American trade practices; economic exchange was seen as a social transaction built on reciprocity and gift giving where each side incurred duties and obligations that were used to create and maintain social ties and diplomatic alliances. Marquette’s partner on the expedition, Louis Jolliet was an experienced fur trader richly steeped in these traditions. Jolliet proved to be very capable in creating ties with Indians, which earned a

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10 Bruce White “Give Us a Little Milk”: The Social and Cultural Significance of Gift Giving in the Lake Superior Fur Trade,” in *Rethinking the Fur Trade: Cultures of Exchange in an Atlantic World*, ed. Susan Sleeper-Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 118-120.
substantial profit for his brother, who funded his ventures. The French and Native Americans created what historian Richard White called the middle ground, a physical space and type of relationship that “depended on the inability of both sides to gain their ends through force. The middle ground grew according to the need of people to find a means, other than force, to gain the cooperation or consent of foreigners.” The middle ground was a place where French colonists and Native Americans pursued their own interests through mutual negotiation for economic and diplomatic success. Historian Brett Rushforth complicates the story by arguing that the French-Indian alliance was also built upon the gifting of Indian slaves, another object for alliance building.

The French also believed that saving Indian souls was an important part of colonization. Instead of resettling Indians into missions, however, French Jesuit missionaries lived among Native Americans in their villages. The Jesuits learned Indian languages so they could preach in native tongues, and they established missions among the people. By integrating themselves, the French believed that they would be more successful. Jacques Marquette proselytized in this tradition. After his education among the Jesuits, he traveled to New France and into Indian country, where he quickly learned six native languages, building close ties with the Native Americans he sought to convert. During the conversion process, the Jesuits asked that Indians change their clothing, language, and gender roles in a process known as “Frenchification.”

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method of conversion was extremely common among the métis and Native women, who found conversion most appealing.  

**Into the Unknown Country**

Marquette and Jolliet explored the Mississippi from 1673 to 1676 as part of French empire building. They set out from St. Ignace in two canoes with five men. The expedition traveled down Lake Michigan to modern-day Green Bay, where they met Menominee Indians, who warned them to turn back. They proceeded down the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, which took them to the Mississippi. Marquette and Jolliet made maps and kept journals about their travels. They encountered countless Native American villages where they were given food, shelter, and guides. Initially, Marquette and Jolliet believed that the Mississippi would lead to the Pacific Ocean, but they learned that the Mississippi flowed into the Gulf of Mexico. Marquette and Jolliet were worried about encountering hostile Spaniards near New Orleans, so they turned back in Arkansas. On their return trip, Marquette and Jolliet explored an alternate route up the Illinois River to Lake Michigan, opening another area for French trade and colonization, especially near modern-day Chicago (Appendix One). Their expedition was considered a success because it spurred later ventures including one by Cavalier La Salle, who set up trading posts to advance France’s colonial project.

**Strangeness on the River**

Only Marquette’s journals survive, and he made numerous observations about the geography, land, plants, animals, and native peoples they encountered. Marquette and Jolliet described fertile land and abundant natural resources that would support French settlements. Marquette noted the vast rolling plains on which the buffalo roamed, large ridges, heavily wooded areas, and large sandbars. Jolliet stated that the ground was fertile with good land to grow crops. Marquette also described encounters with wondrous animals: “from time to time, we came upon monstrous fish, one of which struck our canoe with such violence that I thought that it was a great tree, about to break the canoe to pieces.”

Marquette and his men eventually saw the creature and described “a monster with the head of a tiger, a sharp nose like that of a wildcat with whiskers and straight, erect ears.” Marquette and Jolliet both described herds of buffalo as well as raccoons, rabbits, elk, and deer. They were in awe of the bountiful land and abundant resources.

Their most important encounters were with Native Americans. Marquette and Jolliet encountered the Menominee, Illinois, Peoria, and Quapaw. Marquette’s journal is full of observations about native peoples, including their appearance, food, gender roles, and religious practices. He noted that many of the people dressed in clothing made from buffalo hides and that women of the tribes covered themselves more than men. Most people ate fish, Indian corn,

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25 Claude Dablon, *Claude Dablon’s Interview Notes* (1674), 11.
28 Thwaites, *Father Marquette*, 192.
29 Dablon, 5.
wild game, and fruits or nuts. The Native Americans worshiped multiple spirits that guided them in every aspect of their daily lives, a practice that began in adulthood.

On their journey, most Native Americans welcomed them with offers of food, shelter, and sometimes guides—all aspects of Indian hospitality. Among the Illinois, elder men welcomed the explorers, stating “How beautiful the sun is, O Frenchman, when thou comest to visit us! All our villages await thee, and thou shalt enter all our cabins in peace.” Following the welcome, Marquette and Jolliet parleyed with the tribal elders about the French religion. After the council ended, the Indians served a feast of sagamite, Indian corn boiled and seasoned with fat, three types of fish, a large dog, and wild ox. In another extension of hospitality, Native Americans gave them a tour of their village, presenting some of their prized possessions as gifts, including ox and bear hides and belts.

Not all of Marquette and Jolliet's encounters were friendly. As noted in the introduction, when they neared the mouth of the Arkansas River they were threatened by the Quapaw. The French probably received the hostile response because the Indians had earlier contact with the Spanish led by De Soto, whose violent actions lived in tribal memory. It was probably the calumet that saved the Frenchman's lives—that and the judgement of an elder. Jolliet and their men were taken into the village where they were questioned about their purpose. After discovering the intentions of the French, the Quapaw welcomed them in hopes of creating an alliance against their own native enemies, and the Spanish, should they return to the area.

32 Marquette, *Marquette's First Voyage*, 123.
33 Marquette, *Marquette's First Voyage*, 123.
French were worried about running into Spaniards, whose violent reputation had preceded them, so the expedition returned to New France to report their discoveries.

**Commerce and Conversion**

During their expedition, the French exchanged material goods and religion in the hopes that they could establish economic and diplomatic alliances like they did in the north. Marquette and Jolliet were given Indian corn, fish, and other game as signs of friendship, which proved vital for exchange with subsequent tribes as they traveled downriver. The most important gift given to Marquette and Jolliet was a calumet, a powerful symbol that assured all native peoples they encountered that the French came with peaceful intent, unlike the Spanish. In native culture, the calumet was more than just a pipe; it represented where a person had been, their wartime accomplishments, their allies, and served as a symbol of peace. Native men carved the story of their lives into the calumet and strung feathers to symbolize power. When Marquette met the Illinois, he used the calumet and his knowledge of their language to gain food, housing, and safe transport through their territory. During the calumet ceremony, native leaders provided information about how to get to the sea, other tribes, and who was hostile. Through the calumet, Marquette and Jolliet were able to open the pathway to good Indian relations so necessary for later French colonization.

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37 Thwaites, *Father Marquette*, 202-203.  
41 Marquette, *Marquette’s First Voyage*, 137.  
43 Marquette, *Marquette’s First Voyage*, 119-121.
Within thirty years of their journey, France colonized the Lower Mississippi, specifically Louisiana, despite a scattered Spanish presence. As the colonial economy developed, Native Americans like the Quapaw became the primary agents in the exchange of Indian slaves, food, animal oils, and skins for French guns, cloth, and metal cooking implements. Historian Kathleen Duvall calls the trade economy the “native ground,” a place where Native Americans dictated the terms of trade, especially in the Arkansas River Valley. Further south in Louisiana, Native Americans, French settlers, and African slaves all contributed to what historian Daniel Unser calls the “frontier exchange economy.” Unser describes the trade as happening at “the interstices in which people exchanged small quantities of goods in pursuit of their livelihood.” For Unser, economic exchange was a small scale process, but it led to the development of both local and regional exchange economies between the French, Native Americans, Africans, and Creoles.

Marquette and the Indians also exchanged ideas about religion. Marquette preached short sermons. Many of the Indians interpreted Marquette’s explanation of God as a spirit they already worshipped. Native Americans also told the French about their religious beliefs. When a child in the tribe would start puberty, they would go into the woods and fast for four days. On the fourth day, the person would see a spirit that would guide them throughout their life. On his return trip through modern day Illinois, Marquette founded a mission named the Immaculate Conception.

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45 Kathleen Duvall, The Native Ground, 5-7.
47 Parkman France and England, 386-387.
The mission shows that Marquette did have some success with conversion through the exchange of religions ideologies on the expedition.48

**Journey’s End**

On the return trip to St. Ignace, Marquette contracted dysentery. The expedition stopped at a mission near Green Bay, where Marquette spent the winter trying to recover.49 When spring came, he held a feast to celebrate Easter and then departed for home.50 But he never made it. He died51 and was buried in the upper peninsula of modern-day Michigan.52 His bones were later collected by Native American converts and reinterred at St. Ignace.53 Jolliet’s journey did not end so badly. Although he lost his records—and nearly his life—in an accident on some rapids,54 he made his final report to Frontenac, telling him about the richness of the Mississippi and possibilities for trade and settlement.55 Jolliet continued to work as a fur trader and explorer in the far north of New France.56

Marquette and Jolliet’s journey matters because it made possible French colonization of the Mississippi River Valley, especially Louisiana. It also illustrates that there were multiple models of colonization in North America and multiple ways that Europeans interacted with Native Americans. While the French were certainly interested in empire, they, more than the English or the Spanish, believed that accommodation with Native Americans was central for

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49 Thwaites *Father Marquette*, 211.
50 Thwaites *Father Marquette*, 222.
51 Marquette, *Marquette’s First Voyage*, 159.
52 Thwaites, *Father Marquette*, 228.
53 Thwaites, *Father Marquette*, 228-229.
54 Repplier, *Pere Marquette*, 189-190.
55 Thwaites *France, In America*, 57.
success. Through the creation of the middle ground, the native ground, and the frontier exchange economy, the French set a different political precedent for relationships between Europeans and Native Americans. They repudiated the violent Spanish and English models and instead formed economic and diplomatic alliances with native peoples built on gift giving and reciprocity—mutually beneficial exchanges that enriched both sides. Indian-French alliances became the foundation of French colonial success in North America until the Seven Year’s War destroyed France’s foothold in North America, leaving the Native Americans at the mercy of the English and the Spanish.57

Appendix I

Map of Marquette and Jolliet’s Exploration of the Mississippi River, 1673.

Museum Link – Illinois:

http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/post/htmls/hi_explore.html
Appendix II

The image above is a map drawn by Jacques Marquette illustrating the Mississippi River Valley and its tributaries. The dots along the rivers and waterways represent the locations of Native Americans villages.

Above is a depiction of a Native American smoking a calumet as a sign of peace.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

Dablon, Claude “Claude Dablon’s Interview Notes.” 1 August, 1674.
http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/ref/collection/tp/id/39318

Dablon’s interview of Jolliet shows what both men contributed to the expedition. It also helps me argue that Marquette proved to be helpful in establishing good relationships with Native Americans because of his language skills and the calumet. Jolliet also described their encounters with Native Americans.


This account describes in depth Marquette’s final journey to the Illinois Country where he returned to his mission that he founded and celebrated the Immaculate Conception with the converts. On his journey back to St. Ignace, he died of dysentery. He told his companions to bury him on shore and pray in the names of Jesus and Mary in the last moments of his life.


This image helped me understand and represent how far Marquette and Jolliet traveled down the Mississippi River. The map also shows where countless Native American villages are located.
Marquette describes in detail the geography, plants and the animals on his exploration of the Mississippi River. He also describes his countless encounters with the Native Americans. In these encounters, he and his men were invited to a feast where they were given corn meal and game that the Native Americans hunted or caught.

This personal account from Marquette depicts the first part of his journey down the Mississippi River through the Illinois country. Marquette describes in detail the encounters with Native Americans, specifically, how the French were taken in and were given a calumet to ensure safe passage for the explorers. In addition, he also describes the geography of the surrounding land like how the river was lined with trees and sandbars jutted from the land.

In this uncompleted journal, Marquette goes into detail and describes his every movement during his trip through the Illinois Country. For example, Marquette states that
during their travels down the Mississippi, their native guides would scout ahead and also hunt game for the French. He also describes that their trek was long and tiresome due to the inclement weather that they faced.

**Secondary Sources**


This book aided me in my argument that in their travels Marquette, Joliet, and their men were invited into Native American villages. In the first three villages, Marquette and Jolliet smoked a calumet or peace pipe with the indigenous leaders. They were also given food for their voyage down the Mississippi River. Lastly, on their return journey, both Jolliet and Marquette never made it back to their desired destinations.


This article argues that the religious culture of the Illinois Indians worshiped figures that related to the sun and thunder. However, Marquette’s journey down the Mississippi in the mid-1670s shows that the Illinois converted to Catholicism because they believed that the Christian god was the spirit that they worshiped already. In addition, the chief of an Illinois village begged Marquette to talk to god in hope that they would be given long healthy lives.

As the French began to explore the Mississippi River, specifically Illinois, they brought disease with them. However, one of the main reasons for the fall of the Illinois is due to the warring between them and countless other tribes like the Sioux and Fox Indians. In addition, as the tribes warred, the Illinois begged to live with the French for both protection and safety.


This article further explains that in aiding the French in their wars, the Illinois destroyed themselves and left themselves disheartened and struggling. It theses times, food and land became scarce and countless Natives died.


Carter’s book explains that not only were the Aztecs effected by the disease brought by the Europeans, but the countless other tribes known to the Aztecs also joined the Spanish to destroy their former enemies. In their hunt for gold, the Spanish also destroyed the cultures of the Native Americans they encountered.


Din’s article argues that the French settlers of Louisiana did not accept Spanish rule. Instead Creole people lives as they had under French rule despite Spain’s attempts to gain control.

From Donnelly’s book, I am able to argue that Marquette was not interested in his personal education but in exploring and seeing what else the world had to offer. Marquette also jumped at the opportunity to go to New France because he preferred a more active life in the field.


From this webpage, I can argue that the Native Americans aided Marquette and his companions on their trek down the Mississippi River. They did so by giving the French food and other supplies as well as welcoming them into their villages. Lastly, Marquette left behind detailed notes about his journey ranging from the peoples he met to the geography around him.


Duncan argues that De Soto and his men were particularly brutal during their exploration and quest to find gold in North America. They were disrespectful and frequently violent toward the native peoples they encountered. This book helped me to see how much difference there was between the Spanish and French models of colonization.


This article helps me argue that the tribes of the Arkansas River Valley built great relationships with the French explorers like Jacques Marquette, by giving them access to their village. The tribes were Quapaw Native Americans. They controlled the entrance to
the Arkansas River as well as passage to the lower Mississippi River. By controlling this area, the Native Americans limited trade and gained prairie land to grow their crops.


Duvall’s *The Native Ground* helps me argue that the Quapaw tried to establish good relationships with the French to give themselves an ally against their Indian enemies. Likewise, the French told them of god and religion, which the Quapaw accepted. Duval also describes the development and growth of trade between the Quapaw and the French in the years after Marquette and Jolliet’s expedition.


Eifert stresses that Jolliet was a renowned cartographer and explorer after in trek down the Mississippi River with Jacques Marquette. After exploring the Mississippi, Jolliet explored the upper reaches of New France near Hudson Bay.


This article from *The William and Mary Quarterly* stresses that the Jesuits were not only trying to convert Native Americans to Catholicism, but their goal was to change how the Native Americans lived. However, many Native American tribes adopted the Jesuits' beliefs but did not adopt their culture.

Stephen Hyslop describes that the Spanish colonized California heavily for its resources, particularly gold. As a result, the Spanish enslaved Native Americans to work in their mines. The Spaniards also forced the Native Americans to adapt to Spanish culture. Jackson, Robert and Edward Castillo. *Indians, Franciscans, and Spanish Colonization: The Impact of the Mission System on California Indians*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995.

Jackson and Castillo argue that the missionary systems of California were brutal in some cases and less harmful for native converts in others. In many cases, the natives were forced to don new clothes, change their language and culture in order to conform to the Spanish way of life.


Marquette spent much of his early time in Quebec and New France learning six different Native American languages. He also founded St. Ignace Mission in the Upper Peninsula of modern Michigan. Nearing the end of his journey, Marquette concluded that the Mississippi would flow to the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.


Van Kirk states that the French fur trade was not an all-male profession. In fact fur trader wives—including métis and French women—ran trading posts while the traders were away and sometimes accompanied their husbands on expeditions.

Kenton uses primary sources to depict the journey of Marquette. For example, Marquette described the geography as one of the most beautiful sights he had ever seen. In addition, Marquette found that the land was rich and would prove to be useful for crops as well as furthering fur trading with Native Americans.


This article argues for the importance of the calumet, a symbol of peace in Native American culture, in relations between French explorers like Jacques Marquette and the Native American tribes they encountered. Since a calumet was a symbol of peace, the Native Americans took in the Frenchman and exchanged ideas and aspects of their culture in the name of peace.


Leavelle helps me argue that in the six years he spent at the St. Ignace Mission, Marquette learned six different Algonquin based languages. Marquette also showed in the waning years of his life his unwavering faith in the fact that god would help him get through the illness he had long battled. Lastly, in his encounters with the Native Americans, he was able to convert many to Catholicism.
This Canadian Museum of History webpage delves into Jolliet's life as a fur trader up to his time with Jacques Marquette. Jolliet became a well renowned fur trader in his early career. He was also the first Canadian born explorer to make a great contribution to France.


Initially, Marquette figured that the Mississippi River would lead to the Gulf of California and the Pacific Ocean. However, he found out quickly that the River led to the Gulf of Mexico. They traveled in canoes down to the mouth of the Arkansas River before turning back due to hostile tribes and the presence of the Spaniards.

"Map of Marquette and Jolliet’s exploration of the Mississippi River, 1673."

http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/post/htmls/hl_explore.html

This map shows Marquette and Jolliet’s journey down the Mississippi River Valley. The map give a sense of where they traveled on a modern day map and shows that where they stopped and turned around in Arkansas.


O'Neill's dissertation helps me argue that the not all Natives encountered by Marquette were converted. Many in fact accepted some of the ideas but did not fully convert to Catholicism. In addition, Iroquoian tribes did not take kindly to exploration and
instigation in wars of the French. Therefore, they began to war against other Native tribes on this account.


Parkman argues that Marquette and Jolliet were welcomed into Native villages due to the fact that they had acquired a calumet or peace pipe. The Native Americans invited them to their village to feast and converse. Marquette and Jolliet were surprised that they were treated so well.


Repplier describes Marquette's life and time in New France. He was originally stationed at St. Ignace in the upper peninsula of modern Michigan. During his time in France, he contracted dysentery, hindering him and eventually killing him only six years after arriving. However, in his time in New France, Marquette explored the Mississippi exchanging knowledge, culture, disease, and religion with the Natives that he and his men encountered.


*Bonds of Alliance* helps me argue that the French and the Native Americans not only traded material goods but Native American slaves as part of their attempt to build cross cultural alliances. The Native Americans did this to establish military, diplomatic, and economic relationships with the French.

Sleeper-Smith explains that Native American women married French fur traders during the fur trade. They gave birth to mixed heritage children known as métis, created families, and helped form a new culture. The Native American women and eventually métis peoples became central to the fur trade because they served as guides, knew how to do the work, and served mediators between native peoples and French traders.


Steck argues that despite being in New France missions for only six years, Marquette was able to accomplish a great deal. Ranging from learning six different Native American languages as well as writing about his encounters with tribes in Northeast Wisconsin and the upper peninsula of modern Michigan, to creating the mission at St. Ignace, Marquette accomplished a great deal in a short amount of time. However, he also states that Marquette would have been able to do more if he had not fallen ill on his journey of the Mississippi River with Louis Joliet.


Thwaites’s book helps me argue that Marquette’s bones were eventually taken back to his mission named St. Ignace. The book also helps me describe Marquette and Jolliet's encounters with Illinois and Quapaw Native Americans.


*France in America* describes how the French expanded their empire throughout the interior of the United States. The Jesuit missionaries considered the Native tribes as
“savages” that needed to be taught how to live. In the first exploration of the Mississippi by Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette, they found that many of the Native Americans were friendly due to their acquisition of a symbol of peace called a calumet.


Daniel Unser’s article helps me argue that the frontier exchange was not on a large scale, but done on an intimate level by French colonists, Native Americans, and African American slaves, who were trying to make a living in the lower Mississippi River Valley.


Usner’s book helps me argue that after the wave of exploration done by Marquette, Jolliet and La Salle, exchange began in the Mississippi River Valley between the French, and Native Americans. This exchange is described by Usner as the frontier exchange.


Waselkov’s article helps me argue that the French traded heavily in the lower Mississippi River valley. The French and Natives traded animal products and food for guns, metal cooking implements, and knives.

“Give Us a Little Milk” emphasizes that gift giving was an integral part of the fur trade in New France. It served as the foundation for economic and diplomatic alliances because it was a central part of Native American culture.


*The Middle Ground* helps me argue that France was attempting to grow their empire in North America through the fur trade. By trading the French built alliances with the Native Americans, which helped them expand their empire.


White’s *Wild Frenchmen* argues that the French not only wanted to convert Native Americans to Catholicism, but they wanted to convert Indians to French culture as well. Sophie White calls this process “Frenchification” and argues that this happened especially through the exchange of material goods.


This book helps me argue that during their expedition, Jolliet and Marquette encountered countless Native tribes who aided them in their journey down the Mississippi River. In addition, both men made maps of their journey to aid France in the expansion of the
French empire. However, when Jolliet's canoe overturned in a patch of rapids, many of Jolliet's papers were lost.


Woodburn's journal argues the importance of Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet's exploration of the Mississippi River due to their peaceful encounters with multiple Native American tribes, as well as the exchange of language, goods, and culture between the explorers and the Native Americans. He also explains the tragic ends to both Marquette and Jolliet at the end of their journeys.