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The Scientific Invention of the Mediterranean

Egypt, Morea, Algeria

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How did the notion of the Mediterranean as a region first emerge?

Between 1798 and 1842, three scientific expÉditionss—to Egypt, Peloponnesus, and Algeria—set out to describe and classify climates, flora, ethnicities, "Mediterranean" landscapes—a high point in the formation of scientific disciplines and, more generally, the history of science. Studying French governmental sponsorship of these missions reveals much about the relations between science and power. The expÉditionss produced a system of references and comparisons that contributed to the the global representation of Mediterranean space as an intellectual construct.

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