OVERLOOKING THE INDIGENOUS MIDWEST: PRINCE MAXIMILIAN OF WIED IN NEW HARMONY

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In the winter of 1832-1833, German scientist and aristocrat Prince Maximilian of Wied spent five months in the Indiana town of New Harmony during a two-year expedition to the interior of North America. Maximilian’s observations of Native Americans west of the Mississippi River have influenced European and white American perceptions of the Indigenous peoples of North America for nearly two centuries, but his time in New Harmony has gone understudied. This article explores his personal journal and his published travelogue to discover what Maximilian’s time in New Harmony reveals about his work. New Harmony exposed him to a wealth of information about Native Americans produced by educated white elites like himself. However, Maximilian missed opportunities to encounter Native Americans first-hand in and around New Harmony, which he wrongly thought required crossing the Mississippi River. Because of the biases and misperceptions caused by Maximilian’s racialized worldview and stereotypical expectations of Native American life, he overlooked the Indigenous communities and individuals living in Indiana.

Jennifer Guiliano, PhD, Chair

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Introduction

On July 4th, 1832, the American ship *Janus* arrived in Boston Harbor, having spent seven weeks crossing a stormy Atlantic Ocean from the Netherlands. On board the ship were three white European men for whom the arduous Atlantic crossing was only the first leg of a much longer journey across the continental United States. Prince Alexander Philipp Maximilian of Wied-Neuwied, a 50-year-old Prussian aristocrat and scientist, was accompanied by his personal servant David Dreidoppel as well as Swiss landscape artist Karl Bodmer, on an expedition of scientific discovery to the interior of North America. Maximilian's goal at the end of the long sea voyage was to observe and record "the rude, primitive character of the natural face of North America, and its aboriginal population."[1] Coming within eyesight of Boston for the first time, he wrote: "we Europeans sent our searching gaze into the distance for new objects."[2] Maximilian would spend the next two years painstakingly cataloguing the flora, fauna, landscapes, and Indigenous peoples of a large swath of the continent. His descriptions of Indigenous rituals alongside Bodmer's striking illustrations offered written published observations that shaped American and European understandings of these cultures.[3] While Bodmer's illustrations have received significant attention, the writings of Maximilian, particularly within the context of Indiana, have been largely understudied in English-language scholarship. This article seeks to remedy this by highlighting the narrow conception of

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[1] Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, Volume 22: Part I of Maximilian, Prince of Weid's Travels In the Interior of North America, 1832-1834.* ([S.l.]: A.H. Clark Co., 1906), 26.

[2] Maximilian of Wied, ed. by Stephen S. Witte, Marsha V Gallagher, and William J Orr, *The North American Journals of Prince Maximilian of Wied, Volume I: May 1832-April 1833,* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 37.

[3] For explorations of Bodmer's work and influence, see Robert J. Moore, *Native Americans: A Portrait: The Art and Travels of Charles Bird King, George Catlin, and Karl Bodmer,* (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1997) and Francis Flavin, "The Adventurer-Artists of the Nineteenth Century and the Image of the American Indian," *Indiana Magazine of History* 98, no. 1 (March 2002): 1–29.

Indigenous North Americans that Maximilian's racialized worldview, cultural background, education, and class position conditioned him to focus on, and how this conception led him to disregard opportunities for encountering Native Americans directly in Indiana.

Throughout the expedition, Maximilian kept a daily diary with detailed entries of his botanical, zoological, ethnographic, and geological observations. This diary has only recently been fully translated to English for the first time by the Joslyn Art Museum's Durham Center for Western Studies [Omaha, NE] and published in three volumes as *The North American Journals of Prince Maximilian of Wied* by the University of Oklahoma Press. Upon his return to Europe, Maximilian published *Reise in das Innere Nordamerika* in 1839, a two-volume travelogue accompanied by over 80 full-color aquatints of Bodmer's artwork. While the diary went untranslated until recently, a partial English translation of the travelogue titled *Travels in the Interior of North America* was published in London in 1843.[4] The translator, H. Evans Lloyd, claimed in his Translator's Preface that he omitted "only minute details of the measurements of animals, &c" in order to fit Maximilian's two-volume *Reise* into one volume, the only "principal omission" being "the very extensive vocabularies of the languages of the different Indian tribes."[5] This translation was updated and slightly altered in 1905, when Reuben Gold Thwaites republished it as part of his *Early Western Travels* series and included the vocabularies and zoological details Lloyd had excluded.[6] While Thwaites himself praised Lloyd's translation overall, he did note that Lloyd "saw fit in many cases to abbreviate the

[4] Maximilian, Prince of Wied, *Travels in the Interior of North America*, trans. H. Evans Lloyd (London: Ackermann and Co., 1843)
[5] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 25.
[6] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 15.

prince's prolix descriptions."[7] It is therefore clear that Lloyd did not omit "only minute details," but rather made more substantial editorial decisions.

In comparing the original German versions of Maximilian's personal diary and the published travelogue, German linguist and scholar of Maximilian's career Paul Schach found significant differences. On such matters as Euro-American settlers' treatment of Native Americans and the environment, Schach claims that "matters that were expressed with tact and discretion" in the published account "are recorded more fully and frankly" in the diary.[8] Given these differences between Maximilian's personal diary and his published travelogue, as well as the various omissions and modifications made in the translations of the latter, the two sources should be read with very different intended audiences in mind. Maximilian's diary entries, painstakingly and thoroughly translated by modern experts at the Durham Center, were not intended for direct public consumption and thus portray Maximilian's personal thoughts and feelings much more accurately. Meanwhile, in addition to the translation issues discussed above, Maximilian's published travelogue was written with an elite, educated European audience in mind, and thus Maximilian tempered his language and conclusions to fit into the scientific and social milieu by which it would be received. The decision to include an argument or piece of information in the published travelogue therefore indicates that Maximilian believed it was important to the European scientific discourse of the time.

[7] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 30.
[8] Paul Schach, "Maximilian, Prince of Wied (1782-1867): Reconsidered," *Great Plains Quarterly*, 853, https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsquarterly/853, 6-7.

Disembarking

Maximilian's first observations of the United States as he disembarked in Boston, Massachusetts were tinged with dissatisfaction. Boston offered "a very mediocre fireworks display" in celebration of the young country's 46th Independence Day, he wrote in his diary.[9] Maximilian, seeking to begin his study, "looked in vain for the original American race, the Indians; they have disappeared from this region."[10] Since he did not encounter actual people of the "original American race," he searched instead for scientific texts that might provide a start. Maximilian "visited all the booksellers' and engravers' stores throughout Boston but found nothing at all about Indians, a matter that was of great consequence to me."[11] Maximilian and his companions spent three weeks scouring Boston's, New York's, and Philadelphia's bookshops, museums, and private natural history collections for any information on the native inhabitants of North America but came away largely unimpressed with what they found. As an educated member of the European nobility, Maximilian strove to be informed by the most recent scholarship of his day. Near the end of his life, Maximilian had a library of over 3,000 books, including materials published in the eastern United States.[12]

From the East Coast, Maximillian, Bodmer, and Dreidoppel travelled inland to Pittsburgh via stagecoach, where they spent ten days before heading down the Ohio River by steamboat. Maximilian intended to follow it all the way to the Mississippi, where the bulk of his work would begin. Hoping to observe native North American peoples in their

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[9] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I*, 46.
[10] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 45.
[11] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 46.
[12] Michael G. Noll, "Prince Maximilian's America: The Narrated Landscapes of a German Naturalist and Explorer." (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2000), 233.

“original state,” he believed he would have to cross the Mississippi River and enter the western United States to observe Native Americans first-hand. This belief—that there were no authentic Indigenous peoples east of the Mississippi—constrained Maximillian’s observations in Indiana. This article demonstrates, though, that Maximilian did encounter Indigenous peoples prior to crossing the Mississippi, despite travel limitations due to weather. It was not until after leaving New Harmony, Indiana in March of 1833, when the expedition crossed the threshold of the Mississippi River and reached St. Louis, that Maximilian identified members of the Sauk and Meskwaki tribes and considered his goal of first-hand observation accomplished. The expedition then travelled up the Missouri River along the trade routes of the American Fur Company, encountering the Mandan and the Hidatsa. The experiences of Maximilian and his companions before crossing the Mississippi are often written of as merely a prelude to their later activities. Yet, this article demonstrates that Maximillian was in daily proximity to Native peoples and may have gained greater understanding of Indigenous peoples and their lives had he engaged with these people.

The five months spent in New Harmony account for nearly a quarter of Maximilian’s two-year sojourn in North America. Throughout the five months, however, Maximilian’s specific views on race caused him to overlook the “original Americans” he could encounter in Indiana. Instead, second-hand sources of information emanating from white, educated explorers and naturalists like himself were of interest rather than the Indigenous peoples who shared his camp and those who lived in Indiana permanently. New Harmony, then, was anything but an unfortunate and necessary layover during the expedition. Instead, it is a pivotal site that illustrates the power of racialized thinking.

The Lands of the United States in Maximillian's Mental Landscape

Maximilian painted a dreary picture of Native American life east of the Mississippi River throughout both his personal diary and his published account of his travels. In Maximilian's mental landscape of North America, the Mississippi acted as a pivotal, continent-wide axis between east and west. It also demarcated between those Native Americans still living in a "peaceful abode" in the west and those still east of the river who had "degenerated":

> The indulgent reader, following the author beyond the frontier of the United States, will have to direct his attention to those extensive plains – those cheerless, desolate prairies, the western boundary of which is formed by the snow-covered chain of the Rocky Mountains, or the Oregon, where many tribes of the aborigines still enjoy a peaceful abode; while their brethren in the eastern part of the continent are supplanted, extirpated, degenerated, in the face of constantly increasing immigration, or have been forced across the Mississippi, where they have for the most part perished.[13]

Maximilian's use of the word "degenerated" connotes the eastern tribes' loss of cultural distinctiveness, which he viewed as just as damaging as the outright violence of removal. Maximilian also referred to them "supplanted" and "extirpated," blaming the violence of the American government's Indian policy and Euro-American settlers' behavior for the perceived absence of a peaceful existence for Native Americans east of the river.

Maximilian directly criticized the 1830 Indian Removal Act, which authorized President Andrew Jackson to forcibly relocate the so-called Five Civilized Tribes of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole from the Southeast to the West.[14] Maximilian lamented in his journal that "now one already has to cross the Mississippi to find [a native Indian]. During the course of this winter, they even want to drive across the

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[13] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 18-19.

[14] President Jackson's Message to Congress "On Indian Removal", December 6, 1830; Records of the United States Senate, 1789-1990; Record Group 46; Records of the United States Senate, 1789-1990; National Archives.

Mississippi the last settled remnants of these nations, the Cherokees, Choctaws, and other peoples – an act of sheer brutality! Such is the vaunted liberty of America!"[15] The Indian Removal Act was a shift in United States policy toward Native presence east of the Mississippi not in ends, but in means. Before its enactment, Federal policy was rhetorically committed to coexistence, if Native groups adopted European cultural and economic practices – or, in Maximilian's vocabulary, as long as they culturally "degenerated." However, in a private and remarkably honest 1803 letter to then-Governor of the Indiana Territory William Henry Harrison, President Thomas Jefferson explained how this policy of acculturation was ultimately aimed at obtaining Native land:

> Our system is to live in perpetual peace with the Indians… we wish to draw them to agriculture, to spinning and weaving… When they withdraw themselves to the culture of a small piece of land, they will perceive how useless to them are their extensive forests, and will be willing to pare them off from time to time in exchange for necessaries for the farms and families… We shall push our trading uses, and be glad to see the good and influential individuals among them run in debt, because we observe that when these debts get beyond what the individuals can pay, they become willing to lop them off by a cession of lands.[16]

Jefferson's notion of "perpetual peace" relied on a system of economic coercion to push a westernized lifestyle financed by debt. This policy was not only designed to convert Native Americans' lifestyle to the Jeffersonian vision of private smallholding farmers, but to tie that lifestyle change to enough debt to force them to "pare" and "lop off" sections of their "extensive forests." Jefferson's aim, like Jackson's, was land cession to enable white colonial expansion. Jackson's election and the passage of the Indian Removal Act dropped the façade of "perpetual peace". It accelerated outright relocation

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[15] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I*, 235.

[16] "From Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison, 27 February 1803," *Founders Online,* National Archives, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0500.

and dispossession of the Five Civilized Tribes targeted by Jackson.[17] The Indian Removal Act was, in the words of historian John P. Bowes, "a continuation of, rather than a transition from, the civilization policy begun in the late eighteenth century" because both shared the common goal of land cessions.[18]

Despite Jefferson's rhetoric of peace, then, Indian removal in the Indiana Territory, the land east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio, had always involved land dispossession through coercive treaty agreements and military force. Harrison negotiated a series of treaties between 1803 and 1809 that ceded control of the southern third of what is today Indiana, including the territory on which New Harmony was built just a few years later.[19]

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[17]John P. Bowes, *Land Too Good for Indians: Northern Indian Removal,* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), Location 136, Kindle. The outdated term Five Civilized Tribes, despite its anachronism, is still in wide use today to refer to the targets of Jackson's Indian Removal Act, the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole.

[18] Bowes, *Land Too Good for Indians,* location 136.

[19] James H. Madison, *Hoosiers: A New History of Indiana,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 35-36.

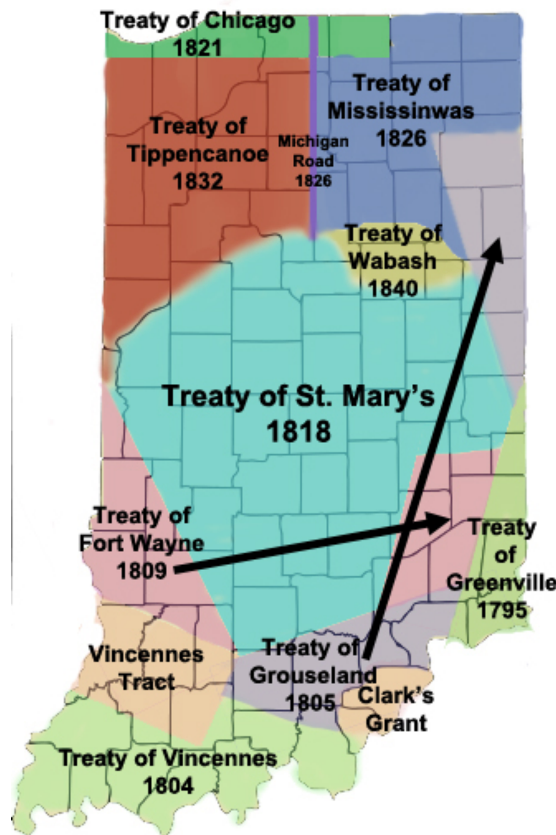

Figure 1: Indiana Land Cession Treaties[20]

Maximilian's critical outlook toward the U.S. government and its settler citizens allowed him to see the full range of the cultural, economic, and military strategies the United States was deploying against eastern Native Americans. It did however obscure ongoing acts of resistance near to New Harmony. Native resistance to removal in what is today Indiana began in conjunction with white settlers appearing in the region. After the American Revolution (1775-1783) freed the former colonies from restrictions on western settlement established by the British with the Proclamation of 1763, white settlement in the Ohio River Valley increased rapidly. Four hundred Americans were already settled in

[20] Charles Edward, *Indiana Indian Treaties,* 2009, Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Indiana_Indian_treaties.jpg#filelinks

Vincennes, a town in southwestern Indiana, by the mid-1780s.[21] As early as 1785, Shawnee war leader Kekewepelethe warned American settlers against crossing the Ohio: "You are drawing so close to us that we can almost hear the noise of your axes felling our Trees and settling our Country… we shall take up a Rod and whip them back to your side."[22] Native leaders identified that settlers' priority was obtaining, clearing, and exploiting Native land. Shawnee leaders like Kekewepelethe, Blue Jacket (Weyapiersenwah), Tecumseh and his brother Tenskwatawa would cobble together a series of confederacies over the next twenty years between the Shawnee, Miami, Potawatomi, and other Indigenous peoples to present a strong military and cultural resistance to ever-increasing encroachment north of the Ohio by settler-colonizers. Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa's confederacy would confront William Henry Harrison, whom Jefferson had written to, and his territorial government.[23]

Despite land cession treaties and military defeats, Native removal and the accompanying resistance was still very much an ongoing and incomplete process in Indiana at the time of Maximilian's visit to New Harmony in the winter of 1832-1833. Forced land cession treaties and Native refusal to comply continued throughout the 1830s, and removal was never fully completed. Maximilian contradictorily bemoaned the total removal of Native Americans east of the Mississippi while simultaneously acknowledging their remaining presence. On February 3rd, over three months into his stay in New Harmony, Maximilian lamented that "Unfortunately, the Indians have now been

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[21] Madison, 26-27.

[22] Quoted in Douglas R. Hurt, *The Indian Frontier, 1763-1846,* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 27.

[23] Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa's resistance movement culminated at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811, where Harrison attacked and destroyed the movement's main settlement of Prophetstown, located on the Wabash River in what is today northern Indiana.

driven so far back that anyone who is reluctant to travel very far can hardly see any of them. Yesterday Mr. Maclure said, and very rightly, that because of the settlements here in America, it is just as impossible for the original inhabitants to maintain themselves as it is for native wildlife… Thus the Indians disappeared."[24] But according to historian John P. Bowes, "From 1832 to 1836, federal treaty commissioners signed nearly 20 different land cession treaties with Potawatomi bands living throughout the northern third of the state," a process that did not culminate until 1838 in the infamous Potawatomi Trail of Death, a forced relocation of 800 members of the Yellow River Potawatomis that killed around 40 people.[25] Maximilian himself recognized the continued Potawatomi presence in northern Indiana in a footnote in his journal, relaying a newspaper report listing tribes "still living in the territory of the United States" that included the tribe.[26] Maximilian's only other mention of the Potawatomi came in a long summary of Benjamin Smith Barton's *New Views of the Origin of the Tribes etc. of America*, which he studied for information on Native history and languages while in New Harmony.[27] In what will emerge as a pattern throughout his time in New Harmony, Maximilian showed more interest in studying the work of elite white writers like Smith Barton on eastern Native Americans than in the possibility of encountering groups like the Potawatomi himself. His contradictory treatment of the Potawatomi's remaining presence in Indiana stemmed not from lack of knowledge of their presence, but from his perception of any remaining Native American communities after removal efforts as "degenerated."

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[24] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 284.

[25] John P. Bowes, *Black Hawk and the War of 1832: Removal in the North*, (New York: Chelsea House, 2007), 98-99.

[26] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I*, 235 footnote M39.

[27] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 278-280. See also footnote 167 for a biographical summary of Smith Barton.

Maximilian also recorded Smith Barton's thoughts on the Miami Indians, treating their presence in Indiana as occurring exclusively in the past. In a footnote citing his sources of information about the Wabash River, Maximilian noted that "several years ago the Miamis still roamed the prairies of the Wabash," describing their presence in the past tense.[28] However, Miami presence continued in Indiana beyond the time of Maximilian's visit and into the present day.[29] Through a combination of treaty provisions, lawsuits, and legislation, hundreds of Miami—many of whom owned individual land allotments, were of mixed descent, or were otherwise partially acculturated into white settler society—maintained residence in Indiana.[30] The Piankashaw, who were closely allied with the Miami along the Wabash, received a similarly brief mention in Maximilian's diary: "just a few years ago, hunting parties of hostile Piankishaw Indians occasionally roamed through this area. Since the last war, they have again been driven farther back. In that region there is also a Piankishaw village which has likewise since disappeared."[31] For the Piankashaw, as with the Potawatomi and the Miami, Maximilian's focus was on their past and his perception that they have been "driven farther back" and "disappeared," not on any possibility of encountering the remaining Native Americans still living in Indiana. Maximilian's third and final mention of the Miami was an anecdote about past Miami resistance leader Little Turtle, described later in this article.

In a short encapsulation of the history of the Lenape (Delaware) people, Maximilian related that the Lenape had been completely removed from the Delaware

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[28] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 212 footnote M10.
[29] Miami Nation of Indians of the State of Indiana. Official Miami Indians of Indiana. Accessed July 4, 2021. http://www.miamiindians.org/.
[30] Elizabeth J. Glenn and Stewart Rafert, *The Native Americans,* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society Press, 2009), 65.
[31] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 325.

River valley, echoing language he used in discussing the Indian Removal Act. "A great part of them dwelt, subsequently, on the White River, in Indiana, after they had been much reduced by the whites," he wrote, "but, in 1818, they were compelled to sell the whole of this tract of country also, to the Government of the United States, and lands have been allotted to them beyond the Mississippi, where some half-degenerate remnants of them still live."[32] Maximilian, emphasizing that the Lenape were "compelled" to sell their land, recognized the coercion at the heart of the Jeffersonian civilization policy. The events related by Maximilian, including settlement along the White River and their removal west of the Mississippi in 1818 following the Treaty of Saint Mary's, are broadly accurate.[33] He even visited Gnadenhutten, a Moravian settlement in Pennsylvania that was attacked by the Delaware, and acknowledge the role it played in the Lenape's removal from the area.[34] Maximilian went on to say he was "filled with melancholy by the reflection that, in the whole of the extensive state of Pennsylvania, there is not a trace remaining of the aboriginal population. O! Land of Liberty!"[35] However, Lenape peoples remained in Pennsylvania after the events Maximilian highlighted.[36] They continue to reside in Pennsylvania today. Thus, as Maximilian travelled from Pittsburgh along the Ohio River, the lands that became Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania were not without Indigenous peoples. Rather, they were deemed less important, and barely recorded, in Maximilian's journals.

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[32] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 89-90.
[33] William C. Sturtevant, *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 15: The Northeast,* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 224.
[34] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 145.
[35] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 90.
[36] "Who Are The Lenape?" The Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania. Accessed June 20, 2021. https://www.lenape-nation.org/.

New Harmony, Indiana

Maximilian intended his visit to New Harmony to be a brief detour as he traveled the Ohio River towards St. Louis and the American West. Facing an unspecified illness that intermittently left him bedridden, however, Maximilian ultimately spent five months in the town over the winter of 1832-1833. This unplanned hiatus, far from being detrimental to the expedition, proved influential in Maximilian's North American writings: "at any other place in this country I should have extremely regretted such a loss of time, but here I derived much instruction and entertainment," he told his European readers in his published travelogue.[37] Most subsequent accounts of Maximilian's expedition to North America treat his time spent in New Harmony as an interesting tangent, if it is mentioned at all. In the introductory essay in Volume I of Maximilian's *North American Journals,* Schach briefly refers to New Harmony as "the best possible place to prepare to study Indian cultures."[38] Schach's characterization of New Harmony as important in Maximilian's developing knowledge of Native Americans is a rare acknowledgement of the important role the town played in the expedition. Geographer Michael G Noll's dissertation *Prince Maximilian's America* spends about a dozen pages on the town, focusing on Maximilian's descriptions of the physical landscape of the Wabash River and environs, with little attention to how the terrain was tied to cultural identity.[39] Historian Harry Liebersohn's *Aristocratic Encounters,* which devotes a chapter to Maximilian's expedition, dedicates only one paragraph to his time in New Harmony.[40]

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[37] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 186.

[38] Paul Schach, "An Introduction to Maximilian, Prince and Scientist," in *The North American Journals, Volume I,* xxxix.

[39] Noll, *Prince Maximilian's America,* 93-105.

[40] Harry Liebersohn, *Aristocratic Encounters: European Travelers and North American Indians,* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 140-141.

These brief mentions hint at opportunities to further explore New Harmony as essential to Maximilian's expedition.

In this idiosyncratic, remote Indiana town, Maximilian found himself surrounded by a group of white, Enlightenment-educated men who had just the experience and expertise about North America that Maximilian could both recognize and relate to. As historian Ryan Rokicki argues, the town's foundations in education and Enlightenment values produced an emphasis on science in the community.[41] Arising from the scientific revolution in the 16th and 17th centuries, Enlightenment thinkers like Maximilian and the residents of New Harmony he would come to know believed in the rational, objective observation and categorization of the natural world. These methods could not only reveal the truth about the natural world, but also could improve humanity and allow it to progress.[42]

As an Enlightenment thinker, Maximilian represented himself as a neutral observer of nature seeking to accurately record, and thus understand, the natural world. This neutrality included referring to himself in the third person as "the observer" when addressing his audience in *Travels in the Interior of North America*.[43] Maximillian was, like many Enlightenment thinkers, highly educated in a wide range of subjects including zoology, botany, anatomy, and ethnology. As a child, he was tutored privately by Christian Friedrich Hoffman, an experienced naturalist and archaeologist, who had been hired by Maximilian's mother to excavate Roman ruins near Neuwied Castle on the

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[41] Ryan Rokicki, "Science in Utopia: New Harmony's naturalist legacy," *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History,* 26, no. 2 (2014).
[42] William Bristow, "Enlightenment." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2017. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2017. https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/enlightenment/.
[43] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 177.

family property in the Rhineland (Germany). As a member of the nobility, Maximilian had special hunting privileges in the forests and wildlands of his principality, which further enabled his skills as an observer of the natural world, as well as a hunter and taxidermist.[44] After his service in the Napoleonic Wars (1800-1815), Maximilian enhanced his training in science at the University of Göttingen under Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, a professor of medicine, a zoologist, and a pioneer of physical anthropology. Blumenbach's influence on Maximilian will be explored later in this article.

The settlement of Harmony, Indiana was established in 1814 by the Harmony Society, a white German separatist Lutheran sect led by George Rapp. Rapp had a vision of a communal society built on religious principles under his direct control. The Harmonists, or Rappites as they were sometimes referred to, had settled in Pennsylvania after fleeing persecution in Germany in 1804. Seeking respite first in Pennsylvania, they then bought land on the Wabash River and settled Harmony, Indiana in 1814. The Rappites then sold the town in 1824 and moved back to Western Pennsylvania.[45] Scottish industrialist Robert Owen, seeking a place to create his own utopian communal society, bought the town.[46] Owen, despite being a wealthy industrialist, was an early Utopian Socialist. He wanted to create a society where all people owned property in common and

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[44] Noll, *Prince Maximilian's America,* 30.
[45] Karl John Richard Arndt, *George Rapp's Harmony Society, 1785-1847,* Rev. ed., (Rutherford [N.J.]: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1972), 32.
[46] Historians of utopian communities tend to divide examples into two major categories: religious communities and secular communities. Some historians argue that this split represents a conflict between secular and religious forces in American history, while others, such as Robert P. Sutton, see continuities between the two forms of communal utopias in that they both represent "a persistent, unbroken expression of what some Americans, and some Europeans, thought the United States ought to be."[46] Sutton uses New Harmony, which began as a religious utopian community and later became a scientific one, as the prime example of this continuity. Robert P Sutton, *Communal Utopias and the American Experience: Secular Communities, 1824-2000,* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2004).

all work was done on a voluntary basis. William Maclure, another wealthy Scottish industrialist who assisted Owen in establishing the second Utopian community in New Harmony, wrote in an 1829 letter to educator and longtime New Harmony resident Marie Duclos Fretageot that the main purpose of the New Harmony experiment was "the Dissemination of Knowledge, on which alone depends all the benefit to be derived from our or any similar plan of operations."[47] Owen saw the monopolization of knowledge by the wealthy and powerful as a cause of inequality and injustice. He believed that "knowledge dispersed to the masses would set them free and equalize power and property."[48] Owen's attempt at constructing his "New Moral World" in New Harmony then included a printing press for distributing knowledge, in addition to the textile factory, distillery, and other production facilities built by the Rappites.[49]

With their project's foundation in these Enlightenment principles, Owen and Maclure recruited an ensemble of influential naturalists and educators in Philadelphia connected to the Academy of Natural Sciences—the leading naturalist organization in North America—to join their experiment.[50] In December 1825, Maclure arranged for his recruited intellectuals to embark for New Harmony from Philadelphia on a keelboat named *Philanthropist,* but which its passengers nicknamed the "*Boatload of Knowledge*". While the communal economic system Owen established failed to be productive and was

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[47] William Maclure, Marie Duclos Fretageot, ed. Josephine Mirabella Elliott, *Partnership for Posterity: the Correspondence of William Maclure and Marie Duclos Fretageot, 1820-1833*, (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Society, 1994), 561.

[48] Donald E. Pitzer, "The Original Boatload of Knowledge Down the Ohio River: William Maclure's and Robert Owen's Transfer of Science and Education to the Midwest, 1825-1826," *The Ohio Journal of Science*. v89, n5, December 1989, 128.

[49] Sutton, *Communal Utopias and the American Experience,* 5-8.

[50] Maclure himself was a leading geologist and the second president of the Academy. Elliot, *Partnership for Prosperity,* 4-5.

abandoned after only two years, the transfer of leading naturalists from Philadelphia to New Harmony meant that the remote community quickly became home to some of the leading intellectuals of the time.

The two New Harmony scholars who most influenced Maximilian were Charles-Alexandre Lesueur and Thomas Say. Lesueur, educated at French military academies in the 1790s, was one of twenty scientists to embark on a military-directed scientific expedition to Australia and Tasmania organized by Napoleon from 1800-1804. Disillusioned with life in France after the fall of Napoleon in 1815, Lesueur met William Maclure in Paris, who convinced him to move to North America. With his scholarly pedigree, Lesueur quickly established himself as one of the premier members of the Philadelphia scientific community. By the time of his move to New Harmony on the *Boatload of Knowledge*, he had participated in naturalist expeditions throughout much of eastern North America, including a joint US-Canadian border mapping expedition from 1819-1822.[51] Thomas Say was a co-founder of the Academy in addition to being a naturalist. Famous for his study of insects and mollusks, he was an experienced scientific traveler, having participated in specimen-collecting expeditions to Georgia and Florida. He also joined Maclure on his geological study trips throughout North America.[52] It was not Say's travels to Georgia and Florida, home of the Cherokee, Creek, and Seminole that interested Maximilian, though. Instead, Say's involvement in an 1819-1820 U.S. War Department exploratory expedition along the Missouri River under Major Stephen Long interested Maximilian most.

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[51] Patricia Tyson Stroud, "Lesueur, Charles Alexandre (1778-1846), artist and naturalist." *American National Biography.* 1 Feb. 2000, https://doi.org/10.1093/anb/9780198606697.article.1300987.
[52] Pitzer, "The Original Boatload of Knowledge," 129.

Maximilian met Say his first day in New Harmony, October 20th, introducing him in his journal as "this interesting man, who had undertaken significant journeys to the Rocky Mountains and into the westerly countries with Major Long."[53] On November 2nd, Maximilian recorded that Say told him "some interesting things about his stay among the Indians when he traveled up the Missouri with Major Long."[54] The two discussed the expedition on at least three more occasions.[55] Say had already encountered Native American inhabitants along Maximilian's intended route west.[56] The Long Expedition was "the United States government's first expedition of exploration to be accompanied by trained scientists," notes historian and Say biographer Patricia Tyson Stroud. Say was one of four scientists accompanying the expedition led by Long, a member of the U.S. Topographical Engineers, all of whom dressed in military uniform "designed to impress the Indians."[57] Like Lesueur's Napoleonic expedition to Australia, Say's presence on the Long Expedition indicates how intertwined scientific expeditions were with colonial military processes. Secretary of War John C. Calhoun wrote in a letter to Long that "the cause of Science as well as the interest and reputation of the Country is involved in the success of the expedition." Stroud rightly notes "the government's utilitarian motives – its interest in opening the West for settlement."[58] Maximilian relied heavily on the knowledge Say and Lesueur gained on these expeditions, without acknowledging their

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[53] Wied, *North American Journnals, Volume I,* 204.
[54] Wied, *North American Journnals, Volume I,* 216.
[55] Wied, *North American Journnals, Volume I,* 274, 331.
[56] Stroud, Patricia Tyson. *Thomas Say: New World Naturalist.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992, 72-93, https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015033149959.
[57] Stroud, *Thomas Say,* 71.
[58] Stroud, *Thomas Say,* 77.

contribution to the very processes of expansion and dispossession he decried in his denouncement of the Indian Removal Act and elsewhere.

Maximilian arrived in New Harmony having focused his time in the eastern United States on botanical and zoological pursuits rather than his study of Native American history and ethnology. Stuck on what he considered the wrong side of the Mississippi River to achieve his goal of first-hand observation of the "original American race," Maximilian considered himself lucky to be surrounded by this group of experienced naturalists and explorers. Once he recovered from his illness enough to make productive use of his time, a daily pattern of behavior emerged in Maximilian's journal entries. His mornings were often spent reading. His afternoons were filled with hunting, birdwatching, and botanizing. His evenings were taken up by conversation with Thomas Say, Charles Alexandre Lesueur, and less frequently other New Harmony residents. A representative example is the entry for January 17th, 1833:

> I spent a pleasant morning reading my letters from Germany. Afterward I went out and found it very cold but calm and very nice weather. I saw a coven of prairie hens. In the afternoon a man brought four opposums, one mink, a rust-bellied squirrel, and a pheasant (*Tetrao umbellus),* all of which I kept. Later Russel also brought a turkey hen, so that Dreidoppel had quite enough to do. Visit that evening at the home of Mr. Lesueur. When I went home it was cold and the stars were twinkling brightly.[59]

This activity fit in perfectly with the lifestyle of free, self-driven scientific inquiry Say and Lesueur had developed in the town. Despite the cold winter weather and his intermittent health problems, Maximilian spent much of his time traversing the landscape around New Harmony outdoors in active pursuit of plant and animal specimens, much like Say and Lesueur had spent their last several years. William Maclure described their

[59] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 272.

activities and the intellectual environment in New Harmony in a letter to his friend and Academy of Natural Sciences member Reuben Haines, who was concerned their scientific abilities were going to waste by living in such an out-of-the-way location instead of the hotbed of the Academy back in Philadelphia: "at Harmony [Say] is on a new field for all the objects he studies and has a printing press at his command… he is perfectly free to follow his amusements in all the branches of science which pleases him… Lesueur is on the field favorable to his collections either for himself or his European correspondents." Back in Philadelphia, by contrast, Say and Lesueur had been living in squalid conditions and worked at the behest of other more senior members of the Academy, "neither receiving any gratification at all for their labors… it is gratifying to those who have their independent occupations and amusements to be out of the crowd."[60] Indeed, according to scholar of New Harmony Josephine Mirabella Elliot, the two "accomplished much fieldwork" during the years they spent in the town.[61] Say published one of his major influential works, *American Conchology,* from New Harmony in six volumes between 1830 and his death in 1834.[62]

One of the main topics of conversation between Maximilian and Say were published travel accounts, histories, and ethnographies about the American West and Native Americans. Having left Boston empty-handed and without literatures on Indigenous peoples, Maximilian searched New York and Philadelphia with only marginally more success. One of the few exceptions was a museum in Philadelphia run

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[60] Maclure, William, in Elliot, *Partnership for Posterity,* 1105-1106.
[61] Letter from Maclure to Haines transcribed in Elliot, *Partnership for Posterity,* 669.
[62] Thomas Say, Lucy Way Sistare Say, and T. A Conrad. *American Conchology, Or, Descriptions of the Shells of North America: Illustrated by Coloured Figures From Original Drawings Executed From Nature.* New-Harmony, Ind.: Printed at the School Press, 1830.

by Titian Peale, another member of the Academy of Natural Sciences and one of Say's companions on the Long Expedition, where he saw "several Indian scenes in oil" painted during the Long Expedition "that are mediocre but provide an interesting depiction of the life of these people."[63] In New Harmony, by contrast, Maximilian found that Say "has a very good library at his disposal here. At present he is again expecting books from Europe, which cost several thousand dollars."[64] With the financial backing of William Maclure, Say acquired one of the best libraries in the United States. Yet, despite Say's extensive collection, Maximilian remained frustrated by the difficulty of finding books on Indigenous peoples. In *Travels in the Interior of North America*, the published version of his travelogue, he informed his elite European audience of the lack of American publishing on this topic: "It is next to impossible to collect anything complete respecting the history of many exterminated Indian tribes. Messrs. Morse, Smith Barton, Edwin James, Say, Duponceau, Schoolcraft, Cass, Mc Kenny, and some others, are an honorable exception in this respect."[65] Of these eight authors Maximilian deemed worthy of praise, many were connected to Thomas Say and the Long Expedition. Maximilian relied on a very narrow range of written sources, mostly connected to either or both the Academy of Natural Sciences and the Long Expedition. This overrepresented the authority of these well-educated, white naturalists and explorers in providing information about Indigenous peoples.

One of Maximilian's eight "honorable exceptions" was Edwin James, a botanist and doctor, who compiled and edited the *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the*

[63] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 71.
[64] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 206.
[65] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 70.

Rocky Mountains, the official travel account of the Long Expedition.[66] This book was the start of a long writing career for James, who spent the 1820s and 1830s fighting a lonely battle against the prevailing trends of American Western travel writing. Most accounts of the time at best ignored, and at worst celebrated and encouraged, Indian removal and extermination. James, much like Maximilian, combined environmental conservationism with a concern for the preservation of Indigenous cultures.[67] Thomas Say was the author of Chapter 10 in the *Account*, which included "Some account of the Kiawa, Kaskaia, Arrapaho, and Shienne Indians."[68] Say's role in the Long Expedition was "primary responsibility for conducting Native American studies."[69] This work of Say's earned him inclusion in Maximilian's short list of exceptional writers on Native Americans alongside James.[70] His many evening conversations with Say about the Long Expedition must have reinforced it in Maximilian's mind as one of the essential publications on Native Americans.

As a benefit of his residence in New Harmony, Maximilian was able to call on Say's first-hand knowledge of the Long Expedition to clarify and expand his understanding of James' writing. One "interesting conversation" between Say and

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[66] Edwin James, Stephen H Long, Thomas Say, Samuel Seymour, Titian Ramsay Peale, George Delleker, J. H Young, et al. *Account of an Expedition From Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains: Performed In the Years 1819 and '20, by Order of the Hon. J.C. Calhoun, Sec'y of War, Under the Command of Major Stephen H. Long,* (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey and I. Lea, 1823), https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/BAYKDR579742023/NCCO?u=iulib_iupui&sid=bookmark-NCCO&xid=8f3a6389&pg=1

[67]Kyhl Lyndgaard,, "Landscapes of Removal and Resistance: Edwin James's Nineteenth-Century Cross-Cultural Collaborations" (2010). Great Plains Quarterly, 2519, http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsquarterly/2519, 36-38.

[68] James, *Account of an Expedition,* p. 173.

[69] Lyndgaard, "Landscapes of Removal and Resistance," 41.

[70] For lists of items Maximilian's library, see "Bibliography: Maximilian's Sources" in *The North American Journals, Volumes I, II and III*, and "Appendix B, Maximilian's Library," in Noll, p. 233-237. The only other writing of Say's that appears in Maximilian's library concerns conchology and entomology, not ethnography.

Maximilian on December 16th revolved around James' 1830 memoir of John Tanner, a white man who had been kidnapped as a child and raised by Ojibwe Indians. While the captivity narrative was a popular literary style at the time, James used Tanner's story to criticize Indian removal and highlight its devastating effects on Native American families and communities.[71] In the book's introduction, James denounced Jackson's Indian Removal Act in language like Maximilian's, calling a policy of removal "more pregnant with injustice and cruelty to these people than any other."[72]

In his journal entry about their December 16th conversation, Maximilian noted that Say recommended James and Tanner's captivity narrative over John Dunn Hunter's *Memoirs of a Captivity among the Indians of North America,* which was also among Maximilian's personal library. Say alerted him that Hunter's account was "largely fabricated," but that Tanner's account could be trusted because "Mr. Say had seen Tanner himself" during the Long Expedition.[73] Hunter's autobiographical *Memoirs* centered on his claim of having lived among the Kickapoo, Osage, and Kaw since the age of two.

Though highly popular with the public, *Memoirs* was controversial among elite white Indian experts of the time. The most vociferous of Hunter's critics, Lewis Cass, one of Maximilian's cited "honorable exceptions" and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Michigan Territory, wrote an article accusing Hunter of fabricating his life story in the journal *North American Review*.[74] Lacking any direct experience across the

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[71] Lyndgaard, "Landscapes of Removal and Resistance," 44.

[72] Edwin James, "Introductory Chapter," in John Tanner, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner, (U.S, Interpreter at the Saut de Ste. Marie,) During Thirty Years Residence among the Indians in the Interior of North America,* (New York: G. & C. & H. Carvili, 1830), 18.

[73] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 247, footnote 109.

[74] Historians and other scholars have since found evidence confirming much of Hunter's biography and knowledge of the language and culture of the Osage and other native groups. One such scholar, professor of English Literature Andy Doolen, argues that it was partially Hunter's rejection of the "catastrophic

Mississippi, Maximilian relied on the word of elite, educated white men like Say and Cass as authoritative sources on the veracity of published works like Hunter's, while dismissing Hunter's own first-hand experience based only on the word of Say.

Eight days after their conversation about Tanner and Hunter, on the afternoon of December 24th, before "Christmas Eve was welcomed with heavy charges of powder by the young people of Harmony… directly beneath our windows,"[75] Maximilian and Say again discussed "Indians and various kinds of travel accounts of North America." This included Lewis Cass's *On the North American Indians* and Pierre Etienne Du Ponceau's work "about the Indian languages of North America."[76] Du Ponceau, like Cass and Say, was another member of Maximilian's list of "honorable exceptions." Endorsed by Say, Du Ponceau's background and biography further enhanced his authority in Maximilian's eyes. Du Ponceau was a French linguist who recorded Native American languages for preservation and translated several travel accounts of Europeans in North America, including Maximilian's idol Alexander von Humboldt, another aristocratic German naturalist and explorer who had launched expeditions to the Americas some thirty years before Maximilian.[77] Maximilian would take up the practice of recording Indian language fragments later on during his expedition, ultimately including a long list of words from various Native American languages and their German translations in an appendix to his

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ideology of white racial supremacy" that led to Cass and others' efforts to discredit him. Andy Doolen, "Claiming Indigenous Space: John Dunn Hunter and the Fredonian Rebellion." *Early American Literature* 53, no. 3 (September 22, 2018): 685.

[75] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 252.

[76] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 251, see especially footnote M53.

[77] Gerard W. Gawalt, "Du Ponceau, Pierre Étienne (1760-1844), scholar and lawyer." *American National Biography Online.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1 Feb. 2000, https://doi.org/10.1093/anb/9780198606697.article.1100256.

published *Travels in North America*.[78] As mentioned above, he also cited Benjamin Smith Barton's work on Native American languages, which earned Smith Barton a spot on Maximilian's "honorable exceptions" as well. Maximillian repeatedly displayed bias toward the word of these highly educated white male sources as a result of sharing the same trans-Atlantic intellectual training that many of them participated in. Maximilian's strongest educational influence, and perhaps the largest influence on his North American expedition, was the German anatomist and early anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach.

[78] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 395, see Footnote M1.

German Racial Fantasies Imported to New Harmony

Johann Friedrich Blumenbach was already a renowned anatomist who had influenced the development of zoology and anthropology and the debate about the origins of humanity when Maximilian arrived at the University of Göttingen. This debate divided polygenists, who believed different human races evolved separately in different geographic locations and descended from distinct proto-human species, and monogenists like Blumenbach, who believed that the human species had a single origin. Blumenbach categorized humanity into five "varieties:" Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, and Malay.[79] His theory stipulated that Native Americans were a "transitional" variety: "that is, the American is the passage from the Caucasian to the Mongolian."[80] Blumenbach himself was an antiracist and an advocate for the abolition of slavery. He insisted that there were no innate differences in ability between the human "varieties." Blumenbach used the concept of "degeneration" to explain how these varieties had become different from the original Caucasian without having originated from different species. He described degeneration as simply a change in anatomy over time due not only to environmental factors such as climate, but also to lifestyle and cultural factors, or what Blumenbach called "the mode of life."[81] In Blumenbach's usage, degeneration was the process through which different varieties of an animal, including humans, could become different from one another without being considered fundamentally different species. When applied to humans in this way, degeneration theory lent itself to ideas of racial equality because it attributed the differing characteristics of the human "varieties" to

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[79] Schach, "Maximilian, Prince of Wied: Reconsidered," 10.
[80] Thomas Bendyche, "Editor's Preface," in Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *Anthropological Treatises of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach.* ([S.l.]: London, Published for the Anthropological Society, by Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1865), xi, https://archive.org/details/anthropologicalt00blumuoft.
[81] Blumenbach, *Anthropological Treatises*, 121.

changeable environmental and cultural factors, not to fundamental, unalterable biological differences.[82]

When Maximilian referred to Native North Americans like the Five Civilized Tribes as “degenerated,” he was applying Blumenbach’s theory to what he understood to be happening on the ground. Maximilian believed that the lifestyle changes that men like Jefferson and Jackson were forcing upon Native Americans would destroy their cultural practices. This would then change the anatomical properties that distinguished the “original American race” from other varieties. Forcing them across the Mississippi into a new geography and environment could likewise shift those fundamental and distinct anatomical properties. His concern over their “degeneration” was therefore an aspect of his concern for the preservation of Native Americans and their way of life. It also, however, biased Maximilian against recognizing Native Americans who were not living in their “original state,” either through adopting new cultural practices or through physically relocating, as still being a member of the “original American race” he was searching for. Thus, Maximilian could acknowledge the remaining presence of the Potawatomi in Indiana, for example, while simultaneously claiming that all examples of the “original American race” had been pushed west of the Mississippi.

Blumenbach’s influence and Maximilian’s application of his ideas in the North American context are crucial to understanding Maximilian’s anthropological activities globally in addition to his activities in New Harmony specifically, as it guided Maximilian’s interpretation of the world he would encounter. The two were in “constant

[82] Despite Blumenbach’s personal antiracism, his schema would later influence ideas of white supremacy and racial hierarchy. Marvin Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A History of Theories of Culture,* (New York: Crowell, 1968), 85-90.

correspondence," as Schach notes, during Maximilian's 1815 expedition to Brazil. Maximilian sent skulls and other bones from South America to add to Blumenbach's collection.[83] He would later do the same with bones he collected from Indigenous burial mounds near New Harmony.[84] Burial mounds and grave sites scattered along the Ohio and Wabash Rivers in North America were tantalizing clues as to the nature and origins of the "original American race" as they could serve as physical proof of the theory's divisions. The gravesites would also confirm Maximilian's distorted view of the eastern United States as having already been cleared of living Native Americans, leaving only skeletal remains and ruins to study. Just days before arriving in New Harmony, Maximilian bemoaned a missed opportunity when his steamboat had sailed past the "old Indian ruins" near Marietta, Ohio.[85] Maximilian dedicated a portion of the New Harmony chapter of the publication version of his *Travels in the Interior of North America* to the topic of the "ancient tumuli" of the Ohio River Valley, demonstrating the importance he believed this contribution and his observations more generally had to the scientific discourse in Europe.[86]

The burial mounds around New Harmony were of significant interest to Maximilian. In just his second week in New Harmony, on October 31st, he visited the burial mounds near New Harmony with Say and Lesueur for the first time.[87] He would return on November 17th, not to further appreciate the mounds, but instead to gather

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[83] Schach, "Maximilian, Prince of Wied: Reconsidered," 10.
[84] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 316.
[85] He did not, though, miss the opportunity to criticize the careless Americans for lacking "the sufficient appreciation for such things to preserve them." See Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 186, Footnote M22.
[86] Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America,* 172.
[87] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 213.

materials including physical remains from the burial site. That day, Say gave Maximilian several skull fragments from the mounds which Maximilian immediately sent to Göttingen to add to Blumenbach's collection.[88] Skull shapes and specimens were central to Blumenbach's categorization of human variety. Because he did no travelling himself, Blumenbach relied on donations of specimens from his friends and colleagues to expand his collection. In his famous 1795 treatise *On the Natural Variety of Mankind,* Blumenbach included a list of the skulls he had collected and the names of their donors, in part to thank his "friends and patrons" who had sent him specimens.[89] Lesueur gifted Maximilian more bones from nearby grave mounds on February 11th and 12th. As Maximilian departed New Harmony, he had a "sixth small [case] filled with bones from old Indian graves and intended for Hofrath Blumenbach" in addition to the five cases of natural history specimens he, Bodmer, and Dreidoppel had collected in their months at New Harmony.[90]

In addition to bones, Maximilian collected numerous pieces of material culture from these burial mounds. This included pottery shards, flint knives and arrow heads, and clay tobacco-pipe bowls.[91] Maximilian's descriptions of the flint knives, in particular, are quite detailed. He took the time to sketch the knives and reproduced the information about the knives in the printed *Travels in the Interior of North America*. Although he does not make this explicit, his comparison between these stone tools and obsidian tools from Mexico in Say's collection make the reason for his interest clear. Describing the

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[88] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 223.
[89] Blumenbach. *Anthropological Treatises*, 155.
[90] For Lesueur's gift of more bones, see Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 290-291. For an accounting of the cases shipped back to Germany at the end of the New Harmony stay, see Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 316.
[91] Thwaites*, Travels in the Interior of North America*, 172-177.

two artifacts as "very similar… exactly the same shape," Maximilian implicitly aligned these tools to Blumenbach's theory. They were similar supposedly because all Native inhabitants of the Americas were historically related and part of a unified race.[92] In a conversation with Lesueur and another New Harmony resident, Mr. Fauntleroy, Maximilian noted that similar burial mounds in Tennessee had included "ancient coins, probably Roman ones,"[93] making the connection between ancient Europe and America, and therefore between the Caucasian and American "varieties," even more explicit.

Maximilian's journal entry for November 30th, 1832 further reveals how his interpretation of Blumenbach's theories constructed what Maximilian saw – or failed to see – in New Harmony. On that day, Maximilian wrote that Thomas Say "frequently sends me all kinds of things, especially books, through his young Mexicans. He has two of them, Cavallos and Lopez, both of Indian descent but no longer of pure race." In the same day's entry, he then lamented that "unfortunately, during my entire North American journey, I have not yet seen one native Indian or any of their descendants."[94] Despite acknowledging Cavallos and Lopez's Native ancestry only four sentences prior, Maximilian still sought to meet a "native Indian," or even "any of their descendants." Cavallos and Lopez, in Maximilian's racial worldview, are "Mexican," not "Indians," not even recognizable as the "half-degenerated remnants," as he phrases it elsewhere, of the "pure American race" he was searching for. This is the same bias that led him to ignore the Potawatomi, Miami, and other Native groups still living just up the Wabash River in favor of travelogues and burial mounds. Material remains, both biological and cultural,

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[92] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 235-236.
[93] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 328.
[94] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 235.

were more important than first-hand lived experiences when those experiences did not align to Maximilian's narrow concept of the "original American race."

Physical aspects were not the only thing Maximilian would note about those he encountered. He also noted Cavallos and Lopez' social status. Maximilian's possessive description of Cavallos and Lopez as "his [Say's] Mexicans," as if they were Say's property or part of his household in a feudal sense, contributed to his dismissal of their Native ancestry as opposed to his immediate acceptance of the indigeneity of the Sauks and Meskwakis he would later see in St. Louis. Fuedalism was entirely appropriate conceptually to Maximillian and his scientific circle. According to historian Harry Liebersohn, 103 of 277 of Maximilian's advance subscribers were "titled individuals or aristocratic institutions such as royal libraries."[95] Maximilian was a proud member of the German aristocracy who enjoyed encountering his "fellow-countrymen" in North America. These like-minded scientific thinkers were well-bred and well-educated, unlike the German immigrant "peasants" he encountered in rural Pennsylvania and the "backwoodsmen" of southern Indiana.[96] In a particularly telling passage on election day 1832, which resulted in the re-election of Andrew Jackson and a public affirmation of his removal policies, Maximilian harshly criticized the character and behavior of these backwoodsmen as they streamed into town to vote: "everywhere one saw the dirty farmers riding about in the rain in their ridiculous attire. Many wore plaid coats... After these crude individuals had registered their votes, they did ample justice to the whiskey;

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[95] Liebersohn, 149.

[96] For Maximilian's positive feelings toward his countrymen, see Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America*, 84. For his appraisal of lower-class German immigrants, see Thwaites, *Travels in the Interior of North America*, 75.

it was asserted that there would be no lack of brawling and disorderly conduct."[97] In these settlers-turned-voters' poor behavior, Maximilian saw the flaws of democracy, which, with the election of Jackson, they had been able to subvert to their own immoral and indecent self-interests and increase the Federal government's brutality on the frontier.

Maximilian and his fellow aristocrats were immersed in a particularly German notion of what a typical Native American should look and act like. Germans had long perceived a close cultural kinship between themselves and Native Americans. Native Americans, like Germans, were "noble tribal people with a clear connection to the forests… who suffered at the hands of an expansive, colonial civilization."[98] Within this fantastical framing, Germanic tribes had been the victims of ancient Roman imperialism in central Europe in the same way that Native Americans were suffering at the hands of the United States and its colonial European predecessors in North America. The German projection of similarity included a sense of innate virtue, martial prowess, and masculinity, especially in those male Indians naturally ordained as chiefs or tribal leaders.[99] Maximilian demonstrated these widespread assumptions of how an authentic Indian should act in the conversations he had in New Harmony with Say, Lesueur, and others. Say related an encounter he had with Chief Petalesharo of the Skiri Pawnee and Ongpatonga, or Big Elk, a leader of the Omaha Indians, on the Long Expedition. During the Expedition, Say warned Ongpatonga not to go to Council Bluff, an American military outpost in Nebraska, because the fort was suffering from scurvy. Ongpatonga "stood up

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[97] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 217-218.
[98] H. Glenn Penny, *Kindred by Choice: Germans and American Indians Since 1800,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 30.
[99] Noll, *Prince Maximilian's America,* 185.

and delivered a vigorous speech to Mr. Say, in which he stated that he was never afraid and feared nothing in the world."[100]

In contrast to the brief mentions of Indiana tribes discussed above, Maximilian conveyed these conversations in great detail in his journal. This was likely because they depict Native Americans displaying stoic masculinity and courage, two characteristics that he believed Native Americans had in common with German aristocrats like himself. The subject of the conversation was also a Native American from west of the Mississippi, where Maximilian expected the "original American race" to retain its fundamental characteristics, as opposed to the "degenerated remnants" in the east. Furthermore, since Ongpatonga's resistance was taking place west of the Mississippi, Maximilian was able to recognize it as still authentically Native, unlike the continued presence of groups like the Potawatomi and Miami in Indiana. The next day, as if to confirm his admiration for the two western Native leaders, Maximilian wrote to his acquaintance Krumbhaar in Philadelphia to ask him to acquire a painting of Petalesharo for Maximilian's collection.[101]

Character was also vital to Maximilian's interpretation of Indigenous men. In early February 1833, Maximilian dedicated two days of journal entries to recording his conversation with Alexander Maclure, who was the brother of New Harmony co-founder William Maclure and still lived in New Harmony, about the "strong, vigorous" character of Miami leader Little Turtle (Mihšihkinaahkwa) Maclure had encountered.[102] Upon Maclure telling Little Turtle that he believed the Indians originated in Europe and had

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[100] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 302, see also footnote 226.
[101] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 303.
[102] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 283.

migrated to North America, Little Turtle retorted that "he believed rather that the Europeans came from America."[103] Given Maximilian's understanding of Blumenbach's theory, in which Europeans were the original, least "degenerated" line of humanity, Maximilian found Little Turtle's reversal of Maclure's argument to be worth noting. In contrast to the few brief mentions of the Miami cited earlier, this anecdote rose to Maximilian's attention because it harkened back to a previous era of full-on military and cultural resistance by Native people in the Indiana Territory.

A second example illustrates the importance of military resistance in how Maximilian perceived specific Natives. On November 26th, a man from nearby Vincennes related an anecdote to Maximilian about Tecumseh, the Shawnee leader of a Native resistance movement discussed earlier. The Vincennes man told of a confrontation between Tecumseh and an American military officer at a negotiation. At the meeting, the American attempted to intimidate Tecumseh, referring to the U.S. President as Tecumseh's "Great Father." Tecumseh, according to Maximilian's second-hand retelling, "twisted his features into a grin and responded, 'My father! Up there is our Father (as he pointed to the sun) and down there our Mother (pointing to the earth.)'"[104] This dignified, defiant image of Tecumseh aligned to Maximilian's image of the naturally ordained Indian nobility standing up to the American government. It also reinforced a stereotypical image of Native Americans' spiritual closeness to nature. Aspects of Tecumseh's brother and fellow resistance leader Tenskwatawa's cultural and religious awakening that focused on returning to traditional Indigenous practices and rejecting alcohol,

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[103] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 283.
[104] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 230.

Christianity, and European clothing and tools resonated with Maximilian's views of racial categorization and purity, as well as his cultural expectations for Native American behavior.[105] These Shawnee and Miami resistance figures of the past provided an image of Indigeneity that conformed to nearly all of Maximilian's cultural preconceptions, understandings, and misunderstandings of Native North Americans, unlike their contemporary descendants in Indiana, whom Maximilian disregarded.

Despite the extensive study, excavations, conversations, and encounters Maximilian took part in in New Harmony, it was not until he left the town and crossed the Mississippi, which had risen to such importance in his mental landscape of North America, that he considered his goal to observe Native North Americans complete. At the time of Maximilian's arrival in St. Louis, the Sauk resistance leader Black Hawk (Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak) was being held at Jefferson Barracks outside the city. A large contingent of Sauks and Meskwakis were present in the city to petition for his release. Before disembarking the boat in St. Louis, Maximilian glimpsed "strange-looking figures wrapped in red, white, and green blankets… my first view of them astonished me greatly." To Maximilian, these figures appeared to have "great similarity with the Brazilians… they are absolutely of the same race," immediately applying the lens of Blumenbach's theory to this first encounter.[106] He would go on to describe their facial features and structure in anatomical language reminiscent of Blumenbach's heavy reliance on skull structure, noting their "broad faces and sturdy bones and features," their "somewhat aquiline noses," and "mostly very white and strong" teeth. Keokuk, a Sauk

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[105] Colin G. Calloway, *The Shawnees and the War for America,* (New York: Viking, 2007).
[106] Wied, *North American Jounrals, Volume I,* 372-373.

chief he would meet, was “a good-looking man of medium height with features differing little from those of Europeans, though of a darker color, and an intelligent, pleasant expression.”[107] The immediate focus on facial structure and favorable comparison with Europeans in Maximilian’s descriptions was unsurprising. Maximilian’s Euro-centric, racialized understanding of Blumenbach’s monogenist theory was the primary prism through which he viewed Native Americans like the Sauk and Meskwakis; the fact that he did not even bother to record this information about New Harmony residents Cavallos and Lopez, despite their Native ancestry, suggests he truly viewed them differently than Keokuk and the other Sauks and Meskwakis he would encounter in St. Louis. In addition to their anatomy, Maximilian also noted in detail the Sauk and Meskwaki petitioners’ dress, body paint, feathered headdresses, weapons, behavior, language, and other cultural markers that distinguished them from westerners.[108] The image of Native Americans he was confronted with finally conformed to, not clashed with, all of his preconceived notions.

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[107] Wied, North American Journals, Volume I, 377.
[108] Wied, *North American Journals, Volume I,* 373-379.

Conclusion

With his transition over the Mississippi at St. Louis, Maximilian entered a new phase of his North American travels. Now that his expectations of Indigenous peoples aligned to the physical realities before him, he set about recording as much about those he encountered as he could. This leg of his journey would make himself, and his traveling companion Karl Bodmer, influential in European and American understanding of Native Americans for nearly two centuries. But his time in the eastern United States, and especially New Harmony, revealed and reinforced the serious limits imposed by his worldview and expectations on these observations. From his first moments on the East Coast, Maximilian misperceived a void of living Native Americans. While rightfully criticizing the United States' treatment of Native Americans, he ignored the pockets of resistance and presence persisting in Pennsylvania and Indiana, reaching instead for stories of past heroic leaders and the leading white experts of the day—some of whom were present in New Harmony—to fill the gap. He also turned his attention to ruins and burial mounds, further solidifying his sense that "original" Native American presence in the region was dead and eradicated, not still vibrant and alive just up the Wabash River from New Harmony. Maximilian's racialization of Blumenbach's categorization and theory of degeneration underpinned much of this misperception, as did Maximilian's own cultural expectations stemming from his cultural background and his class position. This time period should be featured in any analysis of Maximilian and his work, not sidelined as a minor, if interesting, tangent.

The recent publication of the first full English translation of Maximilian's journals should make this task easier for future English-language scholars of his North American travels. I have relied extensively on the first volume of this three-volume

publication, which, like this article, covers his arrival in Boston up to his arrival in St. Louis, but there are many avenues still open to researchers of this understudied portion of his trip. Karl Bodmer's side trip to New Orleans, for example, could be looked at in detail. How did he portray the various groups of people he encountered on his trip down the Mississippi, and how do those compare to his more famous depictions of Native Americans in the West? Maximilian's reliance on colonial military and economic processes, such as his exploitation of the Long Expedition's knowledge of the area and later the American Fur Company's trade routes, also deserves more attention. Disease and illness are recurring elements throughout the travelogue as well. How did both his personal illness and public health shape and limit his travel plans? Maximilian's interactions with other Germans in the United States, especially fellow aristocrats in the eastern cities, is another topic ripe for exploration. And in addition to Maximilian's study of Native Americans, his journal is full of his observations on the cities, towns, plants, animals, and landscape of the eastern United States that should be of interest to historians of the natural and built environment. With daily observations over a two-year period, Maximilian's journals are certainly valuable to any scholar of the early 1830s United States interested in an aristocratic German's perspective. This article demonstrates what a rich resource it is for understanding Maximilian's activities and worldview, with all its faults. When it comes to Native Americans, from Boston to St. Louis, Maximilian trained his gaze ever more firmly west, ignoring the existing Indigenous presence in the Midwest, in Indiana, and in New Harmony itself.

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