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Stranger/Europe

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Abstract. Drawing on the working methods of imagology, this article surveys the way in which an implicit or tacit European self-image has taken shape over the centuries through contrast with two non-European Others: the New World and the Mediterranean. The article shows how these two others merge into a self-image of European alienation and moral perplexity following the devastations of the Second World War: the European cities have become kasbahs, Europe has become its own Other.

Keywords: Europe, imagology, stranger, xenophobia, exoticism, self-image, identity

Identity and image

The Stranger identifies Us – whether we define that Us in local, national, ethnic, or other terms. But which stranger identifies Europe?

There is, of course, no objective entity, let alone an identity, we can call European, and the subjective associations we have tended to shift from context to context and from period to period – in each case calling different Others, different Strangers into play –, Muslims, Americans, Oriental Despotism, or the native populations of the Third World. The characteristics that have been attributed to Europe in this fluid process of representation and stereotyping vis-à-vis non-European Strangers can be mapped to some extent by a well-defined method, that of *imagology* or image studies, a specialism first developed in the field of Comparative Literature to analyse the literary, narrative, and rhetorical cross-cultural representations of various nations. (Imagology was given its methodological and theoretical consolidation by Hugo Dyserinck (2014). Cf. also the handbook edited by Beller and Leerssen (2007) and the website imagologica.eu. An application to the European case was made in my Dutch-language monograph (see Leerssen 2015).

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Imagology studies cross-cultural representations, predominantly in the field of literature and other narrative genres such as theatre, opera, and cinema. It studies these representations as discursive, poetical, and ideological[1] constructs and does not pronounce on their "truth" or "falsity". Hence my emphasis on a "subjective" rather than "objective" identity: the topic of investigation lies in the area of reputations, characterizations, and stereotypes, which are driven partly by the subjectivity of the onlooker.

Frequently, such national representations concern the tenuous but often-repeated notion of a "national character", a collective mentality predisposing a given society to certain modes of behaviour; as a result, national images or stereotypes concerning the "character" of the Germans, French, Hungarians, etc. are often ethnic in nature and often tacitly presuppose a physically inherited type of racial mentality (much like the different "characters" of poodles, terriers, Rottweilers, and other canine "races") (generally, see Leerssen 2006; on the role of animal breeding (especially horse-breeding) in the European history of physiognomy and collective characterization, see Claudia Schmölders 1998). In other cases, however, national stereotypes are less of an ethnotypical nature when they pertain to multicultural and/or multilingual societies such as Belgium or Switzerland. The case of Europe would fall into this category. The stereotypical "character" or identity attributed to Europe (if indeed we manage to pinpoint one) will be of a social and historical rather than of an ethnic nature.

Imagologists have long studied the perspectival situatedness of national images. The image or representation of Germany will differ according to its provenance: "German" in whose eyes – Polish? Austrian? Danish? French? Turkish? Japanese? In any given representation, there is a country that is represented or being looked at (the technical term is the "spected" nation), and the point of view of the onlooker (the "spectant"). The characterization takes shape in the interplay between these two poles neither of which is fixed or unambiguous and changeable over time. (French representations of Germany will be vastly different in 1750, 1850, and 1950).

The dynamics and interaction between various images from various perspectives is complex and fascinating. A nation can export its self-image and have it adopted by foreign spectants. Thus Mme de Staël's representation of Germany, in her *De l'Allemagne* of 1813, was largely an adoption of the German self-image as held by Romantics such as her lover and informant August Wilhelm Schlegel. At the same time, *De l'Allemagne* does not represent Germany *in vacuo* but as a counterpart and opposite to France; thus, in every description of "typically" German cultural characteristics, there is tacitly implied the *repoussoir* of a French self-image against which this Germany is silhouetted. (On German-

1 "Ideological" in the sense as defined by Gérard Genette (1969), as "a corpus of utterances that constitute at the same time a value-system and a world-view".

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French mutual characterizations, see Florack 2000, 2001. Special attention to the role of Madame de Staël is paid in the older, pioneering study by Carré 1947.)

Conversely, in other cases, a nation can internalize the foreign representations of it and subscribe to them as a self-image. Thus, the Irish self-image of the "Celtic Twilight" or the Hungarian self-image of Mór Jókai's novella and Franz Lehár's operetta *The Gypsy Baron* (1885) or the primitivism of the French *négritude* school are all internalizations of images originally formulated from a metropolitan English, Viennese, or Parisian point of view and subsequently adopted by Irish, Hungarian, or black African authors. (On the "otherworldly" image of Ireland in the "Celtic Twilight" and its English, Victorian roots, see Francis Shaw (1934) and Leerssen (1996); on *négritude* and French primitivism in the penumbra of the surrealist movement, see Dyserinck 1980 and Steins 1972.)

Image formation is, then, a dynamics of cultural production, transfer, and exchange rather than a straightforward reflection of social reality. So, a European image, or European "subjective identity" can be also traced in its incipience and emergence as a discursive node. What I want to tease out in the following pages is an ensemble of representational strands coming from various narrative traditions, perspectives, and contacts and twisted into a complex knot.

Eurocentrism meets America (dynamism and history, innocence and experience)

Eurocentrism is as old as Christendom's encounter with Islam and with the non-European world, that is to say, from the High Middle Ages onwards. (A survey is given in Peter Hoppenbrouwers 2006.) In many cases, such Eurocentrism is indistinguishable from straightforward ethnocentrism, generic rather than specific. European triumphalism in a colonial-imperial context, from the sixteenth century onwards, is expressed in many forms (maps, statues, iconography), but is, again, generic and does not ascribe a peculiar *character* to the triumphantly celebrated Europe. This changes after the scientific revolutions and the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, when, in the Enlightenment, a chronotopical element creeps into the representation of the European encounter with the rest of the world. The world outside Europe is seen as static, extrahistorical, or backward and as such opposed to the dynamically progressive nature of Europe, which develops and learns from the past to improve upon it. Johannes Fabian has described this chronotopical Eurocentrism as "the denial of coevalness": the rest of the world may be ancient (e.g. the Persian, Chinese, or Japanese realms) or primitive (e.g. Africa or the Americas), it is Europe alone that combines an ancient tradition with a dynamics of progress (Fabian 1983; see also: Marshall & Glyndwr Williams 1982, Leerssen 1997). This idea of Europe-as-progress can also

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be found in the Romantic themes dear to the European imagination of the early nineteenth century: Faust and Prometheus. To be sure, dynamism will soon cease to be a European monopoly and will become vested in the rising transatlantic counterpart, the United States; but in the European image of America (and also, to some extent, in the American self-image) the dynamism of the New World is a youthful, slightly naive one, and lacks the experience that comes with a long, centuries-old track record on the stage of world history.

Thus, Eurocentrism in the nineteenth century will emphasize its development potential against static Asian and African counterparts and its worldly-wise historical experience against dynamic America. Travel writing, from both sides of the Atlantic, will constantly activate an American–European polarity in this way: the travels of Dickens and Fanny Trollope in America and the European travels of Washington Irving and Mark Twain (*The Innocents Abroad*, 1877) are cases in point. (From amidst the very voluminous literature on the topic, the following studies may be mentioned: Ray Allen Billington 1981, Hagebüchle & Raab (eds) 2000, Ruland 1976, Woodward 1991, Wright and Kaplan (eds) 1999, Zacharasiewicz 2004.) A powerful expression of an American–European moral polarity in terms of New World moral simplicity vs Old World cultivated immorality plays through the novels of Henry James, the most concise example probably being *Daisy Miller* (1879).

In the twentieth century, the thematization of travel will still continue this transatlantic polarity: travel in Europe as a concentrated experience of many countries in a small space, travel in America as a negotiation of empty landscapes between ahistorical cities. Baudrillard has predicated his entire essay on America (*Amérique*, 1986) upon this *tabula rasa* notion, which is, however, a literary trope (with forebears like Tocqueville and Ortega y Gasset) rather than an original insight. Wim Wenders, the German filmmaker, has used the contrast between American and European settings and mentalities in various *road movies* (*Alice in den Städten* (1974), *Falsche Bewegung* (1975), *Im Lauf der Zeit* (1976), and most saliently, of course, *Paris, Texas* (1984), co-scripted by Sam Shepard), but the trope has its strongest early expression in the twice-filmed novel by Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (1955; Kubrick's film, scripted by Nabokov and starring James Mason, was made in 1962; Adrian Lyne's version starring Jeremy Irons in 1994). The perverse seduction by a world-weary middle-aged European of a fourteen-year-old brash American girl and their wayward flight through a moral wilderness of anonymous motels, guilt and desire, allegorizes and spatializes not only the Nabokovian themes of loss and commemoration but also the clash between European experience and American innocence (very much in the mode of Henry James). The image of an America of wide empty spaces and restless, aimless movement is internalized in the Kerouac-style myth of being "On the Road".

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The opposition, in *Lolita*, between Humbert Humbert's cultivated, urbane refinement and his moral depravity is worthy of note: an ironically negative connection is made between morality and refinement. We lose our innocence in acquiring civility and experience. Those who are culturally refined (like Humbert Humbert) are morally depraved, while our moral sympathy lies with Humbert's victim, who is given a tragic dignity despite her vulgar and childish superficiality.

Orientalism and the image of the Mediterranean

In the long European tradition of orientalism, a crucial position is taken up by the encounter of Byron with the Balkans. Ottoman Europe began south of Zagreb and Novi Sad, and in the eyes of many European travellers their encounter with the Islamic East began when they travelled into Bosnia or Albania. So too it was with Byron, whose Grand Tour in 1809–1811 took him from Malta to Albania and thence to Athens (the usual tour route, involving France and Italy, being inaccessible in these Napoleonic years). In Janina, a town in the Albanian-Greek Pindos region, Byron had a formative meeting with the local war lord, Ali Pasha, and his impressions of Ottoman Europe were expressed in four dramatic romances that he published in the years 1813–1814: *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, and *Lara*.

The image of Ottoman Europe was in flux these years. While the Ottoman culture was no longer seen in terms of straightforward cruelty but rather in a mixture of apprehension and fascination (Mozart's *Entführung aus dem Serail* testifies to this), the combination of sensuous refinement and archaic ruthlessness remained a powerful lens for Romantic perceptions (Kleinlogel 1989, Konstantinovic 1999, Schiffer 1982, Stajnova & Zaimova 1984). So it was with Byron, whose own personality and poetic persona was predicated on the combination of tenderness and bitterness, sensitivity and misanthropy – a stance which has become known as "Byronic" and which strongly influenced the pose of the Romantic male, from Heine and Mérimée to Pushkin.

The Byronic representation of Ottoman exoticism coincided, furthermore, with the beginnings of Romantic philhellenism, which saw the Balkans as the theatre of a moral and national conflict between noble, oppressed Christians and cunning Turkish tyrants (Konstantinou ed. 1992). All these elements (Byronism, philhellenism, and Orientalist exoticism) conspired to make the romances of 1813–14 of determining importance in the Romantic perception of the Eastern Mediterranean. The image we may summarize is as follows: a picturesque landscape where the openness of the sea confronts the rugged terrain of mountains; where colourful cultures and traditions meet and mingle; where under the hot sun passions run high; where women are seductive and men driven by fierce

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affects such as honour and jealousy; and where sensuousness, violence, and cruelty are closer to the surface than in civic societies and temperate climates.

This Byronic image of the Levant was subsequently applied to all of the Mediterranean when it was taken up by French Byronists such as Prosper Mérimée and Alexandre Dumas. Mérimée himself was intrigued by the fashion for Balkan culture (witness his imitation of Serbian oral epic in his *La Guzla* of 1824), but he also took the Byronic mix of sea/mountains, sensuousness/violence, eroticism/hatred into the settings of Corsica and Andalusia in stories such as *Matteo Falcone* (1829), *Colomba* (1840), and *Carmen* (1845). The image of Italian *banditti*, popular in the Romantic tales of these years, likewise drew on this representational register. Verga's *Cavalleria rusticana* (1880) imitated Mérimée's *Carmen*, much as the spin-off opera *Cavalleria rusticana* by Mascagni (1890) imitated Bizet's *Carmen* (1875).

Most popularly, Alexandre Dumas's *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1845–46) spread the imagery far and wide into the readership of the melodramatic novel. The hero of that book is repeatedly compared with Byron himself: solitary, misanthropic, with cruelly disappointed love and dark passions under the surface of refined dandyism. Moreover, although much of the action is set in fashionable Paris, Dantès (the self-styled "Count of Monte-Cristo") is linked almost obsessively to a Mediterranean setting. He is originally a sailor from the Catalan quarter of Marseille, has found his fabulous wealth in a treasure hidden on the island of Monte Cristo, was in touch with Napoleon during his Elba exile, and was imprisoned off Marseille in the island-fortress of the Château d'If. He has contacts among Italian *banditti* and Maltese contraband sailors, has picked up a Corsican servant (characteristically dedicated to the pursuit of vendetta), and has bought a house slave in Algiers and a slave-girl in Istanbul; he follows an oriental lifestyle involving the use of hashish and sumptuous food from all around the Mediterranean lands.[2] His hospitality is lavish, his sense of revenge is merciless. He is compared variously, not only to Byron, but also to an undead vampire (because of his pallor, result of his long imprisonment) and to Sinbad the Sailor. He lives outside the law, according to a primitive and ruthless honour code. To top it all, the slave girl he acquired, Haydée, is the daughter of Ali Pasha of Janina himself, of Byronic fame, whose doomed insurrection against the Ottoman authorities provides an important subplot.

Even in the twentieth century, this image of the Mediterranean has continued in force. We recognize it in Fernand Braudel's evocation, in *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (1947, rev. ed. 1967), of a terrain dominated by the encounter between the sea and impenetrable mountainous coasts, where central state control and civic societies are impossible and men live by

2 One example among many: fruits on offer include "des ananas de Sicile, des grenades de Malaga, des oranges des îles Baléares, de pêches de France et des dattes de Tunis" (Dumas 1963 (1): 398).

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honour codes and outside the law. Also, the "honour and shame" theory, fashionable among anthropologists, may be seen in this Romantic, Byronic tradition. Drawing attention to the prevalence of feuds and vendettas in a belt stretching from Corsica and Sardinia by way of Sicily and the Peloponnese to Albania and Montenegro, anthropologists have characterized societal patterns in terms of a tension between the family code of "honour" (enforced by males, if necessary, by violent means and expressed in the values of hospitality and loyalty to one's given word) as against the threat of "shame" (incurred by the sexual approach of females by strangers). Originally used as a concept to define the fact that many pastoral communities regulated their codes of behaviour while standing outside the rule of law and the order of the modern state, "honour and shame" has since then become a favourite term to describe the lawlessness and behavioural codes of a non-civic Mediterranean (Campbell 1964; Gilmore ed. 1987; Peristiany ed. 1966. For an oblique comment on the incompatibility honour code with the restraint implied in the civic virtues of the modern western nation-state, see Bowman 2006). (We must therefore allow for the possibility that this anthropological model owes more to literary formulas and cultural stereotypes than to empirical observation and scientific analysis.)

Byron goes to Hollywood

The Byronic image of the Mediterranean spread into various media and, in the course of the nineteenth century, into various countries. The trajectory I want to trace leads from a crime thriller to cinema, from Algiers to Hollywood by way of Casablanca.

A moderately successful thriller about a master criminal gone to ground in French Algiers, *Pépé le Moko* by Henri La Barthe (who wrote under the acronymous pseudonym of Ashelbé), was filmed in 1937 by Julien Duvivier, with Jean Gabin starring in the title role. The film opens on a map of Algiers (then, of course, firmly under French colonial control); from there, the first scene unrolls with police officers debating the impossibility of apprehending the elusive Pépé. An official sent from Paris is keen to bring the crook finally to justice. What he fails to understand and what is explained to him by his Algerian-based colleagues is that the normal rules of procedures do not apply on this shore of the Mediterranean. As to the naïve notion of venturing into the Casbah of Algiers (Pépé's hide-out), a local official explains to his French colleague (and to the audience):

> 'The Casbah is like a labyrinth. I'll show you.' *(The local officer walks over to the map of Algiers; the camera zooms in on it, then cuts to a series of documentary-style images, illustrative shots taken in the Casbah, illustrating the lecture-explanation given 'off' in voice-over)*:

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> 'From the air, the district known as the Casbah looks like a teeming anthill, a vast staircase where terraces descend stepwise to the sea. Between these steps are dark, winding streets like so many pitfalls. They intersect, overlap, twist in and out, to form a jumble of mazes. Some are narrow, others vaulted. Wherever you look, stairways climb steeply like ladders or descend into dark, putrid chasms and slimy porticos, dank and lice-infested. Dark, overcrowded cafés. Silent, empty streets with odd names. A population of 40,000 in an area meant for 10,000, from all over the world. Many, descended from the Berbers, are honest traditionalists, but a mystery to us. Kabyles. Chinese. Gypsies. Stateless. Slavs. Maltese. Negroes. Sicilians, Spaniards. And wenches of all nations, of all shapes and sizes: the tall, the short, the fat, the ageless, the shapeless. Chasms of fat no one would dare approach. The houses have inner courtyards which are like ceilingless cells, which echo like wells and interconnect by means of the terraces above. They're the exclusive domain of native women. But Europeans are tolerated. They form a city apart, which, from step to step, stretches down to the sea. Colourful, dynamic, multi-faceted, boisterous, there's not one Casbah, but hundreds, thousands. And this teeming maze is what Pépé calls his home.' *(The camera moves back, by way of the Algiers map, to the scene in the police office).*[3]

The rhetoric is obvious: a labyrinth in three dimensions, strongly gendered as female, its chaotic topography overlaid with an equally bewildering accumulation of ethnicities and a general intimation of uncontrol: vermin, people, sins, and secrets. This is a Forest Perilous in which law and order have no power and where survival and success depend only on the prowess of the ruthless individual. It is as if Odysseus, that archetypical Mediterranean hero who "travelled much, saw many places and encountered many people" is here facing a new challenge.

This post-Byronic formula of the anti-hero as outlaw, in a moral and topological, multi-ethnic labyrinth, was immediately popular. The next year, in 1938, *Pépé le Moko* was remade in the United States under the title *Algiers*, starring Charles Boyer (and Hedy Lamarr). Ten years later, another American remake would follow: *Casbah*, starring Tony Martin (and with an important role for Peter Lorre). Casbah movies were almost a sub-genre in their own right, and it is in this light that we ought to see, I suggest, their most important spin-off: *Casablanca*.

Made in 1942, directed by Michael Curtiz and starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, *Casablanca* is, of course, one of the canonical and popular classics of twentieth-century cinema. It is usually seen as a war drama about the

3 Here, as in other excerpts, the transcripts are from the film as viewed on DVD. In this case, I have relied on the DVD subtitles with an occasional emendation (*Berbères* as "Berbers", not barbarians; *filles* as "wenches", not girls).

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impossibility of remaining neutral or as a psychodrama on the battle between idealism, love, and cynicism. As such, the character of Rick (and Humphrey Bogart in the role of Rick) is one of the most powerful twentieth-century avatars of the Byronic hero: solitary, disillusioned, hurt in love, misanthropic but with heroic charisma nonetheless. His entrance into the film (a late one; as late as that of Pépé in the earlier film) comes after an appreciable build-up: the dialogue mentions him repeatedly (much as the police officers discuss Pépé), it is said that "everybody comes to Rick's", and the first actions we see of him are concerned with his aloofness and authority within Rick's American Café. More to my point here, however, is the fact that, in the mode of *Pépé le Moko, Casablanca* opens with a map, with scenes of a multi-ethnic moral-cum-topographic labyrinth and with a voice-over explaining the convoluted breakdown of law and order (in this case: the corrupt and discredited Vichy regime) in a bewildering and overcrowded environment where only the strong and the ruthless can survive. Before the scene where a chaotic "round-up of the usual suspects" opens the actual narrative, the voice-over introduces us to the setting, to the visual background of a globe and then a map:

> With the coming of the Second World War, many eyes in imprisoned Europe turned hopefully or desperately towards the freedom of the Americas. Lisbon became the great embarkation point; but not everybody could get to Lisbon directly, and so a tortuous, roundabout refugee trail sprang up: Paris to Marseille; across the Mediterranean to Oran; then by train or auto or foot across the rim of Africa to Casablanca in French Morocco. Here the fortunate ones, through money or influence or luck might obtain exit visas and scurry to Lisbon, and from Lisbon to the Free World. But the others wait in Casablanca; and wait, and wait, and wait... (*cut to crowded street scenes, vendors, beggars, tourists and loafers, and a con man stealing the wallet off a gullible tourist couple whilst warning them against the dangers of Casablanca*.)

Casablanca is an emphatically American film and treats the Maghrebinian setting as a Europe-in-microcosm: the various characters (many of them in fact played by actors fled from Nazi-controlled Europe) represent a cross-section of the European nationalities. Truly, "everybody comes to Rick's": Bulgarians, Czechs, Dutch, Nazis, Germans-in-exile, equivocal French, Peter Lorre with the Spanish name of Ugarte, Sydney Greenstreet as "Signor Ferrari" with fez and fly-swatter. Remarkably, here, as in *Pépé le Moko*, the Casbah population is only a passive *couleur locale* in the background; none of the speaking characters are actually Moroccan or Algerian. Indeed, *Casablanca*'s setting is a Europe displaced, a Europe of displaced people moved to the further shores of its colonial possessions.

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It comes as no surprise to learn, then, that *Casablanca* was, in the original conception of the drama, located in Marseille, home town of Edmond Dantès. The original author, Murray Burnett (a New York teacher), had witnessed Hitler's entrance into Vienna and the subsequent large-scale stream of emigrations from the *Reich*. The Casblanca route came to his attention when he was in the South of France, and there he conceived the multi-ethnic café setting. This led to a play, co-authored with Joan Alison and written in 1940, entitled *Everybody Comes to Rick's*. The play was never produced, but Hollywood took an option and eventually grafted a Casbah-style setting on the European refugee drama (Harmetz 2002).

War-torn Europe as Hollywood-style Casbah

The Byronic image of the Mediterranean, from *The Giaour* to *le Comte de Monte-Cristo* and *Casablanca*, is a European one and involves a self–other distinction that may be schematized as follows:

Table 1. *The Byronic image of the Mediterranean*

Europe	**Mediterranean**
civic virtue	primitive honour
law and order	lawlessness and chaos
social structures	solitary individualism
cool, clean, controlled	hot, messy, sensuous
moderation	extremes

Under the pressure of totalitarian dictatorships and the ruins of total war, the "Casbah" imagery of life as a messy, unregulated labyrinth was increasingly applicable to Europe itself (rather than being projected into Europe's Romantic/exotic Other). The mappable distinction between nation-states was swept aside, and the ruined cities became themselves the receptacles of the flotsam and jetsam of displaced populations; the ordered mercantile or planned economies giving way to a rampant black market system. Casablanca, a city equivocally between a Maghrebinian-Orientalist setting and a European demography, is a first sign of this process of the internalization of the Mediterranean Casbah image. Europe itself is now becoming the topographical-cum-moral labyrinth. The treatment of that most Central of Central-European cities, Vienna, in *The Third Man* is a case in point. The Carol Reed film, starring Orson Welles and Joseph Cotten, dates from 1949 and was based on a screenplay by Graham Greene, which Greene reworked into a novella in 1950. (For this information and some of what follows, see Greene's (2005) foreword and the editorial comments in *The Third Man* and *The Fallen Idol* as well as Alloway 1950 and Palmer and Riley 1980.)

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Tellingly, the opening is, once again, a voice-over introducing the audience to an alien environment. Maps are absent this time, but various documentary-style shots and newsreel footage are used (as they were in the prologue to *Pépé le Moko*) to give a sense of place, involving, emphatically, the partitioning of the city into different zones of occupation, and its ruined character.

Table 2. *The Opening of* The Third Man

Voice-over	Images
I never knew the old Vienna before the war, with its Strauss music, its glamour and easy charm; Constantinople suited me better.	Panorama, with the caption *Vienna*; images of landmarks covered in snow
I only got to know it in the classic period of the black market. We'd run anything if people wanted it enough and had the money to pay.	Furtive, unshaven dealers, suitcases containing shoes; silk or nylon stockings; money changing hands, a bottle of painkillers; wristwatches around an arm.
Of course a situation like that does tempt amateurs, but... well, you know they can't stay the course like a professional.	A corpse floating in the partly-frozen Danube
Now the city is divided into four zones, you know, each occupied by a power, the American, the British, the Russian and the French.	Military signs in various languages indicating the zone limits
But the centre of the city, that's international. Police file international patrol, one member of each of the four powers. Wonderful! What a hope they had, all strangers to the place and none of them could speak the same language except a sort of smattering of German. Good fellows on the whole, did their best, you know.	Differently-uniformed officials saluting, changing guard, driving around in patrol car
Vienna doesn't really look any worse than a lot of other European cities; bombed about a bit...	Various ruined inner-city locations
Oh I was going to tell you, wait, I was going to tell you about Holly Martins, an American, came all the way here to visit a friend of his, the name was Lime, Harry Lime.	Soldiers marching and on parade
Now Martins was broke and had been offered some sort, I don't know, some sort of a job... Anyway there he was, poor chap, happy as a lark and without a cent.	Train pulling into station. Holly (Joseph Cotten) alights.

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The voice-over is spoken by Orson Welles in the character of a black marketeer. (In the film, Welles portrays the black-marketeer Harry Lime, who is here, however, referred to in the third person.)[4] The tone is suave, debonair, and cynical, mocking the inept efforts at control and law enforcement. Tellingly, the city in which such a character thrives is not the "old" pre-war Vienna of civility and metropolitan order but rather the new, partitioned, ruined city. It is, in fact, yet another example of a Casbah-style labyrinth, and fittingly the voice in the commentary sees it as a continuation of his previous working terrain: Constantinople – another example of Europe's post-war interiorization of the Byronic Mediterranean.

In *The Third Man*, Harry Lime is a second Pépé le Moko: gone into the underground of a labyrinthine city, impossible to catch by the law enforcement authorities who are baffled by the complex topography of the place. The post-war climate, and Graham Greene's existentialist vision, make this an altogether more sombre film, however. Whereas surface cynics like Pépé le Moko and Rick the American are fundamentally admirable and likeable, drawing on the sympathy of the Byronic hero, Harry Lime, inverts the scheme. His roguish, debonair likeability is on the surface, and his essence is pure, satanic evil – as his old school friend Holly Martins finds out in a painful process of disenchantment. Good and evil are fatally complicated, contaminated, and compromised in this world. Tellingly, the crime racket with which Harry Lime earns his money involves selling diluted and contaminated antibiotics to hospitals: medicines that do not cure but leave patients crippled, paralysed, and brain-damaged, in a state worse than death. This moral contamination is likewise incessantly spatialized: the directions of "heaven" and "hell" have got their wires crossed. Thus, the janitor, who informs Holly that his friend has been killed in a – staged – road accident, points downwards when he surmises, in halting English, that Harry may have gone to heaven, or else (pointing upwards) to hell. The gesture foreshadows the up-then-down movement of the Ferris-wheel, where Holly and the undead Harry, who had staged the accident so as to fool the police, come face to face. Here, in the film's climactic scene obviously inspired by the biblical account of Christ's temptation by Satan, Harry offers a deal to Holly; when the wheel reaches its highest point, people on the ground seem insignificant specks in the landscape below, their life or death a matter of no consequence. Eventually, the action will go underground in a literal sense. In a scene reminiscent of the Harrowing of Hell, Lime is chased into his true hide-out: the sewers of Vienna, a labyrinth with a vengeance – full of echoes, dead ends and shadows disappearing around corners, and the proper setting of the moral cloaca where Lime's life has taken him.

4 In the US release, the introductory voice-over is spoken by Joseph Cotten in his role as Holly Martins; the text is more or less the same (less "British" irony, the idiom slightly Americanized, the reference to Constantinople dropped as well as the reference of German as a minimal *lingua franca*).

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Urban jungle: no law, no order

The "chase into the sewers" (or caves) is as much a thriller trope as is its counterpart, the "chase across the rooftops". One invokes the thrills of claustrophobia, the other the thrills of vertigo. Its prototype is, of course, the descent of Jean Valjean into the sewers of Paris in Victor Hugo's *Les misérables* (1862). The constants and variables of this trope, as used by Hugo and followed by Greene, need not concern us too closely here, but the thematic filiation does alert us to the fact that there is, in fact, a fairly long-standing narrative presence in European and American literature of the modern city (sewage systems are *par excellence* a feature of urban modernity and at the same time an image of the dirty underside of things that have been pushed out of sight in civic society)[5] as a Forest Perilous, or jungle. *Les misérables* follows, in its own socialist sympathy for the downside of society, a setting that had been made popular in literature by Eugène Sue in his epoch-making *Les mystères de Paris* (1843), which explored the criminal slum life of Paris and knew many spin-offs and imitations (besides Hugo's own work, we can think of Dickensian London or the criminal neighbourhoods of the Sherlock Holmes stories). Sue himself referred, in the asides to his *Mystères de Paris*, repeatedly to the American adventure novels of Fennimore Cooper, stating that the inner-city slums of Paris were a wilderness not unlike the forests and plains of America, where hardy savages stalked and killed each other, using ruses, cunning, and violence. Alexandre Dumas picked up the parallel between inner city and savage wilderness in his novel *Les Mohicans de Paris* (1855); the slang name *apache* for a Parisian underworld criminal likewise plays on the connection. In each case, the back alleys of the great cities are a dangerous testing ground for the hero, who here proves his mettle and his superiority.

The Sherlock Holmes variation on that theme was picked up in the New World, not only in crime journalism (an example worth mentioning: Asbury 1927, made famous by Martin Scorsese's 2003 film, a sensationalist New World equivalent of Chevalier's *Classes laborieuses, classes dangéreuses*) in the detective stories of Dashiel Hammett and Raymond Chandler, who gave a certain Byronic glamour to their hard-boiled, disenchanted detectives. This is how Chandler praised Dashiel Hammet's style of detective fiction:

> The realist in murder writes of a world in which gangsters can rule nations and almost rule cities [...]; a world where a judge with a cellar full of bootleg liquor can send a man to jail for having a pint in his pocket, where the mayor of your town may have condoned murder as an instrument of money-making, where no man can walk down a dark street in safety because

5 Compare, by contrast, the ongoing emphasis in *Pépé le Moko* on the insalubrious "open-sewer"-style dirtiness of the pre-modern Casbah, dank, and lice-infested.

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> law and order are things we talk about but refrain from practising [...] But down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid. The detective in this kind of story must be such a man. He is the hero, he is everything. [...] He must be, to use a rather weathered phrase, a man of honour, by instinct, by inevitability, without thought of it, and certainly without saying it. (Chandler 1983: 190–191)

Chandler's "Philip Marlowe" and Hammett's "Sam Spade" moved across crime and moral squalor as sad, cynical, and just men, and that, too, is a source tradition for Humphrey Bogart's "Rick" in *Casablanca*. One year before *Casablanca*, the triad of Bogart, Lorre, and Greenstreet had acted out scenes of crime, betrayal, and willpower in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941, based on a Dashiel Hammett story and a remake of a 1931 version, with Bogart playing Sam Spade). Such detectives bring justice, or at least a sense that "crime does not pay", into an urban wilderness only superficially civilized; they are the descendants of the sheriffs who dispensed rough and ready retribution in the frontier towns as imagined in the Wild West novel.

Lost in the labyrinth: Confused pioneers

In the decades following the First World War, Europe seemed to present a happy, adventurous challenge to Americans. American soldiers after 1918, doughty machos in the Ernest Hemingway mode, or else individuals enriched by the artistic and historical riches of the Old Continent, seem to abolish the old Jamesian note of being out of one's depth and strike a happier, more confident note, (generally, Chew III (ed.) 2001) still present in post-war films like *An American in Paris* (1951), *Roman Holiday* (1953), and *Sabrina* (1954). The heroic progress of the allied forces from the 1944 Normandy landings onwards was to reinforce the idea of an American can-do attitude in a European setting, men of honour going down mean streets.

It is this source tradition that is ruthlessly ironized and subverted in *The Third Man*. Holly Martins (the name, Greene notes, is deliberately and mockingly non-macho) is a writer of Western novelettes, a pulp fiction genre as hackneyed in its good-guys/bad-guys ethics as it is limited in its repertoire of narrative motifs. Accordingly, his notion of good and evil in Vienna is simplistic to a degree. Thus, in the first encounter between a half-drunk Holly and the worldly-wise British intelligence officer Calloway, Holly calls Lime the "best friend I ever had". Calloway rejoins:[6]

6 Calloway is the closest we get to an authorial point of view and moral anchoring point in *The Third Man*. In the story Greene subsequently wrote, Calloway provides the narrative voice,

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Calloway: That sounds like a cheap novelette.
Holly: I write cheap novelettes.
Calloway. I'm afraid I've never heard of you... What's your name again?
Holly: Holly Martins.
Calloway (*apologetically*): Sorry
Holly: Ever heard of *The Lone Rider of Santa Fe?*
Calloway: Can't say that I have.
Holly: *Death at Double-X Ranch?*
...
[Holly, angered by Calloway's denunciation of Lime as a murderous racketeer, suspects that his late friend is being posthumously set up as a 'fall guy'.]
...
Holly: Listen Calahan...
Calloway: Calloway. I'm English, not Irish.
Holly: You're not going to close your files at a dead man's expense!
Calloway: So you're going to find me the real criminal? Sounds like one of your stories.
Holly: When I'm finished with you, you'll leave Vienna, you'll look so silly!

The search for the real course of events around the death of Harry Lime thus seems to follow an established "whodunit" pattern of dauntless detective (Sam-Spade- or Philip-Marlowe-style) vs conceited cop. In the event, it emerges that good and evil, perpetrator and victim, friend and foe, are hopelessly tangled. The Third Man mysteriously present after the drive-by accident of Harry Lime was Harry Lime himself, staging his own death. The "best friend" Holly ever had turns out to be what Calloway said he was: a ruthless, murderous criminal, consorting with an assorted set of evil characters from different countries (such as the cadaverous-looking Romanian Popescu). Finally, it is Holly himself who leaves Vienna, looking silly, after first having betrayed his false friend to Calloway's forces. The destruction of Holly's naïve morality is made complete in the memorable quip given by the amoral felon Harry:

'Don't be so gloomy! After all, it's not that awful. What the fellow said, in Italy for thirty years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder and bloodshed; but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and

along with Greene's own, pragmatic, Anglo-Catholic ethos: the moral imperative to punish crime, despite the quixotic nature of such a mission in a fallen and fatally tainted world. (This configures the subjective British self-image into a mid-way position between Central-European depravity and American naiveté).

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> the Renaissance. In Switzerland, they had brotherly love and five hundred years of democracy and peace, and what did that produce? The cuckoo clock! So long, Holly.'

This cynical dissociation and opposition between civilization and morality, between the good and the beautiful, is what wrong-foots Holly throughout the film. The hero is out of his depth, and the setting is accordingly full of oblique angles, distorted perspectives, buildings surrounded by scaffolds and rubble. The morality and the topography of Vienna are both equally askew. What is more, this labyrinthine morality reverberates in a strong European–American polarity.

The idea of Vienna-as-pitfall is enhanced by the cultural incomprehensibility and complexity of the place. Nationalities abound: German, Czech, Russian, Romanian, and Austrian. As often as not, they speak a strange language. A surprisingly large amount of dialogue in the film is in fact in German and, as such, incomprehensible to the questing Holly.

> Janitor: Da werden Sie kein Glück haben, mein lieber Herr! Sie kommen um zehn Minuten zu spät. Da ist niemand mehr hier, Sie läuten umsonst.
> Holly: Speak English?
> Janitor (*shrugs and smiles apologetically*): English? Er... na ja... little... little. (*Tries to resume*): Sie kommen um zehn Minuten zu spät...

The incomprehensibility of Vienna is thus not only a moral one but also a cultural one. The mores, realities, historical predicaments, and languages are all of them lost on our American *ingénue*. His clash with that Vienna that combines cultural complexity and immoral depravity uncannily mirrors the amorality of Humbert Humbert, depraved but refined in a naïve but schlocky, ridiculous, cuckoo-clock America.

Conclusions

From all these conflict-fraught tales of disturbance, we can extrapolate an underlying sense of normality – the implied European default of normality against which the disturbance manifests itself. I would suggest it in the following terms: The implicit European self-image is one of a separation between an ordered interior world, ruled by laws and by domestic values, a household with a centre of gravity in traditional authority, and cordoned off from an unordered outside where only the law of the jungle applies. That image is that of the house, with its roofs, walls, and thresholds separating outside from inside and with its central focus in the hearth and chimney giving warmth and shelter to its inhabitants.

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Outside this ordered world of domesticity are nomads, displaced or placeless strangers, who live in non-houses, whose fires are not on a hearth but under the open skies, and whose behaviour is wild, lawless, unregulated, and transgressive. In this stereotypical self–other opposition, Europe's ultimate Stranger is the Displaced Person, may he be the Asian Mongol or Hun, the Saracens or Beduins moving across the deserts of the Islamic world, the American Indian (and cowboy!) or African/Australian "savage", or the contemporary asylum-seeking migrant. The cities of non-Europe are, accordingly, not places of law and order but urban jungles of crime and lawlessness (from the casbahs of the Islamic world to the criminal ganglands of the Americas).

Seen in this light, the crisis of European order as experienced around the ravages of the Second World War are exemplified by the idea that this nomadic, anti-domestic Otherness is no longer outside but inside Europe: in the chaotic, ruined cities with their displaced people and black markets. Vienna is as much a casbah as Casablanca or Algiers, and the topology is that of the non-domestic building, the non-house: a place of walls but without inside or outside, and with, at its hearts, not a hearth but a monster; the prototype being the Labyrinth. Post-war Europe is, a bit in moral and in topological terms, a maze.

Behind the home and the rule of order is the shadow of the non-home, *un-heimlichkeit*. Europe presents, in modern representations, a combination of civilized refinement and a fraught history, a combination of suave civility and long-lost innocence, that Machiavellian sense that behind every Michelangelo lurks a Borgia, behind every Sissi a Dracula, behind every Louvre a Dachau – and between the two a sense of complexity and mixed feelings.

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