

# Imagology Revisited

Waldemar Zacharasiewicz



*Studia Imagologica*

17

# Imagology Revisited

STUDIA IMAGOLOGICA  
AMSTERDAM STUDIES ON CULTURAL IDENTITY

17

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*Imagology*, the study of cross-national perceptions and images as expressed in literary discourse, has for many decades been one of the more challenging and promising branches of Comparative Literature.

In recent years, the shape both of literary studies and of international relations (in the political as well as the cultural sphere) has taken a turn which makes imagology more topical and urgent than before. Increasingly, the attitudes, stereotypes and prejudices which govern literary activity and international relations are perceived in their full importance; their nature as textual (frequently literary) constructs is more clearly apprehended; and the necessity for a textual and historical analysis of their typology, their discursive expression and dissemination, is being recognized by historians and literary scholars.

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Waldemar Zacharasiewicz



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Cover Image: *Völkertafel (Tableau of Nationalities)*, The Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art.

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sorori carissimae

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**Introduction:**  
**A Personal Memoir: Towards the Study of Imagology**

## **Introduction: A Personal Memoir: Towards the Study of Imagology**

My interest in the literary representation of foreign landscapes, cultures and people inhabiting distant and strange climes was first roused at the University of Graz. Here Franz K. Stanzel encouraged my exploration of this phenomenon in my doctoral thesis dealing with the representation of exotic countries in 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century English poetry (*Die "Cosmic Voyage" und die "Excursion" in der englischen Dichtung des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, 1967, published in a revised version 1969). In this I attempted to contextualize the extensive descriptions in English poetry of countries in both the tropical and polar zones. This, together with a study of the "cosmic poems" in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (by Richard Blackmore, James Thomson, David Mallet and others), fostered my curiosity in the patterns and models of thought helping to account for the diversity of peoples and nations as the material poetica in post-Renaissance literature. The study of foreigners treading the Elizabethan and Jacobean stages, encouraged by generous academic hosts in Britain (such as Terence Spencer at the Shakespeare Institute in Birmingham and George K. Hunter at the University of Warwick), led to an analysis of negative images of regions in Europe which became bugbears in Elizabethan society. The work bore fruit in an early essay on the image of Italy ("Der perfekte Rachemord: Bemerkungen zum Italienbild der Engländer im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert," 1971, reprinted here in an English version). In those years comparatists such as Hugo Dyserinck (1966) were advocating the study of the depiction of foreigners in literary texts and of the factors which shaped generalizations about national character and its function in the processes of composition and reception of literary texts. The value of this field of research, first adumbrated by French comparatists like Fernand Baldensperger, F. M. Guyard, and J. M. Carré, was then becoming ever more apparent though there were skeptical voices such as René Wellek. Nevertheless, a new branch of the discipline of literary studies, imagology, was developed. Long

before Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) alerted academics to the significance of myths supporting collective self-images and strategies of exclusion and the erection of borders, European philologists and comparatists, prominent among them disciples of Dyserinck, began addressing these issues. They also drew on the insights of social psychologists concerning the origin and dissemination of prejudices and the mechanisms that foster the development of (relatively stable) concepts of one's own group (the autostereotype) and notions of the "other" with which they are juxtaposed (the heterostereotype).

My own contribution to this joint effort of a growing number of scholars in the philologies focused first on a comprehensive investigation of the theory of climate as a model accounting for the surprising diversity of manners and morals in the world manifest in multiple travel accounts since the late Middle Ages. The close study of these reports and of numerous medical and geographical texts directed my attention to classical sources in ethnography which continued to shape the expectations and observations of 16<sup>th</sup>-, 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century travelers and which also molded the representation of nations in long didactic cosmic poems such as Du Bartas' *Les Semaines* (1578) and later Richard Blackmore's *The Nature of Man* (1711). These venerable traditions also influenced the depiction of foreigners in the theater, where the theory of climate as a model of thought served to support the (often pejorative) renditions of representatives of individual nations. I subsequently pursued in other contexts the implications of the theory of climate, which permitted both the expression of a deterministic world view with a complacent sense of one's own privileged status and a cosmopolitan attitude towards foreign cultures. Insights gained during the research for my monograph on the theory of climate (*Die Klimatheorie in der englischen Literatur und Literaturkritik von der Mitte des 16. bis zum frühen 18. Jahrhundert* (1977)) gave birth to later essays surveying the use of this model for bringing out the benefits of the youthful USA and Canada, whose potential was alleged to be enhanced by favorable environmental factors (cf. "The Theory of Climate in North American Texts since 1776" (1997)). The pseudo-scientific inferences of this model of thought were also helpful in accounting for the representation of various European nations in other media such as the famous Styrian Tableau of Nationalities. The epithets attributed to the

peoples of Europe and based on ethnographic roots are also structured in accordance with this theory, which, due to the unfavorable location ascribed to his country by teachers of this model, posed particular challenges to the German author of this curious 18<sup>th</sup>-century product. (A condensed English version of my essay “Klimatheorie und Nationalcharakter auf der Völkertafel,” originally published in 1998, is included in this collection.) A wider perspective on this model of thought presented in an essay distilling the results of my scholarly exploration of the topic in “The Theory of Climate and Images of the North in Anglophone Literatures” is still readily available and can be read in the 2008 publication of *Images of the North*. The common roots of the theory of climate and the pseudo-science of physiognomy, which achieved such great popularity from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards and which implied the diagnosis of alleged national qualities inspiring the depiction of facial features indicating moral characteristics, also prompted an investigation (“Foreign Faces: Physiognomy and the Theory of Climate”). This is less easily found and therefore included in an English version in this segment of the volume.

In the course of my study of the work of James Howell, a prolific 17<sup>th</sup>-century British writer, who was preoccupied with ‘national characters,’ I discovered as early as 1971 a voluminous Latin source which encapsulated (shared) European opinions in that sphere. This permitted an identification of relevant traditions and major sources for 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century depictions of national characters, revealing the rootedness of such characters in classical sources and in established educational practice: Latin schools taught their pupils reliance on dictionaries providing appropriate epithets, offering brief descriptions of the typicality of the conduct of nations. A long essay on Howell, Lansius, and Kepler, which has been hidden away in a 1975 *Festschrift* commemorating Johannes Kepler, is here presented for the first time in an English version.

By the time of its original publication in German my career had taken me to the University of Vienna, where I was tasked with building up American Studies, a mission which, naturally, shifted my focus of interest to other texts and contexts. My reading in early American literature confronted me with the challenge of considering the adaptation by American writers of national characters as types familiar from British texts. This topic was first addressed in a talk at



the German Anglistentag in Wuppertal (1977) and then elaborated in a commissioned contribution to the inaugural volume of *REAL*, a review of research on “National Stereotypes in Literature in the English Language.” This essay is also reprinted here with slight additions updating the results of subsequent research still suggested as desiderata.

This review essay contains a section dealing with three European national characters as depicted in early American literature. Soon after its publication other developments in academia, such as the rise of Cultural Studies, the establishment of Ethnic Studies and the rapidly growing interest in travel literature, swiftly made the field of imagology a clearly defined and respected part of the discipline of American and English Studies. Imagology moved quickly from the margins to near the center of the academic field.

This trend prompted the composition of an essay exploring the depiction of several ethnic groups in American literature in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the influx of millions of foreigners and their seemingly difficult acculturation fostered a falling back on heterostereotypes, with the extent and quality of this literary practice depending on the individual background of the author (cf. John Dos Passos and Thomas Wolfe). An English translation of this essay, which originally appeared in a collection by Günther Blaicher (1987), who had previously published several insightful articles on the autostereotype and heterostereotype of the English, is also included in this volume. Among the three ethnic groups whose representatives appear in the texts selected for consideration in my essay, particular attention was paid to Jewish Americans; the traditionally negative associations of this group continued to exert an influence on the imagination of American writers until the mid-1940s and are considered in an essay dealing with the collective experience of Jewish immigrants in the USA, their self-perception and presentation by other observers.

Blaicher’s groundbreaking survey of *Das Deutschlandbild in der englischen Literatur* (1992) aroused the interest of a larger academic audience in the issue at a time when the reunification of Germany was reviving certain anxieties and clichés. This was the backdrop to the invitation I received to produce a companion volume on *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur*. Considering the greater numerical presence of people of German stock in the US,

an even more comprehensive study was called for. This proved to be a task which occupied my spare hours throughout the 1990s until the publication of a monograph in German in 1998. The emphatic advice of American friends that an English version of this book was necessary prompted a revised version in English, which finally appeared as *Images of Germany in American Literature* (2007). As this book is readily available, there is no need to repeat in the present volume this fruit of my imagological research particularly from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But two investigations of the ramifications of the image of Germany in 19<sup>th</sup>-century North America and its function in the American search for a national identity merit inclusion: “Atlantic Double-Cross: Germany as an Alternative Model in America’s Search for a National Identity” (2000) and the representation of typical German immigrants in American popular culture: “The Rise and the Demise of German and Hybrid German-English in American (Popular) Culture” (2007). Essays on related images, especially those of the Austrians and the Viennese in Anglophone literature originally published in the proceedings of various conferences and collections dedicated to academic friends, illustrate the Austrian heterostereotype(s) abroad which gradually developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. To avoid duplication two articles focusing on the emergence and function of the complex image of Austria and the Austrians in North American texts (“Waltzing in the German Paris: American Encounters with Musical Vienna” [1995] and “Masks, Minstrels and Melancholy” [2003]) have been fused into one and find their place in this volume, whilst another essay mirrors the evolution of a similarly ‘productive’ image of Vienna and the Austrian provinces in Canadian literature (2001).

These various images are an integral part of the checkered history of transatlantic ways of perceiving and misperceiving the Old World, manifest in the growing corpus of travel literature, and today the subject of many conferences. The mid-1990s saw the publication of the results of an international colloquium convened in Vienna on “Images of Central Europe in North American Travelogues and Fiction.” More ambitious and sustained was my attempt published in an essay in *Transatlantische Differenzen / Transatlantic Differences* (2004) to analyze the mechanisms that prompted reciprocal transatlantic ‘misunderstandings’ through a selective perception and

'construction' of the other continent. An English translation of this essay is also included here.

The potential productivity of transatlantic perceptions and misperceptions also became apparent since the 1970s as my own interests developed in the direction of Southern Studies. Research into the historical development of its literature and culture since colonial times has revealed the functionality of stereotyped views of individual countries and cultures in Europe. Two essays included here depict the significant links between the American South (until the Civil War) and Continental Europe, ties which partly resulted from the ethnic heritage of immigrants to Dixie (cf. "German Ethnicity in the American South," 2008) and partly from the attendance of Southern graduates at reformed universities in Central Europe ("Southern Alumni of German Universities," 2008). These strong links with Europe were temporarily recovered by the Agrarians in the 1920s and 1930s but the focus was now on other Continental countries. Two essays bear witness to this topic ("A Separate Identity Asserted: Agrarian Affinities with European Culture," 2004, and "Perspectives on the Mediterranean: Americans as Transatlantic Sojourners," 2010). They also illustrate the fact that the use of national stereotypes in literature and in the specific contexts of regional or national cultures is related to the perennial attempts of groups to maintain their collective identities by distinguishing themselves from other cultures. When establishing affinities with more distant cultures, which are often rendered in accordance with (positively connoted) stereotypes, those who perceive themselves as under threat seem to derive support from such intellectual alliances as did the Agrarians in their attempt to stem the pressures of those 'Yankees' eager to industrialize the impoverished South.

The reception of numerous Jewish immigrants fleeing from pogroms in Eastern Europe and settling primarily in the urban northeast of the USA gave rise to the resuscitation of mostly negative heterostereotypes, which the gradually acculturated spokespersons of this ethnic and cultural group tried to refute. Whilst they eventually managed to gain full recognition in urban society and in literature, the limited number of new arrivals from this group in Dixie, where Sephardic Jews had originally been a respected minority, had to struggle for acceptance, which was much delayed in the region. However, the career of a very prominent Southern Studies scholar,

Louis D. Rubin, an admired advisor and friend, eventually demonstrated the complete integration of representatives of this cultural group which had earlier been marginalized and to which stereotype features had been ascribed. This issue is considered in the essay “Stereotypes and Sense of Identity of Jewish Southerners” (1991).

Finally, the heterostereotype of the English prevalent in Central Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the perception of the Scots in North America were subjects of inquiry in two essays of mine which are included here in new translations: The former, “*Charme à l’Anglaise*,” was part of the ambitious study of the *Tableau of Nationalities* produced in the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and arguably reflects the incipient Anglophilia in Germany deriving from the new dynastic ties between Hannover and England, but also from the remarkable progress that had been made in the island in the sphere of science and in the political realm (1999). The latter essay, “*The Rise of Cultural Nationalism in the New World*” (1989), is indirectly related to the theory of climate which offered a plausible model to explain certain features of the Scots, whom political and economic factors drove out of their country. As immigrants to the British colonies in North America, they left their mark and, directly or indirectly, as loyalist settlers came to be welcomed as energetic and talented “*Northerners*,” qualified to help build Canada as the land of the “*Northmen*.”

These studies, which were undertaken and appeared in their original form over the last four decades, are submitted here and dedicated to my many friends and colleagues on both sides of the Atlantic. Their investigations and insights have inspired my own efforts. The mutual sharing of this cultural work was prompted by an awareness of the particular significance of the study of cross-national perceptions and images in our globalized world.

**National Stereotypes in Literature in the English  
Language: A Review of Research**

## **Chapter 1: National Stereotypes in Literature in the English Language: A Review of Research**

The last decades have seen a strikingly increased awareness among literary scholars of the various factors that influence or determine the depiction of foreign nations and the use of national clichés in literature. Contrary to statements by the editors of a collection of essays on stereotypes and prejudices (James Elliott, Jürgen Pelzer and Carol Poore, *Stereotyp und Vorurteil*, 7-8) a large number of articles dealing with literature in the English language made use of the terminology and the frames of reference supplied by the social sciences when examining the portrayal of foreign nations. Dozens of studies have related the use of specific ethnic stereotypes in literary texts to social facts like the common tendency to generalize from isolated incidents or to draw inferences from information long since outdated, and to structure vague impressions by falling back on preconceived notions and firm expectations. Taking into account the habits of individuals and groups to project undesirable phenomena on members of minority groups and particularly on foreigners, many books and articles have examined the use of negative clichés and have considered the custom of assessing everything that is unfamiliar from an ethnocentric position, a habit that favors the emergence and use of stereotypes.<sup>1</sup> Quite a few of these investigations have gone beyond the mere inventory of stereotypes and have touched upon the artistic and social functions of certain auto- and heterostereotypes in literary texts. In spite of René Wellek's grave doubts concerning the inclusion of "national illusions, of fixed ideas which nations have of each other" in literary scholarship<sup>2</sup> a growing number of comparatists and students of

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<sup>1</sup> Literary scholars have profited from research into the underlying mechanisms conducted by Gordon W. Allport, K. S. Sodhi, R. Bergius, Theodor W. Adorno, Otto Klineberg, Peter Hofstätter, and others.

<sup>2</sup> "The Crisis of Comparative Literature" (1959), rpt. in *Concepts of Criticism* (1963), 282-295.

various national literatures have come to regard and defend the study of foreign images of specific nations as a legitimate and rewarding task for the literary scholar.<sup>3</sup> These studies clearly profited from attempts to promote international understanding by exposing and illustrating the mechanism which determines and preserves national stereotypes, and they have benefited from the commemoration of certain historical events like the Bicentennial. Yet, it is beyond doubt the growing interest in the reading process and the interaction between author and reading public that has given an impetus to such research work. It has also become obvious that an analysis of national images can supply essential data for an understanding of literary texts representing lowbrow literature, which traditionally exploits stereotypes. Considering these facts it seems appropriate to survey the results of these books and articles, particularly by students of English and American literature, to relate them to similar research conducted in other fields, and to indicate some areas in which a scholarly investigation of national images might be fruitfully continued.

The present research article proposes to offer a review of relevant studies put in several categories. Books and articles examining individual writers and literary genres of the Renaissance and the 17<sup>th</sup> century under the aspect of imagology will be dealt with in one chapter, while the research exploring the dissemination and use of clichés in the Enlightenment will be considered in another chapter. The roughly chronological treatment will permit a scrutiny of those studies first which seek the roots of specific stereotypes and which, in investigating the problem of the persistence and prevalence of such clichés, shed some light on the remarkable cross-national agreement in stereotypes of various nations. The necessarily more limited attempt to survey recent research on the use of clichés in 18<sup>th</sup>-century England in the second part will include a look at studies exploring the development of the autostereotype of the English, which is intricately linked with British heterostereotypes of that time, as well as at recent comments on the corresponding views then prevalent among other European nations about the English.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dyserinck, "Zum Problem der 'images' and 'mirages'" (1966), 107-120, and a general survey of that problem by P. Boerner, "National Images and Their Place in Literary Research: Germany As Seen by 18<sup>th</sup> Century French and English Reading Audiences" (1975), 358-370.

As several studies have stressed the desirability of a comparative analysis of national clichés employed in various literatures, the third chapter will take stock of research devoted to national stereotypes in early American texts. It will outline hitherto largely unexplored problems of the transfer to and the adaptation of specific English heterostereotypes in the New World after the Declaration of Independence. This chapter will offer some illustrations for this complex process, briefly relating some of the paradigms to the emergence and the function of regional stereotypes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the Civil War.

The final chapter will accommodate studies, partly also of a comparative nature, which attempt to outline some areas for further research. Reference will be made to the frequency with which the authors of certain literary genres of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both in England and in America, draw on the storehouse of national clichés, a phenomenon which still awaits full explanation. The obvious sign of this phenomenon will become apparent in a glance at a study of novelistic techniques employed by prominent American historiographers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Leaving the field of studies with a historical orientation, the review will take stock of articles calling for an inventory of certain patterns and *topoi* which serve as organizing frames in descriptions of foreign nations. It will further take note of some studies which pay attention to the impact of certain clichés on the reception of native and foreign texts by scrutinizing the response of the reading public to the use of certain clichés, and the interaction between such responses and individual writers who felt called upon to revise their original texts. The review will finally briefly consider studies which identify the function of certain clichés and images as catalysts for or obstacles to the reception of literature by foreign audiences.

### **I. Studies of National Characters and National Stereotypes Prevalent in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

If one approaches English literary texts of these centuries with the distinction in mind drawn between national character and national stereotypes offered by H. C. J. Duijker and N. H. Frijda in their important study (1960), thus avoiding for the moment the continuing debate concerning the validity and the genuine function of the concept of a national character, one cannot fail to recognize that literary genres



with strong conventions and a tendency towards shorthand characterization have offered themselves as a particularly fruitful field for the student of national clichés. It comes as no surprise in the context of a historical perspective that a large number of early studies devoted to the portrayal of ethnic characters in literature concerned themselves with dramatic texts. The specific laws of the theatrical genres clearly facilitated the use of stereotyped foreign characters when the expansion of the physical horizon and the fragmentation of the originally fairly unified European culture into national cultures prompted the inclusion of foreigners among the stage characters. The relative briefness of time available to the dramatist demanded a more schematic and selective characterization, and the possibility to exploit the visual aspects of such figures in their striking linguistic and possibly sartorial peculiarity helped to make foreign characters particularly prominent in Renaissance drama. Certain shifts in taste in the Elizabethan theater prompted, first in hybrid plays, a replacement of allegorical figures by representatives of other European or exotic nations and encouraged playwrights to allot to these foreigners the role of comical or evil characters. The first comprehensive and well-documented inventory of foreigners and their characteristics in a large corpus of dramatic texts was provided by Eduard Eckhardt in his study of *Dialekt- und Ausländertypen des älteren englischen Dramas* (1911).

Eckhardt's account of the various traits Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights attributed to European and exotic characters considers also the extent of the familiarity of the authors and their audiences with the representatives of these nations. Eckhardt is clearly, though insufficiently, aware of the importance of socio-psychological factors and the contribution of literary conventions which shaped the characterization through the dramatists and the expectations of the contemporary public. Other early 20<sup>th</sup>-century studies of these dramatic texts, while collecting further examples of the stereotyped presentation of, for instance, French, Italian, or Spanish figures as 'inconstant and fickle,' 'jealous and revengeful' or 'proud and vain' failed to examine the concept of a national character, which has since then become somewhat suspect and is often critically disputed by social scientists. They record these dramatized assertions by playwrights with much less caution than a sceptical observer will do who has seen the dangers of such generalizations in the course of

the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The above-mentioned character traits are either regarded as a more or less valid reflection of real qualities of these nations or as the result of political and religious tensions between England and continental countries. While R. V. Lindabury's study (1931) assiduously catalogues the characteristics allotted to European peoples, regarding them basically as evidence for the problematical patriotism of Elizabethan authors, a number of other books on national characters written in the 1920s and 30s all too clearly reflect the intellectual climate of the post-World War I years. A modern reader is not infrequently struck by the distinct readiness of these scholars to assess foreign characters as either just or distorted reflections of fixed national characters. (Essentialism as a danger is meanwhile generally recognized.)

Cumberland Clark's book *Shakespeare and National Character* (1932), for instance, tends to evaluate the playwright's skill at delineating the distinctive racial characteristics of the different peoples of the world. H. E. Smith's "Foreigners Represented as National Types" (1932) was much more clearly aware of the projective nature of national stereotypes, and the functional aspect of the delineation of foreigners. The advance in scholarly sophistication from these studies to George K. Hunter's persuasive article on "Elizabethans and Foreigners" (1964) reflects both the disillusionment with national typologies and characters, and the progress in the study of literary traditions which in the 16<sup>th</sup> century facilitated the introduction of foreigners as theatrical types. While exploring the framework of assumptions concerning foreigners, Hunter considers the integration of new geographical and ethnographic data into the traditional world view and pays attention to the importance of the experience with foreigners for the emerging new drama. For him, this cultural product of post-Reformation England provides evidence for the process of "vulgarization," the intrusion of vernacular and popular prejudices, into literature. Hunter also notes the support time-worn models of thought, like the ancient theory of climate and certain intellectual patterns (for instance, the juxtaposition of moral virtues and vices in homiletic texts) could give to such a process, in the course of which foreign figures so often fulfilled the function of villains or clowns. His stimulating survey also sketches the cliché-ridden imaginative

background against which Shakespeare's more subtle delineation of foreign and particularly non-European characters must be evaluated.<sup>4</sup>

An article by Jürgen Schäfer (1979) similarly tried to draw Shakespeare's map of Europe by putting his use of foreign figures and his references to various localities in the Elizabethan context.<sup>5</sup> He discovered much evidence for the contemporaneous religious and political tensions between the now fragmented national cultures in Europe in Shakespeare's texts. Yet Schäfer could hardly fail to notice the imaginative prominence of Italy and the contrast between Shakespeare's predominantly romantic evocation of this country with the largely unfavorable picture created by other Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights.

One cannot ignore in this context that the analysis of the Elizabethan image of Italy, particularly of the stage, and the discussion of its sources have been favored research topics since Edward Meyer's *Machiavelli and the Elizabethan Drama* (1897). Meyer's discovery of an important source for the emergence of the stereotype of the Machiavellian villain in Innocent Gentillet's *Anti-Machiavell* (1576), often echoed, for instance, in studies by Clarence Valentine Boyer (1914), has since been qualified and supplemented in several books and articles by Fredson Bowers (1940), Mario Praz, "The Politic Brain," Felix Raab, *The English Face of Machiavelli* (1964), John L. Lievsay (1964), and the present writer, "Der perfekte Rachemord" (1971).<sup>6</sup>

If one makes allowances for literary and especially theatrical conventions like that of the Machiavellian Italian, and if one discounts the obvious examples of various types of xenophobia prompted by cultural and religious anxieties, one is struck by the degree of general agreement among English and other European authors of early travellers' reports, geographical handbooks, psychological manuals and dramatic and fictional texts concerning the typical traits of the nations of Europe. Critical readers who perceive the remarkable consensus regarding the alleged fickleness, impetuosity, inconstancy

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hunter, "Othello and Colour Prejudice" (1967), 139-163.

<sup>5</sup> Since the completion of this review of research Ton Hoenselaars has published a comprehensive monograph, *Images of Englishmen and Foreigners in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (1992), on this topic, demonstrating the conventions in the depiction of stage characters of foreign provenance in the Elizabethan theater. This substantial study supersedes previous work in the field.

<sup>6</sup> See the translation of this essay in this volume.

of the French, the drunkenness, phlegmatic nature and dullness of the Dutch, and the pride of the Spaniards are prone to explain these assessments, so often couched in epithets accompanying these nations, in terms of the abundant evidence for plagiarism.<sup>7</sup> Such facts point to the interaction between writers, publishers and their public. All seem to have been eager to have their own preconceptions and prejudices confirmed and to have measured the authenticity of travelers' books and, partly at least, also of fiction, by the degree to which the details reported conformed to established patterns. Yet a pioneer article by Chester Greenough (1940) identified the primary causes of the puzzling consensus on national character by relating ethnographic descriptions and character portraits in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to sources shared by the *litterati* in late mediaeval times and in the Renaissance. In this article Greenough was able to link the recurrent use of certain epithets for individual nations to precepts in Aristotelian and Horatian poetics and rhetorical handbooks and their Renaissance adaptations. He then traced this cross-national agreement in stereotypes about individual nations to the phrasebooks and thesauri from which pupils in Latin schools all over Europe culled these epithets. By drawing attention to the support the authority of classical poetics could give to stereotype depiction and by indicating the role of the venerable mode of the Theophrastan character in this context, Greenough offered a crucial insight into the emergence and dissemination of relatively stable clichés in humanist and post-Renaissance Europe.<sup>8</sup> Some aspects of Greenough's plausible hypotheses concerning the codification of certain epithets in the thesauri compiled by Renaissance scholars (and piously copied by their disciples) and the role of the decorum in perpetuating definite stereotypes of individual nations have since been elaborated on by Franz K. Stanzel (1974).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. John Walter Stoye, *English Travellers Abroad* (1952), where the persistence of assertions concerning France and the French is shown to be not infrequently the result of copying rather than of identical experience, and C. C. Barfoot, "A Patriot's Boast: Akenside and Goldsmith in Leiden" (1974), where the picture of Dutch life is shown to be more indebted to earlier chorographies and observations, for instance, by Sir William Temple, than to autoptic experience.

<sup>8</sup> The development of the particularly pertinent variant of the popular prose-form cultivated in 17<sup>th</sup>-century England, the national character, has since then received notice in Benjamin Boyce's *The Polemic Character, 1640-1661* (1955).

<sup>9</sup> Since the publication of this review of research Stanzel has offered a comprehensive account of the genesis of national characters and their function in ethnographic and

Stanzel, who did research for a comprehensive study of the factors that molded national stereotypes, underlines the implications of the decorum for classical criticism of the drama, so apparent in Thomas Rymer's strictures on Shakespeare's *Othello*, and advocates further examination of the variants of these thesauri, which are storehouses of evaluative phrases available in different European countries at that time. Older studies of foreigners in English Restoration drama like Käthe Pfitzner's *Die Ausländertypen im englischen Drama der Restaurationszeit* (1931), which are basically modeled on Eckhardt's book, tended to underestimate such literary and 'educational' influences and to overemphasize both the importance of political relationships, which obviously cannot be ignored, and of the autoptic experience of the playwrights for their delineation of foreigners. Further evidence for the significance of educational methods in Latin schools for the perpetuation of national clichés was provided in an article by the present writer which analyzed the widespread practice of comparing the European nations and juxtaposing their respective virtues and vices in orations.<sup>10</sup> The report of an extended rhetorical exercise by young Protestant aristocrats in Tübingen contained in Thomas Lansius' *Consultatio* (1613) could so easily be translated and adapted to the "meridian of England" precisely because the assumptions concerning national characters were shared by the Austrian academic teaching in Tübingen and the English historiographer James Howell translating the *Consultatio* forty years later. Intellectuals all over Europe were ready to draw heavily on classical sources, ancient ethnographies and histories, when depicting ethnic differences in contemporary Europe, an approach that implied the tacit assumption of a close relationship between the ancient peoples and their descendents or the inheritors of their countries in 16<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. The easy transfer of salient national features (the 'levitas' of the Gauls becomes the levity of the French; the fidelity and the constitutional inebriety of the Teutoni referred to in the recovered *Germania* by Tacitus<sup>11</sup> is regularly ascribed to the Germans) is an

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literary texts [*Europäer: Ein imagologischer Essay* (1997)] and was the leader of a team examining the ramifications of this issue in the 'Tableau of Nationalities' from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century: *Europäischer Völkerspigel* (1999).

<sup>10</sup> An English version of this article is published for the first time in this volume.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. the massive documentation of the influential Germanic myth in Jacques Ridé, *L'image du Germain dans la pensée et la littérature allemandes de la redécouverte de Tacite à la fin du XVIe siècle* (1977).

essential aspect of 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century ethnographic writing, which is clearly reflected in various literary genres. Obviously the dissemination of such stereotypes was facilitated by the popularity of pertinent proverbial sayings since mediaeval times<sup>12</sup> (a field well deserving closer scrutiny), a fact which helps to account for cross-national agreement on the alleged characteristics of individual nations.

The importance of Graeco-Roman traditions and myths, in particular the myth of climate and its effects, for the depiction of both exotic and European nations by English authors of the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries has been shown in another seminal article by J. W. Johnson (1960). Bill Johnson sketched the history of a model of thought which was clearly a suitable tool to perpetuate certain stereotypes and to give prejudiced notions, prompted by religious and political antagonism, new currency. Drawing on Johnson's article and Margaret T. Hodgen's comprehensive study of *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1964), as well as many texts hitherto largely ignored, the present writer's long study of the development and the ramifications of the climate theory (1977) offers evidence for the relevance of this pseudo-scientific model of thought for the dissemination of alleged qualities of various nations. While revealing the importance of the adaptation of ancient medical theories in new psychological handbooks, which offer typologies of constitutional and intellectual talents,<sup>13</sup> for the perpetuation of old stereotypes and the consolidation of clichés of more recent origin, the book illustrates the strong impulse certain national clichés received through a systematic exposition of the climate theory. Hodgen documented the persistent reduction of new phenomena to a familiar level and illuminated the

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<sup>12</sup> This impression gained from a reading of Peter Heylyn's *Cosmography* and James Howell's works, for instance, is corroborated by a substantial article by Günther Blaicher on "Zur Entstehung und Verbreitung nationaler Stereotypen in und über England" (1977), 549-574. The rise of new clichés can at least partly be accounted for by the illegitimate application or the misinterpretation of standard mediaeval texts like, in the case of English stereotypes, Bede's *History* in later periods. Proverbial sayings juxtaposing national clichés, while allowing some scope for shifts and substitutions, were particularly fit to strengthen preconceived notions. Cf. pertinent lists in *Reliquiae Antiquae I*, ed. T. Wright and J. O. Halliwell (1841), and V. S. Lean's *Collectanea* (1902ff.), taken, for instance, from James Howell's *Lexicon Tetraglotton... with Proverbs* (1659-1660).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. in particular the readiness of Levinus Lemnius to equate nations with constitutional types and similar attempts by Juan Huarte, cf. Zacharasiewicz, *Klimatheorie* 45-53 and 57-75.

persistent wish to pigeon-hole unexpected data and judge them (the manners and morals of exotic peoples in particular) from the ethnocentric, that is, the occidental European position.<sup>14</sup> That this intellectual habit of organizing disparate phenomena with the help of traditional models of thought posed some difficulties for English writers becomes obvious when the unfavorable implications of the theory of climate apparent to English writers and their attempts to avoid negative conclusions for their own nation are scrutinized. The study of this model of thought testifies also to the suitability of rhetorical patterns in poetic texts for the propagation of national clichés and exemplifies the readiness of those catering for the needs of a growing number of travelers to supply information by distilling a multiplicity of printed sources rather than offering their own autoptic experience, in simplified and, therefore, easily memorable form. My thèse also purports to document the double function of the theory of climate which, due to its growing plausibility in the age of systematic research by members of the Royal Society, regularly served as support for national stereotypes in various travel books and was occasionally employed to sustain fossilized stereotypes in deterministic poetic texts.<sup>15</sup> But this model of thought had also a potential for undermining a rigorous ethnocentrism in favor of a more cosmopolitan attitude. Yet such a possibility exploited by some relativists, who often linked climatic factors with sociological and historical assumptions, did not necessarily restrain generalized statements concerning foreign nations, as is made clear by the popularity of pertinent assertions in 18<sup>th</sup>-century literature both in England and abroad.

## II. National Stereotypes in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Britain

The numerous allusions to national stereotypes in 18<sup>th</sup>-century European, particularly British, documents reflect the tension between the readiness to apply venerable clichés and the recurrent admonition against preconceived notions concerning other nations. The frequent enlightened plea for a critical examination of the validity of glib generalizations clashed with the usefulness of such brief characterizations, for instance, for satiric purposes and for specific

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<sup>14</sup> The abundance of text material and research dealing with the confrontation of European authors with exotic races precludes a review of studies exploring this field in the present article.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Richard Blackmore's long didactic poem *The Nature of Man* (1711).

dramatic and theatrical effects, and the serious attempt to provide a systematic inventory of human types. Indeed, as John G. Hayman put it in an article (1971), the discussion of national characters formed a “lively and intellectually reputable issue” in that age. The continuing consensus among early 18<sup>th</sup>-century writers regarding national characteristics, noted by Paul Hazard in *The European Mind 1680-1715* (transl. 1953), was aptly illustrated by the French scholar with a quotation from a geographical handbook by Nicolas de Fer (1716) for, in accordance with traditional practice so clearly evident in the text of Gerardus Mercator’s *Atlas* (5<sup>th</sup> ed. 1623), lists of national characteristics were often contained in geographical manuals. The basic assumption of a fixed and separate identity was, however, not always easy to reconcile with the concept of the universality of human nature. Moreover, the debate over the conflicting ideas of a common humanity and natural differences between nations engaged many intellectuals in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which may be regarded as the heyday of the debate on national character. As the century progressed, statements relating to national characters grew more detailed and tended to include extensive remarks on the causes of the qualities mentioned. The collection of determining factors reached a climax in Montesquieu’s *L’esprit des lois* (1748), only to be surpassed in comprehensiveness by William Falconer’s *Remarks on the Influence of Climate* (1781).<sup>16</sup> There was an apparent increase in the sophistication of climatic and social hypotheses accounting for innate or acquired national characters and for historical changes in the role and nature of various peoples (cf. Abbé Du Bos’ *Reflexions critiques*, 1719). An age which took pleasure in the comprehensive classification of flora and fauna and which emphasized the environmental factors molding both plants and animals was prone to favor anthropological theories which came to explain the apparent diversity of groups of human individuals (cf. Slotkin, *Readings in Early Anthropology*, 1965). Yet striking inconsistencies in the treatment of the problem of national characters remained even in the work of the intellectual leaders of the Enlightenment, which are exposed in Stanzel’s scrutiny of schemes and clichés in David Hume’s essay “Of National Characters.” Stanzel (1974) reveals the contradiction between Hume’s awareness of the temptation to generalize and to form clichés and

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. F. K. Stanzel, “*Tristram Shandy* und die Klimatheorie,” 16-28, esp. 25-27.



“general rules ... rashly ... which are the source of what we properly call Prejudice”<sup>17</sup> and his own use of current stereotypes in essays and letters, particularly his lapse into the employment of pairs of contrasted national clichés.<sup>18</sup>

Considering the ambiguous and even contradictory attitude of the teachers of empiricism and epistemology, it is no surprise that contemporary authors were even less reticent regarding national clichés, although they, too, paid not infrequently lip-service to the ideas of a critical examination of preconceived notions. It is little wonder that the authors of guidebooks and manuals for the Grand Tour<sup>19</sup> continued to substitute traditional stereotypes for empirical data, or that plagiarism or superficial observation and a demonstrably selective registration of autoptic impressions took the place of genuine scrutiny. Yet these writers are partly exonerated as the limited suitability of a journey to foreign countries for the correction of preconceptions has been empirically confirmed by modern social psychology.<sup>20</sup> While the travel-letter and the novel took over from the thesaurus, the book of characters and the long didactic poem the role of the chief mediator and means of perpetuating national clichés, the contrasted cosmopolitan attitude expressed in the phrase “Human nature is everywhere the same”<sup>21</sup> stood little chance of restraining the use of predominantly negative clichés, mainly, of course, heterostereotypes.

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<sup>17</sup> *Treatise of Human Nature* I, iii, 13.

<sup>18</sup> Hume apparently accepts the validity of stereotypes, attributing more honesty to the common people in Switzerland than in Ireland, and offering fairly indiscriminate comments on the Turks, Greeks, Jews, and Armenians. The limitations of the perspective of the prominent philosopher were wittily pointed out in an essay by Stanzel who noted Hume’s prejudices against the goiter-bearing Styrians and in favor of the Tyroleans, “Häßliche und andere Steirer” (1995).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Thomas Nugent’s *The Grand Tour* (1756), which copies verbatim from outdated descriptions of the Netherlands; cf. Barfoot, “A Patriot’s Boast,” in particular 205.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Gottfried Keller on the heterostereotype of the English held by German students before, during, and after a brief sojourn to England, in “Die Änderung kognitiver Urteilsstrukturen durch einen Auslandsaufenthalt” (1970), and on the corresponding stereotypes held by English students in Germany, “Die Auswirkungen eines Deutschlandaufenthaltes auf das Deutschlandbild britischer Schüler” (1979).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Thomas Rymer’s statements in *The Tragedies of the Last Age* (1678), George Farquhar in “A Discourse Upon Comedy” (1702), Aaron Hill in *The Northern Star*, John Husbands and Samuel Johnson.

Further research might demonstrate how the rise of the novel, which gradually replaced the older romance (whose figures had usually lacked local color) through its very emphasis on a realistic representation of setting and characters fostered attention to/on superficial differences and consequently the inclusion of the supposedly characteristic traits of foreign individuals.

Several studies analyzing the use of national clichés by the early masters of English fiction indirectly bear witness to the affinity of the new genre to such material. William Thomas Graves, in a doctoral thesis (1970), after taking stock of the national types familiar and available to 18<sup>th</sup>-century English novelists and their reading public, investigates the function of the representatives of these types and specific references in the novels of three major novelists. By relating the inclusion of allusions to or the use of fictional representatives of the nations to the political, social and to artistic effects intended by these authors, Graves goes beyond the traditional inventory and illuminates the value of these types within the context of literary constructs. What emerges from his analysis is a contrast between Fielding's increasingly critical examination of the supposedly difficult English individualism, as it is juxtaposed with foreign characters, and the affirmation of the superiority of the ethical individualism of English characters in Richardson's major novels. In Smollett's case, Graves maintains he is able to furnish evidence for the ambivalent attitude of the Scot to the English national character and his compatriots. He claims that Smollett's plots and the fates of his heroes are linked to the sense of national dislocation oppressing many contemporary Scots in the post-1745 period. Graves might have added that Smollett's lack of restraint regarding the employment of national clichés was certainly also due to his satirical and burlesque bent. This is equally manifest in the detailed portrayal of his grotesque British characters, as has been thoroughly shown in studies by Ronald Paulson (1967). His readiness to introduce a gallery of foreign characters may also be related to the new appeal of the aesthetic category of the "New," revalued in the age of transition from Classicism to Romanticism, which encouraged the depiction of the accidentals of space and time.<sup>22</sup> Yet Smollett's apparent relish for the depiction of foreign characters seems to be primarily the result of his

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Staeck, "'Novelty' als Gestaltungsprinzip bei Smollett" (1974).

willingness to provide entertainment for and to establish a rapport with his readers by fully exploiting their prejudices, for instance, the gallophobia rampant in mid-18<sup>th</sup>-century England. Incidental comments by Kurt Schlüter (1969)<sup>23</sup> and others have noted Smollett's attempt to achieve objectivity in factual prose, like his *Present State of All Nations*, a book which corrects and mitigates the xenophobia of his *Travels*.<sup>24</sup> But nobody can overlook the extensive use made of caricatured foreigners, many of whom primarily function as the unamiable antagonists or victims of his picaresque heroes in *Peregrine Pickle* and *Roderick Random*. Both direct authorial commentaries and pertinent allusions in dialogues abound during Peregrine Pickle's Grand Tour, and the caricature of the wretched apothecary Monsieur Lavement, whose servility is unmistakably labeled "typically French," suggest the scope such a relatively crude narrative strategy (the inclusion of a grotesque heterostereotype) could at that time find in the novel.<sup>25</sup> To the grotesque appearance and fawning behaviour of M. Lavement one can add the caricature of an Irish fortune-hunter, Captain O'Donnell, who deserves the punishment by the hero, whom he had insidiously attacked.

A doctoral thesis by Michel Sutschek (1973) on the expository and fictional prose of the Scottish physician Dr. John Moore has identified a similar clear-cut distinction between the depiction of foreigners in factual reports and in imaginative works. But Moore was apparently willing to measure inherited notions against his own experiences in continental countries and dismissed some popular clichés relating to the Italians and to the Germans. An analysis of his three novels indicates that as a novelist he clung to stereotypes expressly rejected in his books of travel.<sup>26</sup> Apparently the expectations of the reading public slowed down or prevented such a process of emancipation and certain traditions in the specific genres worked in the same direction.

These English writers drew on contemporary statements concerning national characters. Yet hardly any other British author of

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<sup>23</sup> "Smollett, The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker," esp. 273-275.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Travels through France and Italy* (1766). The work achieved a certain notoriety as a xenophobic document.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Roderick Random*, chapters 19-21.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Germany* (1779), and *A View of Society and Manners in Italy* (1781). His three novels are *Zeluco*, *Edward*, and *Mordaunt* (1786, 1796, and 1800).

the 18<sup>th</sup> century was so fascinated by the possibility of comparing national characters and intrigued with the pleasures of this intellectual employment as the prolific Oliver Goldsmith, whose hobby-horse could not be ignored by students of his work and even helped them to identify some anonymous publications as part of his canon.<sup>27</sup> The son of an Irish clergyman rang many changes on this topic in his essays and letters, both private and fictional,<sup>28</sup> historical compilations, and his poem *The Traveller*. It is well known that Oliver Goldsmith also helped to disseminate the notion of a national standard of taste, only binding for the writers of an individual nation, a concept which had emerged in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century in national literary criticism and was to be a useful tool in the liberation of literature from the trammels of classicism in mid-18<sup>th</sup>-century England. While Goldsmith took a sane position concerning the popular Grand Tour by declaring that “its chief aim [was] the wearing off of national prejudices,” critically reflecting on natural prejudices in a separate essay, his main body of work shows that he handled national clichés so liberally that he came in for strictures by his readers.<sup>29</sup> Certain labels affixed to individual nations in his poetical survey of Europe have continued to puzzle modern readers, for instance, his reference to the “rude Carinthian boor [who] against the houseless stranger shuts the door.”<sup>30</sup> Even readers outside Central Europe seemed to have been baffled by the unexpected epithet and the implication of habitual inhospitality among those Alpine people. Their perplexity can be inferred from the turn an early American essayist, William Wirt, was to give to this passage, a fact which has so far escaped the notice of all commentators.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. Ronald S. Crane, ed., *New Essays by Oliver Goldsmith* (1927).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. the “Chinese Letters”, in *The Citizen of the World*, which are rooted in the convention of the oriental visitor.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Zach, “Die Darstellung der Völker und Länder der Erde bei Oliver Goldsmith” (1969), and Barfoot, “A Patriot’s Boast,” for a demonstration of his unscrupulous pilfering from earlier writers.

<sup>30</sup> *The Traveller*, ll. 3-4. Goldsmith was said by his first biographer to have justified this pejorative comment by referring to autoptic personal experience in Carinthia, cf. “The Life of Oliver Goldsmith” by Sir James Prior, in *Miscellaneous Works* (1837), 192. The veracity of this remark has been questioned and remains doubtful.

<sup>31</sup> The prominent Virginian lawyer and man of letters, William Wirt, in *The Old Bachelor* (1811), apparently tried to fit the phrase from Goldsmith’s *The Traveller*, which commanded greater authority than a prose passage might have had, into the common pattern of expectations and quoted this line as quasi-evidence for the evils the lack of proper education produces in – Russia! He contrasted “the ignorant, the

The adaptation of a problematical assertion about the foreign nation in an American text encourages the collection of pertinent material for a comparative analysis of national stereotypes in English and early American literature, which will be attempted in the third part of this review.

Lack of space precludes a discussion of studies which have touched upon the use English writers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century made of the images of individual foreign nations, and an analysis of their statements concerning the shifts in these notions partly brought about by different political relationships and cultural ties, but also by purely literary factors. While some of the images will have to be sketched in part three in order to bring out the American adaptation of these clichés, a brief reference to two studies underlining the new function of the image of Italy is in order here. It is apparent that the late 18<sup>th</sup> century saw a notable increase in the production of English books which employed Italian settings, reviving after a period of relative lull the image of Italy as an appropriate locale for Gothic horrors.<sup>32</sup>

Literary scholarship has not ignored the commonplace observation by social psychologists that autostereotypes and heterostereotypes are constantly bound up with each other.<sup>33</sup> Graves, in his scrutiny of the representation of foreign national characters in English novels of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, repeatedly relates them back to the autostereotype of the English. The interaction between continental stereotypes of the English and the English autostereotype has been

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rude, the surly and barbarous boor of Russia, 'who against the houseless stranger shuts the door'" with "the pure, the gentle, the hospitable peasant of Switzerland" who had been refined by the "controversial writings of Luther, Zuinglius, Melanchthon and other champions of the Reformation" on the one hand and "the sublime and beautiful productions of Klopstock, Goethe, the Gesners" on the other hand. William Wirt, *The Old Bachelor*, Essay No. 10, quoted from edn. Baltimore, 1818, vol. 1, 113-117. Whether Wirt's ethnic heritage (his father had come to America from Switzerland about 1750) influenced this rather misleading application of a poetic line, need not concern us here. Gustav Schirmer in *Die Schweiz im Spiegel englischer und amerikanischer Literatur bis 1848* (1929), the most comprehensive study of the image of Switzerland in literature in the English language, is unaware of the passage quoted.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. John G. Hayman's "Notions on National Characters" on this shift in perspective certainly not prompted by political or religious factors, but by imaginative needs, and on complaints by native Italians about prejudice and misrepresentation. Cf. also the function of Italy in 19<sup>th</sup>-century literature magisterially demonstrated in Mario Praz's *The Romantic Agony* (1956).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Duijker and Frijda, *National Character and National Stereotypes* (1960), and Peter R. Hofstätter, *Gruppendynamik* (1967) and *Das Denken in Stereotypen* (1960).

similarly studied by Günther Blaicher since 1968. The first of his pertinent contributions<sup>34</sup> screened popular speculations on the continent concerning the impact of the dreary and foggy atmosphere on the inhabitants of Great Britain, echoed even in English periodical essays, and furnished sociological explanations for the erroneous assumption of 18<sup>th</sup>-century *literati* of the suicidal tendencies of the English.

In a survey of the development and diffusion of certain clichés concerning England (1977), Blaicher profited from Hans D. Schmidt's knowledgeable study of the history of the slogan of 'perfidious Albion' (1953). Schmidt had put this cliché plausibly in the historical and political contexts of 18<sup>th</sup>-, 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century wars between England and her continental antagonists, and had traced this cliché, detrimental to English interests, back to similar phrases in late medieval times. His study had illustrated how dormant stereotypes based on generalizations from isolated incidents could be resuscitated in times of need and effectively serve political propaganda.<sup>35</sup> Blaicher (1977) also adumbrated the history and function of the cliché based on the analogy between England and Israel by tracing this important aid to post-Reformation theologians from Elizabethan documents back to incidental similar claims for "God's chosen people" in early mediaeval times. Additionally, he furnished secularized versions of this stereotype of God's own country even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Yet he refrained from dealing with a stereotype particularly appealing to writers in the English language since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the image of John Bull, presumably because of the attention this cliché has already received.<sup>36</sup> John Arbuthnot's depiction of the "honest, plain-dealing

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<sup>34</sup> Blaicher, "England als das klassische Land des Selbstmords im 18. Jahrhundert" (1968). Blaicher drew attention to the lack of censorship concerning suicides in England as contrasted with the rigorous suppression of such reports and the legal consequences in France.

<sup>35</sup> The slogan of 'perfidious Albion,' which, according to Blaicher, originally applied only to certain segments of English society, clearly contradicted 19<sup>th</sup>-century ideas and notions of certain ethical values approved of in England, like the concept of 'fair play' and the cliché of the English gentleman. Social psychology has, however, found plenty of evidence that contradictions do not hamper the spread of stereotypes and logically irreconcilable statements have often been accepted in this field.

<sup>36</sup> In a short monograph, *Vorurteil und literarischer Stil* (1979), Blaicher continued his study of the English autostereotype with an incisive discussion of the interaction between a writer critical of certain aspects of this autostereotype (Lord Byron) and his

fellow, choleric, bold,” was evaluated by the editors of the annotated edition of the book,<sup>37</sup> Allan W. Bower and R. A. Erickson. In their long introductory remark on national characters the editors go well beyond Lester M. Beattie’s comments (1935)<sup>38</sup> and put Arbuthnot’s engaging creation in the context of the political and journalistic tug-of-war preceding the Treaty of Utrecht. They suggest a skilful adaptation of vague earlier patterns in the allegorical presentation of England’s involvement with her rivals and allies. Though they claim that cruder conventional caricature is omitted in the opening sketches of the antagonists, Nicolas Frog and Louis Baboon, the polemical nature of the delineation of the crafty, ambitious trade rival reminiscent of anti-Dutch propaganda in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, cannot be denied. Though pidgin English is avoided and chauvinism is thus kept within bounds, the satirical potential of national clichés becomes manifest in the delineation of a suspicious ally as well as in the relative reticence with which the enemies (the French) are drawn in this entertaining allegory.<sup>39</sup> The wide appeal of such a treatment of history and the plausibility of the characterization are apparent in the facility with which this book captured the imagination of William Hazlitt<sup>40</sup> and in the ease with which late Colonial writers and authors of the early American Republic were to seize and imitate Arbuthnot’s technique and delineation. They had, of course, to modify the pattern to fit later historical developments and to augment the gallery of characters by introducing Brother Jonathan, the independent-minded descendant of the Squire, the vernacular version of the stereotype representing colonists and, later, independent Americans.<sup>41</sup>

Another important aspect of the English autostereotype,<sup>42</sup> echoed and examined in various continental texts, particularly in

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reading public, a work which, for its methodological interest, will be referred to again in the last part of this review.

<sup>37</sup> Arbuthnot, *The History of John Bull* (1976).

<sup>38</sup> Lester M. Beattie, *John Arbuthnot: Mathematician and Satirist* (1935).

<sup>39</sup> The editors correctly point to later gallophobic sketches which abandon the discretion and control of the polemic strategies in *John Bull*.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. his “Character of John Bull,” *Examiner* (May 19, 1816), which opens with a delineation of the French character.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. George E. Hastings, “John Bull and His American Descendants” (1929/30).

<sup>42</sup> In another article Blaicher has explored the development of the English self-image by placing ostensibly conflicting statements by four English authors of “Anatomies” between 1577 and the 1970s on the English character in their respective historical contexts, and has identified the correction of certain clichés, alleged errors of

Germany, and linked to Britain by many and strong cultural ties in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, had been given currency by David Hume in his well-known conclusion commented upon by Immanuel Kant: the British have “the least of a national character.”<sup>43</sup> Hume’s assertion, which can plausibly be associated with the possibility open to native observers to examine and constantly correct the concepts prevalent about their nation among visitors and outside observers, furnishes evidence for the working of ethnocentrism, even in critical thinkers. The paradoxical stereotype, articulated by Hume, which was vaguely foreshadowed in late 17<sup>th</sup>-century speculations on the variability of the inhabitants of the “region of spleen,”<sup>44</sup> gained plausibility for continental visitors by the apparently wider scope of freedom allowed to the individual in English society. This phenomenon, often commented upon by travelers from abroad, was said to encourage idiosyncracies among the English. In an article on “*Tristram Shandy* und die Klimatheorie” (1971) Stanzel demonstrated both the exploitation of this conviction and the reliance on the theory of climate and on national stereotypes related to this model of thought in Sterne’s humorous masterpiece. Sterne availed himself of the two variants of the climate theory and some facets of the English autostereotype related to this model of thought, for instance, in his delayed “Author’s Preface.” This passage and numerous other allusions in his book can be shown to reflect the juxtaposition between the intellectually underprivileged Northern peoples and the imaginatively gifted Southerners, particularly the inhabitants of southern France – the auspicious setting of later adventures by the protagonist in *Tristram Shandy* and of the *Sentimental Journey*. While the “Author’s Preface” presents an optimistic assessment of the English milieu, which helps to strike a balance between wit and judgment, Sterne’s mockery of generalization about national

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precursors, as a topos of this genre in England. “Zum Problem des Vorurteils in der Geschichte der englischen Landesbeschreibung” (1978). See this article also for a selective bibliography concerning the role of stereotypes in the field of Landeskunde, a problem excluded from this review.

<sup>43</sup> Hume’s essay “Of National Characters,” in *The Philosophical Works*, vol. 3, 224-244. 252. On the German response to this statement cf. John Alexander Kelly, *England and the Englishman in German Literature of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* (1921, rpt. 1966), 85, and Stanzel, “Schemata und Klischees der Völkerbeschreibung” (1974) 379-381.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Sir William Temple’s essay “On Poetry.”



characters, stressed by John G. Hayman (7-8), leaves the reader in doubt about the seriousness of most of his assertions. Yet Sterne can be shown to employ, half-seriously at least, a variant of the English autostereotype, ascribing the richness in characters and the hobby-horsicality of English natives to the *genius loci* which, as writers since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century had stressed, is largely determined by the vicissitudes of the climate, the weather in particular. Thus, the range of characters in the book and its very quality temporarily appear as projections and manifestations of the eccentric and whimsical English character, with national characters and national stereotypes functioning as essential stimuli to the imagination of the novelist.

### III. National Stereotypes in Early American Literature

The interdependence of heterostereotypes and the British autostereotype apparent in English texts is even more clearly noticeable in early American literary documents, a field of research which has received comparatively little attention under the aspect chosen for this review. The celebration of the Bicentennial in 1976 stimulated a spate of books and articles investigating the images of America held in Europe,<sup>45</sup> as well as collections of studies on this problem.<sup>46</sup> Though there is a slowly growing number of complementary articles analyzing the images of European nations held by colonists and the Americans during the early Republic, a definitive study of the literary delineation of European nations, even in the first

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<sup>45</sup> Cf., for instance, Peter Boerner, "Amerikabilder der europäischen Literatur: Wunschprojektion und Kritik" (1978), for a plausible survey of four widely held, if partly contradictory, images of America in the course of history. See Boerner also for bibliographical references to studies exploring French images of America as, for instance, research by G. Chinard (1913) and Durant Echeverria (1957); cf. also Richard Ruland, *America in Modern European Literature: From Image to Metaphor* (1976), which, without ignoring the diachronic dimension, investigates the imaginative value of the images for 20<sup>th</sup>-century European writers.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. in particular two substantial collections by German scholars and their American colleagues: Alexander Ritter, ed., *Deutschlands literarisches Amerikabild* (1977), which gathers and reprints relevant articles written since World War II. It contains a review article sketching the history and the state of research on this material by Hans Galinsky (1976), and a comprehensive bibliography enumerating among almost 350 items more than 300 monographs and articles touching upon the reflection of America in German texts since World War II. This book had been preceded by a collection of pertinent articles sponsored primarily by Germanists at the University of Massachusetts: S. Bauschinger, H. Denkler, and W. Malsch, eds., *Amerika in der Deutschen Literatur. Neue Welt – Nordamerika – USA* (1975).

century after the Independence, is still lacking. The reason for this lacuna in scholarly works is to be found not only in the wealth of material scattered over a multitude of texts which have not been screened, but also in various complicating factors, particularly the above-mentioned interrelationship inherited or developed by American writers. From the time of the early settlements onwards, the authors of the New World always regarded Europe and her nations as the correlate to the new continent and its people. The vicissitudes of this relationship and the changing political connections and tensions, both external and internal, during the last quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century create the impression of a high degree of instability in the images of some nations. They also seem, at first sight, simply to bear out the assumption of social psychologists that national stereotypes may change rather suddenly under the impact of changed circumstances. The difficulties for the student of this problem are compounded by the relative lack of homogeneity of the population in the New World even before the massive immigration in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Statements concerning the peoples of Europe were necessarily dependent on the heritage of the colonist or citizen of the new Republic. They were molded by the degree of previous or present contact with foreign nations or ethnic minorities, which may or might have qualified some stereotypes prevalent in the countries from which his or her forbears had come. Although placed in a different environment and confronted with other races clearly distinguished from the representatives of European peoples, namely the Indians and the blacks,<sup>47</sup> the colonists

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<sup>47</sup> Lack of space compels me to exclude a survey of the numerous literary studies which take stock of the racial stereotypes prevalent in early American literature. This is done only reluctantly since the connexion between the function of these clichés and the role of national stereotypes is fairly obvious. For a comprehensive study of Colonial and early Republican attitudes to the blacks and an impressive bibliography cf. Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550-1812* (1968), which notes, for instance, some interesting legal regulations concerning immigrants of non-English stock, who seem to have taken an intermediate position between the blacks and the English settlers. For a more general survey cf. also S. L. Gross and J. E. Hardy, eds., *Images of the Negro in American Literature* (1966). For the image of the Red Indian consult the impressive and wide-ranging, if somewhat controversial, analysis of this image in its juxtaposition with the self-image of the settlers in Richard Slotkin's bulky *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (1973). Slotkin's thoughtful, if provocative, statements concerning the evolution of the American national character deserve consideration in other contexts as well. On the stereotype of the Red Indian

and the early Americans were relatively slow in abandoning the inherited clichés, as some of them were quite willing to admit.<sup>48</sup> That earlier writers had been even less eager to divest themselves of their inherited sense of identity is at least obliquely reflected in Benjamin Franklin's notorious *Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind* (1751), where he expressed the annoyance of Anglophone inhabitants of Pennsylvania with the growing number of German-speaking settlers (dubbing them "Palatine Boors").<sup>49</sup>

The growing tensions between the colonists and the mother country, of course, terminated the period of easy adherence to British clichés and caused the development of a feeling of solidarity between the majority of the population and their neighbors of Irish, Dutch, French and German stock. The advocacy of a separation from Britain involved, for many at least, a deliberate departure from English modes of thinking. This was, of course, particularly strongly demanded during the War of Independence, when intense feelings of animosity were expressed. Now opprobrious epithets were taken from the storehouse of clichés and affixed to the former mother country, as for instance by Philip Freneau in his *Pilgrim Essays*. One would not, perhaps, expect a late 18<sup>th</sup>-century American writer to have had recourse to ancient precedent when offering disparaging remarks on the English, as Freneau did, employing epithets provided by classical ethnology, and calling the antagonists "barbarous, cruel, inhospitable, unsociable."<sup>50</sup> It is less surprising that similar sweeping generalizations, applying to the whole of Europe, appear in the polemics of some of the Connecticut Wits<sup>51</sup> during the War of

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see also Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (1978).

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Benjamin Latrobe's admission in his *Journal* in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century that "nine tenths of our American ideals and prejudices are English," a statement quoted by T. A. Riese in *Das englische Erbe in der amerikanischen Literatur* (1958), 13. Latrobe's papers have been studied by J. Meredith Neil in *Toward a National Taste: America's Quest for Aesthetic Independence* (1975).

<sup>49</sup> For an examination of Franklin's sometimes even more extreme views on the German allies of the pacifist Quakers in his letters, see Glenn Weaver, "Benjamin Franklin and the Pennsylvania Germans" (1957).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *The Pilgrim*, 28 Nov. 1781, and 2 Jan. 1782. Cf. Lewis Leary, *That Rascal Freneau: A Study in Literary Failure* (1941).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Howard M. Jones, *The Theory of American Literature* (1948), 33ff., but also Thomas Jefferson's well-known epistolary admonition to John Banister to avoid "European luxury and dissipation" (Oct. 10, 1785).

Independence and its aftermath, when an old Puritan tradition was revived and readers were warned against European corruption, luxury, and dissipation. These negative clichés have a counterpart in the anti-foreign sentiments expressed in early American drama, one of the few areas which has been screened from a relevant angle. Kent G. Gallagher's book *The Foreigner in Early American Drama* (1966), which received relatively little attention, bears witness to the author's awareness of the impact of the gradual growth of American ideas of political and economic separateness on the presentation of foreign figures. It also distinguishes several co-existent, if partly divergent, trends in the development of American drama about 1830 and presents a typology of foreign figures. Considering the priority of pertinent studies concerning English plays, it is little wonder that the most obvious mode for the depiction of foreigners has received the closest attention so far.<sup>52</sup> A complementary study of major types and conventions of early American drama prior to the Civil War was undertaken by Jürgen Wolter, who earlier (1971) published a persuasive article on certain stock characters of antebellum American drama, and identified certain phases in the depiction of these figures (the Yankee, the frontiersman, and the Indian). Wolter convincingly interprets the use and the appeal of these stereotypes employed by American playwrights as their contribution to the process of national emancipation with the variants of these figures representing part of the emerging sense of national identity.<sup>53</sup> It is remarkable that Wolter can also show that even the variants of the type of the Red Indian as a stage figure were intricately linked to the search for and the attempted projection, or even celebration, of the developing autostereotype.

Yet the employment of national clichés in the essay and in epistolary forms would similarly merit analysis, as the literary convention of the fictitious letter, which purports to have been written by a foreign, possibly exotic, visitor, was fairly widespread in America. This type of text, modeled on Montesquieu's and Goldsmith's classic works, was, in the phase of Puritan reservations

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<sup>52</sup> Cf. above the priority of studies examining clichés of foreigners in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Wolter, "Die Helden der Nation: Yankee, Pionier und Indianer als nationale Stereotypen im amerikanischen Drama vor dem Bürgerkrieg." – His comprehensive study appeared under the title *Die Suche nach nationaler Identität: Entwicklungstendenzen des amerikanischen Dramas vor dem Bürgerkrieg*, 1983.

against the theatre, an even more appropriate vehicle for the iteration of national clichés. A careful reading of the fictitious reports by *The Yankee in London* by Royall Tyler (1810), which, while reproaching the English for their alleged prejudices against foreigners, quoted extensively from their storehouse of epithets,<sup>54</sup> and the comments by the similarly fictitious Irish Jesuit in Charles J. Ingersoll's *Inchiquin: The Jesuit's Letters* (1810), which combined reflexions on the state of affairs in America with a juxtaposition of European nations, drawing extensively on classical clichés,<sup>55</sup> establishes the popularity, if not the ubiquity, of such notions. The intricate relationship between the growing sense of a distinctive American character and the heterostereotypes of the European nations is substantiated by these essays and fictitious letters, and by Gallagher's reading of about 140 texts in dramatic or dialogue form. However, Gallagher seems, unfortunately, not to be cognizant of Benjamin Spencer's praiseworthy historical study *The Quest for Nationality* (1957)<sup>56</sup> and thus fails to relate the analysis of the dramatic manifestations of the emerging self-image to the abundant remaining material reflecting the constant concern of intellectuals to establish a specific and independent national identity. Yet his book demonstrates how representatives of American virtues and ideals of conduct were contrasted with foreign fools or villains on the stage. The book also evinces that playwrights introduced native figures infected with

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<sup>54</sup> Tyler, *The Yankee in London* (1809), particularly 156-165, cf. also G. Thomas Tanselle, *Royall Tyler* (1967), 189-205. The central role of Tyler's play *The Contrast* in the history of national stereotypes in early American literature is too well known to need further comment here.

<sup>55</sup> Ingersoll, *Inchiquin. The Jesuit's Letters* (1810), cf. in particular 113-128 on the characteristic traits of modern nations. On the contemporary response to Ingersoll's publication in England and in America cf. 274-278 of Jane Louise Mesick's *The English Traveller in America, 1785-1838* (1922), the standard study of travel reports, which indirectly also delineates the background to the fashion of fictitious travel-letters, the topic under consideration.

<sup>56</sup> Benjamin T. Spencer, *The Quest for Nationality: An American Literary Campaign* (1957). The book covers impressively the various ramifications of this quest and analyzes co-existent trends up to 1892. In his more recent study (cf. note 48), which surprisingly fails to refer to Spencer's magisterial book, J. Meredith Neil covers America's quest for aesthetic independence, but restricts himself in his otherwise thorough and stimulating analysis to the period before 1815. It is obvious that Neil, too, has to allude to American notions of the Old World and the culture of its peoples, thus repeatedly mirroring clichés held by early American writers.

European vices while acceptable foreigners were often deliberately furnished with American traits.

In order to elucidate some of the literary and non-literary factors that contributed to the tradition and adaptation of national stereotypes in American contexts and determined their availability for new literary functions, a more detailed discussion of three national images will be attempted in the following. The Irish, the Dutch, and the Germans will serve in this sketch as paradigms, demonstrating the stability clichés possessed and the shifts and changes stereotypes could undergo under the impact of various and complex forces. The following account does not, of course, purport to be complete or definitive, but would rather like to indicate areas in which further research might produce interesting results.<sup>57</sup>

No student of early American drama can fail to notice the close resemblance between the popular character of the Hibernian and the corresponding English stage type whose enormous appeal to English audiences in the 17<sup>th</sup> and particularly the 18<sup>th</sup> century was long ago demonstrated in studies by J. C. Duggan (1937) and J. O. Bartley (1954).<sup>58</sup> It is a commonplace that the familiar figure of Teague was

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<sup>57</sup> The three national images chosen can, it is claimed, be more profitably studied than the images of the British and the French, which seem to reflect relatively directly the vicissitudes of the political and cultural ties and relationships, and to mirror, at least for the first three or four decades, the affiliation of individual writers and thinkers to the two major political camps in the new country. For the image of the French cf. Howard M. Jones, *America and French Culture* (1927), and Gallagher, *passim*; on the complex and tortuous history of early American views of the former mother country cf. Hastings (1929/30), Mesick, *passim*, and research on Washington Irving and James Kirke Paulding. For an instructive American comparison of the French and the English in the 1820s cf. Washington Irving's little known "Parisian Sketches in 1825," publ. in the "Crayon Papers," which appeared in the *Knickerbocker's Magazine* in 1840, particularly the essay "English and French Character." Here Irving elaborates on the picture of John Bull, first drawn by him in his successful *Sketch Book*, and later expanded in *Bracebridge Hall*. R. S. Osborne in his thesis on Irving plausibly regards this book as an extended fictional representation of the English national character. Cf. Osborne, "A Study of Irving's Development as a Man of Letters" (1947).

<sup>58</sup> Research on the continuing appeal of the Stage Irishman was brought up to date by Anneliese Truninger, *Paddy and the Paycock* (1976). Since the original publication of this review of research Joep Leerssen has published his monumental and detailed study of the representation of the Irish in English and Irish literature including an important discussion of the Irish self-image and the intertextual aspects of the use of their heterostereotypes in the English theater. His monograph (*Mere Irish and Fíor-Ghael* [1986, and new ed. 1996]) supersedes all earlier studies of the subject.

derived from the comic servant in Sir Robert Howard's *Committee* (1662), who gained so much popularity through his naiveté and loyalty, through his blundering linguistic impetuosity and clumsiness (the 'bulls' of the stage Irishman) that the descendants of this type and numerous variants were to hold the English stage throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The type of the Irish soldier and fortune-hunter soon joined the superstitious servant, a voracious feeder and lover of the bottle, as seemingly typical manifestations of the Irish national character. The unparalleled popularity of this figure was unscrupulously exploited by needy Irish actors and playwrights in Britain, though there were also deliberate and self-conscious attempts to endow the fairly crude cliché with more attractive positive traits.<sup>59</sup> In Richard Cumberland's case, the more positive delineation of the Irishman in *The West Indian* (1771) was prompted partly by personal experience and partly by his generally more enlightened attitude and self-conscious vindication of ostensible victims of national prejudices.

Considering this development of the ethnic stereotype in 18<sup>th</sup>-century English drama, one must qualify Gallagher's claim that the depiction of the Irish is somewhat more sympathetic in America even before the 1820s, when feelings for the dispossessed sons of the Emerald Isle are given utterance in dramatic contexts. That the Irishman, contrary to Gallagher's thesis, remained predominantly a figure of fun in American theatre is borne out by a doctoral thesis on the stage Irishman in 19<sup>th</sup>-century America by Charles Randolph Wheeler (1973). Wheeler, who traces the development of this stage figure until the end of the century, corroborates the impression of the present writer that the stage Irishman in America, like his British ancestor, lacks sophistication and subtlety. He maintains on the basis of dozens of plays that it was only in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that a sensitivity to the plight of the Irish refugees emerged. Greater audience demand, as a consequence of extensive Irish migration, resulted in a major change in the concept of the comic stage Irishman. This view of the earlier, more limited function of the

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<sup>59</sup> Some of these types, like the soldier and the fortune-hunter, had some foundation in reality. The role of the Irishman was partly due to the penal laws and their grave socioeconomic effects. – The suggested process of revaluation is apparent, for instance, in the fact that Thomas Sheridan added 'generosity' to the typical traits of pugnacity and credulity in the portrait of O'Blunder in *The Brave Irishman*, and that his son Richard Brinsley Sheridan somewhat ennobled the portrait of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, the Irish fortune-hunter in *The Rivals*.

stock character is supported by Wolter's evidence for the purely comic role of this ethnic figure in the first phases of the history of American drama, when the stage Irishman frequently served as companion and foil to the stage Yankee, diverting critical attention and laughter from the rustic representative of the autostereotype (cf. Wolter, *Die Helden der Nation*, 248-250). By examining the societal response to the stage figure and its dramaturgical significance, Wheeler places this ethnic type in a wide social and literary context and can be said to have shed light on an interesting and complex facet of literary history in general and the area of contact between social and literary history in particular.

The molding force of the popular theatrical convention, which persisted in spite of the important contribution of the Irish to the cause of the patriots in the War of Independence as well as later political and military campaigns, can also be felt in the appearance of Irish characters in fiction. The Hibernian apparently continued to be depicted as a voracious indentured servant, often unable to adjust himself to the new environment, or as a rogue and fortune-hunter, as can be demonstrated by a careful sifting of early American prose.<sup>60</sup> But the preponderance of the theatrical model is nowhere more clearly seen than in the portrait of the notorious bogtrotter Teague O'Regan in Hugh Henry Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry* (1792-1814). That the ignorant, yet crafty and ambitious fool, who is willing to take advantage of the numerous political, social, financial, and amorous opportunities that are offered to him in the public and private spheres, derived from the stage type is immediately made clear in the introductory statement by the narrator of *Modern Chivalry*: "I shall say nothing of the character of this man because the very name imports what he was" (ch. 1, 6). Though Teague remains essentially the same in spite of his abortive attempts to launch upon a career as a Member of Congress, a clergyman, a university professor, etc., with his attempts partly prompted by the gullibility and stupidity of the

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. the activities of O'Connor, who takes advantage of the impressionable Dorcasina Sheldon in Mrs. Tabitha Tenney's *Female Quixotism* (1801). The ethnic background of O'Connor and his servant is clearly emphasized in Mrs. Tenney's novel.



public, the imaginative vivacity and vitality of this type is not impaired but brought home to the reader.<sup>61</sup>

Brackenridge's contemporaries were clearly called upon to refer back to a figure which they knew not from real life but from the stage. Their experience in the theater was the storehouse from which they could fill in the gaps which remained when sentences are structured in such a way as to project the picture of a character with the primacy of the statement by the authorial narrator being of special importance in this context.<sup>62</sup> Yet, in spite of Brackenridge's obvious skill at providing a seemingly phonetic transcription of Teague's brogue, the book does not conceal the fact that for a full realization of the potentialities of the Hibernian the oral and possibly also the visual dimension were necessary; as a consequence Teague remained essentially a stage character. While it is apparent that this type represents the starting point for the delineation of Irish characters in American fiction,<sup>63</sup> the gradual diversification observed in later phases of American dramatic history can also be noticed in this genre. That subsidiary figures retained the properties of the durable, if flexible, stage figure, whereas a more sympathetic delineation of the newcomers to the continent gradually replaced earlier techniques in the major characters, is confirmed in Stephan Garrett Bolger's dissertation *The Irish Character in American Fiction, 1830-1860* (1971).<sup>64</sup> Its value is somewhat qualified by the fact that Bolger only

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<sup>61</sup> An incidental comment by a modern critic who claims the "[the] novel form allowed Brackenridge to round Teague into the first developed character in American fiction" (Daniel Marder, *Hugh Henry Brackenridge*, 86) ostensibly identifies the admittedly skilful presentation of a national cliché with a full-fledged, round figure. – One cannot ignore the pertinent fact that this caricature of the bogtrotter was originally prompted by political antagonism against an opponent of Irish stock, William Findley, whom Brackenridge chastised in his Hudibrastic satire from which his satirical novel evolved.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Herbert Grabes, "Wie aus Sätzen Personen werden..." (1978), on "primacy effects in personality impression formation."

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Brackenridge's early prose text, *Father Bombo's Pilgrimage to Mecca in Arabia* (1770), which already contains references to 'Teagues.'

<sup>64</sup> The thesis was published by Arno Press in the series *The Irish-Americans* (1976). – Cf. also the short survey and bibliographical notes on historical and fictional stereotypes of the Irish in America in D. J. Casey and R. E. Rhodes, *Irish-American Fiction: Essays in Criticism* (1979), 1-12. – In the preparation of a comparative analysis of the image of the Irish abroad, the article by Patrick O'Neill, "The Evolution of an Image: German Perceptions of Ireland and the Irish During the 18<sup>th</sup> Century" (1979) should be consulted.

takes a fairly limited sample, omitting among more important texts, for instance, James K. Paulding's novel *The Dutchman's Fireside* (1831), where an important function is allocated to an Irish officer, Barry Gilfillan. Gilfillan, who is said to embody the "truly Irish propensity of falling in love extempore," is juxtaposed with an arrogant and stupid British officer, Sir Thickness Throgmorton, explicitly termed "a real John Bull," and illustrates Paulding's deliberate reevaluation of the picture of the Irish.<sup>65</sup>

While the popular stereotype of the stage Irishman was thus preserved well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century with only minor variations and additions, the cliché of the Dutchman (our second paradigm) seems to have undergone a noticeable change even in early American literature. This phenomenon appears to have been partly due to the ethnic background of writers who try to do justice to the heritage of "hyphenated Americans" and the achievements of some of their ancestors.

Studies of 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century English heterostereotypes have noted that 17<sup>th</sup>-century English writers elaborated on the Elizabethan cliché of the Dutchman as a pot-bellied drunkard and rationalized adverse feelings against their economic competitors by relating the nature of the Dutch and the Netherlands to their unfavorable environment, the foggy air and the boggy, marshy soil of the landscape.<sup>66</sup> As noted above the negative cliché of the slow-witted and heavy Hollander, insensitive to gentle emotions and unsusceptible to poetical or artistic beauty, whose attention is allegedly engrossed by business interests, was perpetuated in books of travel and descriptive poems and letters unscrupulously copying or embellishing those accounts.

Though prevalent Colonial notions concerning the Dutch seem not yet to have been fully collected under the present aspect, the evidence available shows that the English stereotype of the Dutch

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<sup>65</sup> *The Dutchman's Fireside: A Tale*, Vol. 2, chapters 25, 21 and 3 respectively. Paulding's pronounced animosity towards the British was an important factor as it fostered the expression of sympathy for Irish figures. Yet in his exploitation of national contrasts for humorous effects, Paulding is clearly indebted to the great English novelists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, particularly Fielding, whose aesthetic creed he shared and whose narrative technique he imitated.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Andrew Marvell's satire "The Character of Holland" and later John Tutchin's xenophobic attacks on the countrymen of William III in *The Foreigners*, so promptly and devastatingly answered by Daniel Defoe in *The True-Born Englishman* (1701).

continued to shape Colonial assumptions about the European Dutch and their Colonial descendants. It appears that certain economic habits offered a questionable basis for some of these allegations. When the Swedish scientist Peter Kalm published an account of his travels through North America, his pertinent remarks on the Dutch colonists in Albany seem rather to have echoed traditional reservations against people of Dutch stock than to have mirrored his autoptic experience (1749): “The avarice, selfishness and immeasurable love of money of the inhabitants of Albany are very well known throughout North America by the French, and even by the Dutch in the lower part of the New York province. Their avarice is said to exceed that of Jews whom they might ruin, if competitors.”<sup>67</sup> Kalm’s denunciation of the people from Albany also reflects the political and economic tensions between the New Englanders and the English-speaking majority of New York province on the one hand, and the firmly entrenched Albanians on the other. The habitually negative view of Dutch greed, avarice, and general business practice bolstered the dismissal of the Dutch as “the most vile Jews of Europe (I mean the pusillanimous and still unarmed Dutch)” (*Papers of Jefferson*, V, 376, Philip Mazzei to T. J. April 8, 1781) by Jefferson’s Italian correspondent, while a similar imputation on the Dutch character by St. George Tucker instructively shows the function of negative heterostereotypes in the internal affairs of a nation.<sup>68</sup>

A definite shift in the attitude of American *literati* to their compatriots of Dutch stock is indicated by Mrs. Anne Grant’s *Memoirs of an American Lady* (1808) and Washington Irving’s *A History of New York ... by Diedrich Knickerbocker* (1809). The present writer tried to show in an article “Skizzen eines Reisenden”

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. Peter Kalm’s *Travels in North America. The English version of 1770 revised from the original Swedish*, and ed. by Adolf B. Benson, 2 vols. (1937), especially 344. Kalm’s reference to the high costs of board and lodging for travellers in Albany and to the parsimonious diet in that city is only insufficient evidence for the correctness of his negative view of that ethnic community.

<sup>68</sup> Similar to Oliver Goldsmith, who had taken advantage of the cliché of Dutch greed when he wanted to warn his English readers against undesirable social and economic tendencies in their own country, St. George Tucker in a revealing poem, “Ode to Economy” in *The Probationary Odes of Jonathan Pindar, Esq., a Cousin of Peter’s* (1796), 66ff., apparently attacked Hamilton’s controversial intention to establish a National Bank by projecting an extremely unfavorable picture of, significantly, Scottish and Dutch practices in that field. This poem deserves to be considered more closely in another context.

(1977) how Irving, in writing the early history of New York, relied at least as much on literary models and fanciful exaggerations and impressions during a brief tour of the Netherlands, as on isolated experiences with the folklore of Dutch settlers in secluded areas of his native state. The behavior of the portly patricians rendered in his mock-heroic history as phlegmatic, slow-moving, taciturn smokers of pipes can be shown to be the firm basis for bizarre effects intended by the author. But Irving was not satisfied with an embellishment of the dominant variant of this cliché of the Dutch represented by figures like Olof, the Dreamer, or Walter van Twiller and his fat councillors, but added extensive descriptions of the achievements of courageous figures like Peter Stuyvesant and his trumpeter, and came thus near to asserting contrasted values upheld by the Dutch. Such a revaluation is carried further in his *Sketch Book* and later works, as is demonstrated in a doctoral thesis by Robert Charles West (1970). West stresses the change of attitude and tone and the gradual idealization of Dutch figures and values in the world of 19<sup>th</sup>-century America, and offers a typology of the use Irving made of the image of the Dutch in his literary works. This constant amelioration seemed to be at least partly due to Irving's acquaintance and friendship with James Kirke Paulding, himself of Dutch origin, whose numerous stories and novels exploiting a Dutch colonial background mark the change in the assessment of Dutch colonists and the dramatic advance in the suitability of this figure for literary representation.<sup>69</sup>

Yet this development towards positive acceptance of Dutch culture and a reshaping of the cliché was probably even more indebted to the publication of the memoirs by the wife of a young clergyman from Scotland, who had spent part of her youth in Albany.<sup>70</sup> Mrs. Anne Grant's nostalgic portrayal of the virtues and simple life she had known during their early years in Albany laid a firm foundation for a romanticized rendering of this phase in American history and this

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<sup>69</sup> For a survey of the numerous Dutch stories by Paulding see, for instance, the valuable unpublished thesis by Harold E. Hall, "James Kirke Paulding. A Pioneer of American Fiction" (1953), passim. Herman Meyer has demonstrated in a pioneer article the primacy of literary factors determining the genesis of a completely different, new negative cliché of the Dutchman as the Philistine incarnate in German literature. He has stressed its detachment from reality and its function, that of fulfilling specific imaginative and literary needs of German authors: "Das Bild des Holländers in der deutschen Literatur" (1963).

<sup>70</sup> Anon. [Anne McVickar Grant], *Memoirs of an American Lady* (1808), II.

ethnic component of American life. Her memoirs certainly appealed to James Kirke Paulding, to Washington Irving, and to James Fenimore Cooper, whose own stories and novels not infrequently reflect his preference for an idyllic society represented by early Dutch colonists and his rejection of the increasingly acquisitive society of early 19<sup>th</sup>-century America. Warren S. Walker in his introduction to Cooper's work stresses the juxtaposition between avaricious and often vulgar Yankee characters and the stable and upright colonists of Dutch origin.<sup>71</sup> It is thus apparent that through the depiction of imaginary scenes from the past by Irving (for instance, in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"), Paulding (for instance, in *The Dutchman's Fireside*), and particularly Cooper (*The Littlepage Trilogy*, from 1845 onwards) the negative cliché of the Dutch which had previously dominated in English literature and in Colonial and very early American texts, was replaced by an appreciative picture. It is worth noting that political factors and external economic or cultural relationships did not affect this vindication and the general shift in outlook which resulted in the integration of a regional stereotype in the growingly complex and composite autostereotype projected by American authors.<sup>72</sup>

These publications made it artistically inappropriate or even impossible to attribute avarice and other related vices to Dutch figures appearing in later literary texts. A shift in the expectations of the reading public had taken place, which, incidentally, resulted in a vacancy in the gallery of characters, subsequently filled by the figure of the Yankee so unflatteringly drawn by Cooper as a frequently sharp and shrewd trader and upstart businessman. It seems also worthy of consideration that the salient features of the typical Dutchman offered little stimulus to American dramatists. Thus the phlegmatic, taciturn type, which lacked the eminently dramatic verbal impetuosity and

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<sup>71</sup> Walker, *James Fenimore Cooper* (1962), in particular, ch. 6, "Yankees and Yorkers," 202-215. For Cooper's use of stereotypes, cf. Kay Seymour House, *Cooper's Americans* (1965).

<sup>72</sup> W. H. Gardiner, in a well-known review of Cooper's *Spy* (1822), drew attention to the "variety of specific character" in the country, which offered abundant subject material for novelists. Underlining the differences between such variants of the autostereotype as the "high-minded, vainglorious Virginian, living on his plantation in baronial state" and "the Connecticut pedlar," Gardiner also acknowledged the heritage of the Dutch settlers. "Is there nothing of the Dutch burgomaster yet sleeping in the blood of his descendants?" (quoted in *James Fenimore Cooper, The Critical Heritage*, 56-57).

dexterity of the Irishman with his amusing linguistic blunders, never won an important place in dramatic literature. The substitution of the allegedly avaricious Dutch businessman by a shrewd Yankee trader by many prominent writers from the state of New York did not, of course, remove the stage Yankee, who liked to impersonate and mock various foreigners, from the ranks of attractive representatives of the American self-image. In fact, as Wolter has maintained, both the stage Yankee and the frontiersman continued to serve as important variants of the literary autostereotype.<sup>73</sup> This brief survey of the shifts in the evaluation of the ethnic type and the discovery of the specific functions attributed to the emerging regional character in certain literary genres, in which it enriched the literary repertoire, ought to suffice as an indication of the relevance of "imagology" for literary and cultural history.

The reversal of the Dutch stereotype has a parallel in the changes the cliché of the German underwent in the course of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Though there is a comprehensive study of German culture in America by Henry E. Pochmann, the result of 25 years of research,<sup>74</sup> few scholars have directly treated the prevalence of certain clichés among American thinkers and writers which, more than genuine information, shape incidental allusions and cursory delineations of foreign characters. The American revaluation of the Germans seems basically to have followed changes in the European, that is, the French and British views of the German nation, which experienced a spectacular change in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as Peter Boerner demonstrated in his article "National Images"(1975),<sup>75</sup> basing his argument on a considerable corpus of special studies. While French *literati*, encouraged by various pioneer intermediaries preceded, by almost two decades, British authors like Henry Mackenzie in their efforts to revalue German culture, consequently abandoning pejorative clichés American writers, perhaps not

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<sup>73</sup> Wolter shows that, while earlier plays had offered fairly unfavorable pictures of unscrupulous semi-barbarians, the frontiersman in the age of Andrew Jackson appears as a pioneer and achieves the status of a culture hero. Cf. Wolter, "Die Helden der Nation," 254-257.

<sup>74</sup> Pochmann, *German Culture in America* (1957). The bulky book contains approx. 490 pages of text and more than 300 pages of notes, and has remained a definitive study of this field.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. note 3. Cf. also Klaus Heitmann, "Das Französische Deutschlandbild in seiner Entwicklung" (1966).

surprisingly, even lagged behind their English colleagues.<sup>76</sup> German settlers attained quite a reputation for industry and persistence, though they were not infrequently regarded as a “plodding race of men”,<sup>77</sup> whose frugality and skill few writers were willing to give such unqualified praise as Dr. Benjamin Rush, the prominent Philadelphia physician and essayist (cf. his *Account of the Manners of German Inhabitants of Pennsylvania*, 1789). References to the intellectual caliber of people of German stock in Europe not infrequently lacked respect, and when Thomas Jefferson in a letter dated May 2, 1787, alluded to the absence of poetic genius north of the Alps,<sup>78</sup> his by that time clearly outdated skepticism concerning literary talents in the German nation most probably corresponded to the opinion of the intellectual élite and the majority of his compatriots, whose view was still shaped by traditional prejudices. Henry Pochmann has demonstrated the exceptional vogue of Kotzebue’s plays in the following decade and rejected as unfounded the assumption that it was only Mme de Staël’s book on Germany that put German literature on the map, paving the way for a quick reversal of public opinion and a sea change in one major aspect of the national image of the Germans in America. Nonetheless the traditional prejudice against the cultural, that is, intellectual and literary, potential of Germany held sway over American journalists and essays until the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of its popular manifestations was the customary ridicule of the inadequacies of German scholars, who served as the long-

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<sup>76</sup> For a survey of the image of the German in English literature, cf. Willi Radczun, *Das englische Urteil über die Deutschen bis zur Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (1933), and Fritz Schultz, *Der Deutsche in der englischen Literatur vom Beginn der Romantik bis zum Ausbruch des Weltkrieges* (1939), older studies which are occasionally marred by methodological imperfections. Even less satisfactory is Kurt Weineck, *Deutschland und der Deutsche im Spiegel der englischen erzählenden Literatur seit 1830* (1937).

<sup>77</sup> Isaac Weld in his *Travels Through the States of North America and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada During the Year 1795, 1796, and 1797*, 123; for a more positive statement cf. Crèvecoeur’s *Letters from an American Farmer*, particularly the famous Letter III, on the superiority of German immigrants over other European nations, particularly the Irish.

<sup>78</sup> His letter to William Short, the manuscript of which is in Williamsburg (“Letter from Languedoc”), has been printed by the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, Monticello, Charlottesville, Va., 1956. The pertinent quotation “I find Mazzei’s observation just that their [the nightingales’] song is more varied, their tone fuller and stronger here than on the banks of the Seine. it explains to me another circumstance, why there was never a poet North of the Alps, & why there never will be one.”

winded and slow-witted butts of satire in miscellaneous pieces, for instance, in John Dennie's *The Port Folio*, and in several contributions by William Tudor: both poke fun at the voluminous, soporific productions of German professors.<sup>79</sup>

It may well be that vague reports on the new trends in German thinking strengthened the old stereotype drawn upon by Thomas Nashe or Fynes Moryson in Elizabethan times, and aggravated the notion of certain habits and mannerisms of the representatives of German scholarship. Less than a decade later, however, Germany had become an attraction to a generation of leading spirits from New England. German thought and literature left an indelible imprint on prominent figures like George Ticknor, Edward Everett, Joseph Cogswell, George Bancroft, and John Lothrop Motley. It is well known that these pioneers returned home and went about reforming the outdated university system, taking the new German universities as their models.<sup>80</sup> One cannot doubt that the genuine and specific knowledge of the state of affairs and of culture in Germany counteracted and impeded the continued use of the traditional cliché.<sup>81</sup> It appears, however, that the intensified links between the United

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<sup>79</sup> Cf. the allusion to the "habit of minute analysis," intellectual activity spent on a negligible piece of verse, in *Port Folio*, II (1802), 164, and William Tudor's fictitious letter by the Baron von Hartzenleigzenstoffendahl in *The Monthly Anthology and Boston Review* (Feb. 1810), and in his *Miscellanies*, collected in 1821 (for instance, his "On the Secret Causes of the American and French Revolutions").

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Pochmann, 66-78, and Orey William Long, *Literary Pioneer: Early American Explorers of European Culture* (1935). Since the completion of this review of research I have published an extensive study *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur* (1998) and later a condensed account in *Images of Germany in American Literature*, 2007.

<sup>81</sup> The fact that young Bostonians regarded the sudden emergence of Germany as a leading nation in the field of literature as an instructive example encouraging them in their own pursuit of an authentically American culture and literature, and that the newly developed image was closely linked with the autostereotype projected in various Phi Beta Kappa orations, helps to account for their eager championship of the German people. As in earlier centuries the foundation of the new image in the minds of many citizens was laid in the schools. Following the example of the early disciples of German philosophy, literature, and science, numerous compilers of American textbooks praised the German contributions to culture and extolled the scholarship and the mechanical ingenuity and practicality of Germans, thus taking the image even closer to the dominant autostereotype. Cf. Ruth Miller Elson's sketchy report on "Deutschland und die Deutschen in amerikanischen Schulbüchern des 19. Jahrhunderts" (1959/1960).



States and Germany did not preclude the employment of a variant of the emerging new image which derived from an aspect of German society perhaps most familiar to intellectuals and writers in general. Thus the German scholar and the professor in particular remained a viable device in literature produced in the United States. In a long 1979 article Horst Kruse collected ample evidence of the appeal of the German university professor, preferably a doctor of medicine, to American short story writers, especially in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>82</sup> The attributes of this new stock character include an intense preoccupation with scholarly progress and an unscrupulous disregard for ethical norms, as well as a willingness to sacrifice human relationships to the ostensible demands of natural science. Kruse plausibly relates this figure, whose traits manifest themselves, for instance, in his inhuman cold stare, to the traditional concept of the Faustian scholar and its romantic formulations, yet maintains credibly that this new figure can neither be explained as the offspring of a literary tradition, the incarnation of a stereotype now resuscitated after lying dormant for a long time, nor as the reflection of the historical reality in Germany.<sup>83</sup> Kruse might have directed the reader's attention also to the special study of the connection between German scholarship and American culture by Carl Diehl, which explored anew the fascination of German universities for the first generation of New England scholars.<sup>84</sup> Diehl's book revealed the serious reservations by orthodox theologians concerning the unorthodox views of prominent German professors, and their dissatisfaction with the lack of restraint

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<sup>82</sup> "Doktor Materialismus," in *Schlüsselmotive der amerikanischen Literatur*, 43-94.

<sup>83</sup> Kruse is able to point to certain misconceptions concerning the philosophical outlook and the alleged immorality of the prominent German physician Virchow, notions which were liable to foster the image of the reckless, irresponsible, and materialistic German professor in the second half of the century. He is also correct in alluding to the consequences of the German defeat of France and other examples of German, in particular Prussian, efficiency which corroborated the new image, which completely replaced, for a while, the image of the German scholar as the impractical compiler of voluminous books. In this context Kruse might have included Henry James' unamiable figure of Dr. Rudolph Staub in *A Bundle of Letters* (1879), whose cynical and sinister interest in observing French responses to his presumably unwelcome presence betrays a mechanistic view of human nature.

<sup>84</sup> *Americans and German Scholarship 1770-1870* (1978).

shown by these academics.<sup>85</sup> Further research might substantiate Kruse's claim that the rise of a negative cliché of the German scholar popular after the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was rather a projection directed against certain intellectual trends in the United States than a reflection of a reality, the truth of which had only been belatedly discovered by American writers. It need not be emphasized again that such a demonstration would be consistent with sociopsychological findings about a major function of heterostereotypes.

Yet in contrast to the two other paradigms, the image of the German in American letters seems not to have been very noticeably influenced by American writers of German extraction, and the shift in its dominant variant seems to have been primarily due to experience abroad and the reception of German literature and philosophy in America. It appears also that, in contrast to the other paradigms, the new image was not applied to the German ethnic minority on the soil of the United States.<sup>86</sup>

The period which saw such changes in the repertory of clichés and the integration of some regional variants into the increasingly complex autostereotype, was clearly a time of intense absorption with problems of national character in America. It was then that a new sectional stereotype came into being which harked back to images of certain social classes in Europe. The new type of the "Cavalier" was a descendant of the English country gentleman, whose code of values he seems to have upheld while the South was increasingly losing touch with the European scene. The history of the "plantation legend" and the emergence and use of variants of the "chivalrous myth" which, like all images of a similar nature, developed a momentum of its own,<sup>87</sup> has been traced and documented in W. R. Taylor's *Cavalier*

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. various critical comments by members of the prominent Dwight family when Henry E. Dwight, the son of Timothy Dwight, planned to publish his *Travels in the North of Germany* (1829), cf. Archives, Yale University.

<sup>86</sup> The question whether this was due to the speed and extent of the process of acculturation of immigrants of German stock, which differed from that of other ethnic groups, has been clarified in R. R. Doerries' comparative study of acculturation of Irish-Americans and German-Americans. Cf. his pertinent article "The Americanizing of the German Immigrant: A Chapter from US Social History" (1978) and his monograph *Iren und Deutsche in der Neuen Welt* (1986).

<sup>87</sup> The process through which modern clichés elaborated upon by writers of fiction engender heightened variants of images might be demonstrated in a study of postmodernist American novels portraying the German scene, for instance, John Hawkes, *The Cannibal* (1949), and Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973).

and *Yankee* (1957). The stimulating book, which determined the view of the Old South and its representatives from the first adumbration in Southern literature about 1810, through the fiction of J. F. Cooper, J. P. Kennedy, W. A. Caruthers, J. K. Paulding, and W. G. Simms, sheds light on a literary and social phenomenon that is clearly related to the present concern with the role and function of national stereotypes.<sup>88</sup> The introspection of American thinkers since Crèvecoeur's famous question "What is American?," and particularly in the 1820s and 1830s,<sup>89</sup> as well as their preoccupation with the question of their national identity,<sup>90</sup> cannot be separated from the correlated view of the other civilized nations.

#### IV.

In the course of the preceding review of publications on the use of national stereotypes and in the examination of various paradigms, the possible contribution of literary scholars to an improved understanding between nations has been tacitly or explicitly acknowledged. This potential of scholarly work in the field labeled "imagology" endorsed by the majority of the studies under review contrasts clearly with the attitudes in older books and articles, particularly between the world wars, which tended to confirm uncritically common notions on national characters. It has thus become apparent that a significant number of studies have profited from the interdisciplinary work and the efforts of sociopsychologists and ethnologists in particular, whose contributions have been made

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<sup>88</sup> The analysis of the culture of the Old South provided in Taylor's monograph has meanwhile been superseded by Michael O'Brien's magisterial study of intellectual life in the Antebellum (*Conjectures of Order*, 2004) in which the close transatlantic ties and attachment to European cultural values and myths are documented. Thus the Southern sense of a distinct collective identity is related to the rise of German nationalism and its dissemination.

<sup>89</sup> For a collection of texts revealing the growing spirit of nationalism and the concern with the character of the American nation, cf. Spiller, ed., *The American Literary Revolution, 1783-1837* (1967).

<sup>90</sup> For the continuing concern with the American autostereotype, cf. the bibliographical lists compiled by Michael McGiffert, "Selected Writings on American National Character;" a continuation in "Selected Writings On American Character and Related Subjects to 1969," and Thomas L. Hartshorn, "Recent Interpretations of the American Character."

accessible in an increasing number of collections and are listed in several pertinent long bibliographies.<sup>91</sup>

Yet clearly the more immediate task of the literary scholar interested in the complexities of the phenomenon is to account for literary phenomena *per se*, to explain the composition, possibly the revision, publication, and the reception of literary texts. It is with respect to these problems that further areas will be briefly sketched, in which a consideration of the role of national images and stereotypes promises to bring interesting results, results which have been partly foreshadowed in some pregnant articles. One phenomenon a reader of early 19<sup>th</sup>-century historical sketches and romances cannot fail to observe is that national stereotypes are discernible in the depiction not only of minor characters (for which they serve as rough drafts); but such clichés also figure prominently in various descriptive digressions on old manners and customs, or learned commentaries on cultural history. Further research ought to substantiate the assumption that this practice apparent in the works of Sir Walter Scott, James Fenimore Cooper, James Kirke Paulding, and minor contemporaries like Timothy Flint, reflects the author's wish to evoke an atmosphere of authenticity.<sup>92</sup>

The scope given to the representation of national types in 19<sup>th</sup>-century historical fiction in England and America was partly due to the great interest in national characters, a consequence of the impact of studies by German philosophers and writers like Johann Gottfried Herder, and, in America, the impact of Mme de Staël's treatises, her celebration of the literature of nations as the mirror of their very essence. Apart from these philosophical considerations and presuppositions they shared, the more technical aspect, the above-

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<sup>91</sup> Cf. the score of selected articles in the reader compiled by Anitra Karsten, *Vorurteil: Ergebnisse psychologischer und sozialpsychologischer Forschung* (1978); bibliographical lists are contained in Duijker and Frijda, 170-221; a selective list of pertinent studies is given in *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* 23.3 (1973), 82-88 (compiled by Hildegard Ohl), with a slight emphasis on German contributions to this field.

<sup>92</sup> It seems as if these historical novelists counted on the conviction of their readers resembling that of Jean Bodin, the French lawyer of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In a statement regarding history and not fiction, it is true, Bodin claimed that one ought to examine the truthfulness of historical accounts by measuring the ostensible behavior of nations, the actors in the great drama of history, against the permanent and fixed qualities of these nations. Cf. Bodin's *Methodus* (1566).

mentioned interest in the verification of fictitious events placed in the past, may have indeed been an important consideration of the writers of historical fiction.

While American fiction writers drew heavily on national clichés, historical scholars felt the attraction of these recurrent patterns in fiction and began to employ the same narrative strategy in their work. As David Levin's erudite book on *History As Romantic Art* (1959) demonstrates, prominent historians like Bancroft, Motley, and Parkman molded their voluminous studies on the historical romances in the sense that they tried to make history accessible to the ordinary reader by portraying the heroes of history as the "representative men," the manifestations of the genius of the individual nations. They thus fell back on national and even more extensively on racial clichés.<sup>93</sup> These historians were influenced by prominent academic teachers at German universities and had special regard for the achievements of German culture. Their admiration for the new spirit of nationalism in Germany, which seemed victorious in several spheres, deeply affected their handling of historical material. It transformed inherited clichés, made them exalt Teutonic peoples and dismiss "Southerners" and "antiprogressive, vanishing races," and thus colored their historical work. A comparative study of similar ventures of romantic historians in other countries might reveal analogous strategies. An examination of their histories might help to disclose related techniques and the art of rhetoric employed in much of 19<sup>th</sup>-century historiography (by Thomas Babington Macaulay, and James Anthony Froude, etc.), some of whose representatives seem to have gained popularity not least through their neglect of the principle of impartiality and the exploitation of clichés in their dazzling style. A comparative investigation of such texts might also offer supplementary material for the project recommended by Stanzel (1974) in "Der literarische Aspekt." Stanzel sketches a typology of methods employed in the description of various peoples and lists some literary schemes and rhetorical devices frequently used for such a purpose. While accentuating the role of literary factors in such processes, such a topology might facilitate exploring the universals of the phenomenon and the analysis and comparison of pertinent assertions, and render a

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<sup>93</sup> Cf. Levin, especially 49-55, 74-79 ("Teutonic Germs"), and particularly 126-130; 140-147 ("The Infidel: Vanishing Races").

reduction of such statements to their essentials and the exposure of underlying mechanisms fairly easy.<sup>94</sup>

The pursuit of such scholarly projects is intended to furnish an objective inventory of those literary factors which affect and often hamper processes of communication. As one is aware of the fact that national stereotypes have always influenced the reception of foreign literary texts, partly acting as catalysts, partly as obstacles, one can demonstrate the contribution of the study of national stereotypes to the general field of research into the reception of literature.

Hugo Dyserinck's pioneer article on the problem of 'images' and 'mirages' (1966) has illustrated not only the influence of specific clichés, that of Flanders as a country of sensualists and mystics, on the depiction of individuals and their preoccupations, for instance, that of the curé in Georges Bernanos, *Journal d'un curé*, but has also suggested an explanation for the lack of translations of prominent Dutch writers into the German language.<sup>95</sup> Similar incidental observations concerning earlier epochs should be corroborated by further reading, which might help to explain, for instance, the periodic lack of translations in England or America from certain continental literatures. James Kirke Paulding's emphasis on the striking affinity between the spirit of the new American literature and the creations of the Scottish highlands, which is indebted to Hugh Blair's admiration

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<sup>94</sup> Stanzel, "Der literarische Aspekt ...", 78-79. Stanzel distinguishes the following topoi: "Land der Gegensätze" (country of contraries), "Polaritätstopos" (polarity between two peoples), "Laster und Tugenden" (a *topos* which attributes specific virtues and vices to individual nations), a *topos* which credits a nation with a tendency towards extremes in perfection and depravity, and offers some remarks on the genesis of these topoi. One can supplement Stanzel's list, for instance, by a *topos* common in 16<sup>th</sup>-century ethnography, that of substituting a certain constitution, "complexion," "temperament," for an individual nation. After the completion of this review of research issue 2 of *Komparatistische Hefte* (1980), which is devoted to the discussion of "Forms and Functions of National Stereotypes in Literature," appeared. The comprehensive examination and bibliography of a spate of contributions to American ethnicity theory in the 1970s by Werner Sollors ("Theory of American Ethnicity ...") and a pertinent essay by John Ibson ("Virgin Land or Virgin Mary? Studying the Ethnicity of White Americans") have also appeared in *American Quarterly* 33.3 (1981), 257-283 and 284-308 respectively. – Moreover, the project adumbrated by Stanzel has been further developed, and a comprehensive analysis of imagological laws has been provided by Joep Leerssen and others, cf. especially his essay "The Rhetoric of National Character" (2000). Cf. also general essays in Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, eds., *Imagology* (2007).

<sup>95</sup> Cf. note 3 of this essay.

for *Ossian* and Mme de Staël's fascination with the poetry of the North, and the alleged incompatibility of the American spirit with the "enervating productions of Italy", may have had an effect on the literary scene.<sup>96</sup> Thus the appeal of certain literatures and even specific authors to foreign audiences might be subjected to critical analysis under the aspect of the prevalent auto- and heterostereotypes of the receiving nations, and the study of national stereotypes might in this way fulfill an ancillary role in the context of modern attempts to compose a history of literature with special regard to the reader and the reception of literature.

While more attention is to be paid to the impact of such concepts of the characteristic traits of the literature of individual nations on the cross-cultural recognition of authors,<sup>97</sup> a monograph by Günther Blaicher has demonstrated the relevance of national stereotypes to an understanding of processes of interaction between an individual writer and his own audience.

Blaicher does not skirt the complex issue of the positive function of an autostereotype and admits its power to furnish ethical imperatives to the members of a group – in this case the pride of the English in their liberty and moral society – when he subjects Lord Byron's revision of his satire *Don Juan* to close scrutiny. He offers a balanced and persuasive view of these alleged facets of the English character and of their substitution by negative assertions, which are themselves based on generalizations. Some of the seeming inconsistencies and fluctuations in the pertinent cantos of Byron's satire can in this way be explained as the result of the pressures of the

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<sup>96</sup> J. K. Paulding, *Letters from the South* (1817), II, Letter 37, 221.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Bungert's remarks on the belated translation and appreciation of certain American writers, particularly from the South, which, due to the supreme status of Ernest Hemingway, did not fit the popular image of American literature as a literature of realism in post-World War II Germany, in Hans Bungert, ed., *Die Amerikanische Literatur der Gegenwart: Aspekte und Tendenzen* (1977), 252-262. Since the completion of this review I have myself examined the reception of some modern Southern writers in Europe and have reflected on the various factors which had fostered or hindered their popularity in Germany and France in particular. See, for example, "Southern Writers and Their Readers in France and in the German-Speaking Countries of Europe," *Southern Quarterly* (1996), and "Antecedents and Trajectories of Two Twentieth Century Writers from Georgia in Europe," in Gray and Zacharasiewicz, eds., *Transatlantic Exchanges* (2007).

reading public on the author.<sup>98</sup> Thus the study of national clichés, which has profited from interdisciplinary work, finally comes to fulfill a valuable function in what is, after all, the primary role of literary scholarship, the improvement of the understanding of the actual word on the page in the individual text.

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<sup>98</sup> Cf. Günther Blaicher, *Vorurteil und literarischer Stil: Zur Interaktion von Autor und zeitgenössischem Lesepublikum in Byrons Don Juan* (1979). A full documentation of the complementary reception of the British Romantic poet in Germany has since then been published by Blaicher: *Die Rezeption Byrons in der deutschen Kritik* (2001).



## **Imagology and the Theory of Climate**

- The Theory of Climate and the Tableau of Nationalities
- Foreign Faces: Physiognomy and the Theory of Climate
- The Theory of Climate in North American Texts since 1776

## Chapter 2: The Theory of Climate and the Tableau of Nationalities

Since classical antiquity, but especially since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century there has always been an inclination to organize the inherently limited but increasing knowledge of the world: the diversity of its countries, their fauna and flora, and especially their peoples. Among the few models which helped to account for the differences in phenomena, the theory of climate emerged as a very plausible explanation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Man's inclination to schematize his observations and impressions counteracted the tremendous impact of the breaking of the boundaries of the limited circle of the oecumene in the late 15<sup>th</sup> and the early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The shock sustained by the discoveries about which the literate among the Europeans eagerly read in numerous travel accounts was somewhat softened by man's proclivity to generalize and form certain expectations. Schemata, such as the theory of climate, helped the humanists to integrate new knowledge and also assisted them in reshaping information received to fit in with long-held assumptions, prejudices and stereotypes.

This function of the theory is also apparent in the now fairly well-known Styrian *Völkertafel* (Tableau of Nationalities) exhibited in the *Museum für Volkskunde* (Museum of Ethnology) in Vienna, a canvas with an extensive tabulation of the ten leading nations of Europe. On this particular tableau, which has been carefully studied (see Stanzel, *Europäischer Völkerspiegel*, 1999), the various nations of Europe are concisely characterized in 17 rubrics in a High German dialect. The intention of the following remarks is to demonstrate that the theory of climate contributed epithets and attributes to the Tableau of Nationalities and supplied an essential template for the author of the text with the visual illustration of male representatives of the ten nations in their national costume. The entries on the *Völkertafel* (VT), and another, older version, the *Leopold-Stich* (LS), an engraved colored print with an almost identical text but different costumes in the illustrations, describe the manners, the character of personality,

intellect, temperament, and later the vices and diseases characteristic of these nations. Implied in this brief and at times absurd endeavor to pigeonhole the characteristics of these peoples is a concept that goes back to classical antiquity, at least to Theophrastus, a disciple of Aristotle. He had produced a collection of *Characters of Vices*, which was adopted as a model for the representation of ethical types in the early modern period. ‘Character’, a word etymologically derived from the verb ‘to scratch’, ‘to engrave’, had come to denote a human type, as for instance, a young man, a vain-glorious man, a soldier, a miser, and Theophrastus’s characters were eagerly taken up and imitated (see *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. ‘character’). His pattern of brief description and illustration was then also applied to representatives of the nations of Europe, and sketches of national characters were produced from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Students of imagology have seen it as their task to contextualize and historicize such constructs, for the term ‘character’ had undergone important changes and had come to denote not only types of behavior but also to describe the inner being, allegedly the core qualities of representatives of groups and nations.

That the features of such groups were standardized in numerous texts is connected with educational practices in the early modern period. In their training in the ancient languages pupils in (Latin) schools were taught to use dictionaries for their compositions and essays. These thesauri contained lists of adjectives culled from the classical texts and were regarded as the appropriate epithets whenever one referred to certain nations. The French humanist Ravisius Textor thus provided a very widely used teaching tool in his *Epithetorum Thesaurus* (1524) and on the basis of this compilation a number of dictionaries were subsequently produced, such as the *Gradus ad Parnassum*. An English version, Joshua Poole’s *English Parnassus*, provided a corresponding textbook for pupils in 17<sup>th</sup>-century England from which they could copy the proper adjectives. Textbooks of this kind were widely used in schools creating what one might describe as a ‘horizon of expectations’ concerning representatives of certain nations (cf. Stanzel, 1974; Zacharasiewicz, 1982).

Epithets from the thesauri based on the usage of ancient writers also found their way into guidebooks for the Grand Tour and figured prominently in the texts accompanying or preceding the maps in atlases produced in Western Europe. They were, naturally, also

included in the cosmographies, and helped to consolidate the heterostereotypes employed in a diversity of texts.

That the theory of climate zones served as an important aid to orientation and support for heterostereotypes need not surprise us, for the early 18<sup>th</sup> century was a time in which this model was very popular all over Europe. As the composition of the engraved Tableau can be dated before 1725 (*terminus ante quem*) it seems relevant to note that only a few years earlier Abbé Du Bos had, in his influential *Refléxions critiques* (1719), attributed the cultural and intellectual achievements of individual nations to a considerable degree to climatic influences.<sup>1</sup> The flowering of the arts was for him essentially a result of favorable physical conditions, notably of the quality of the atmosphere of the specific environment on which the collective achievements in the various countries depended; this was fully in conformity with the teachings of the medical tradition. Following the classical authorities and advocates of the theory of climate, Du Bos took the view that national characteristics do not change in spite of the exchange of ethnic groups as inhabitants and of the peoples' gradual adaptation to their new environments. He contributed his own reflections to the inherited model of thought by postulating alterations in the climate of individual countries and using them as an explanation for the ostensible or real changes in the conduct of individual nations in the course of history, citing, for instance, changes in the behavior of the Dutch and the apparent different characters of the ancient Romans and the modern Italians.

As Gonthier-Louis Fink has stressed, Du Bos did not trace back the political and cultural hegemony of France to its privileged location in the narrow middle zone. Here he stands in contrast to some of his predecessors, such as the French Jesuit Dominique Bouhours who in *Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène* (1671), stressed the inevitable scarcity of talents among northerly nations, the lack of 'bel esprit' and cultural aptitude.<sup>2</sup> Fink has maintained that the frequent use of the theory of climate in France to promote its claim to hegemony in Europe led to

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<sup>1</sup> There were several editions of this book, which was translated into English as well as German. Cf. *Critical Reflections on Poetry, Painting and Music*, transl. Thomas Nugent (1748). On Du Bos as a key figure in 18<sup>th</sup>-century thought related to the theory of climate see A. H. Koller, *The Abbé Du Bos* (1937) and A. Lombard, *L'Abbé Du Bos* (1913).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gonthier-Louis Fink, "De Bouhours à Herder: La théorie française des climats et sa réception outre-Rhin," *Recherches Germaniques* 15 (1985), 3-62, esp. 8-13.

the fairly conspicuous avoidance of the presentation of the theory of climate zones, with its implications and consequences in manuals of political science and encyclopedias compiled on German soil (for instance, by the internationally famous lawyer and historian Samuel Pufendorf). Fink claims that this state of affairs only came to an end around the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when Albrecht von Haller and Johann Joachim Winckelmann plunged into the debate triggered by the comprehensive presentation of the dependence of political and cultural achievements of the various nations on the climates of their environment in Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois* (1748). In their continuation of the ideas expressed in early documents of philhellenic cultural criticism, for instance in Thomas Blackwell's *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer* (1735), the two scholars fully accepted the model of thought as an important aid to comprehending complex phenomena. It can, however, be taken for granted that German authors in the Baroque Age and in the early Enlightenment were familiar with this pattern of thought; equally it can be assumed that the educated élite were very well acquainted with this idea from medical *loci classici*, from early psychological manuals and from handbooks of political science. However, in contrast to England, which, as a consequence of the efforts of Francis Bacon and the Baconians in the sphere of the "new philosophy" (science) took a leading role, there was no up-dating and consolidation of the theory of climate with the help of data gained through experiments in Germany. Despite this, respect for the theory of climate remained intact in that country, unlike for the [pseudo-science of] physiognomy, which had lost much of its reputation even though it rested on premises derived from the theory of climate.<sup>3</sup> There was, admittedly, nothing comparable to the abundance of writings in the sphere of cultural criticism produced in Great Britain in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Yet, sufficient treatises were published in Germany which explained in German or Latin this model of thought and assured its widespread availability as an aid accounting for different national characteristics. In light of Fink's claims about the avoidance of this model in Germany it seems necessary to document the relatively broad basis for the contemporary debate and for the ensuing derivation of certain national qualities given in the Tableau in the model of the theory of climate. An analysis

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. the investigation of the links between physiognomy and the theory of climate in a subsequent chapter in this volume.

of contemporary compendia and encyclopedias shows that, even beyond the medical profession and the manuals of geography and cosmography, pertinent excerpts from ancient authorities continued to support such ideas. The editors of such works introduced into their explication of the theory of climate newer reports and occasionally their own impressions gained on long journeys and handed the idea on to the compilers of lexica such as Johann Georg Walch, whose *Philosophisches Lexicon* was first published in 1726.

Among the contemporaries of the author of the text of the Tableau of Nationalities, Christoph August Heumann, a prolific but now forgotten professor at Göttingen,<sup>4</sup> deserves special consideration because of his detailed presentation of the theory of environment. In his *Acta Philosophorum, das ist: Gründliche Nachrichten aus der Historia Philosophica*, which appeared in installments from 1715 onwards and reached a large readership, he dedicated no fewer than thirty pages to a detailed discussion of the talents of the various nations. In a section studded with citations and references to numerous sources he establishes a causal relationship between their character and the latitude of their habitation, as well as the quality of the atmosphere of their country, thus firmly basing this text on the theory of climate. While Fink maintains that authors of *belles lettres* and cultural criticism in 17<sup>th</sup>-and early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Germany avoided mentioning the theory of climate as the implications of this model of thought were too unfavorable for them, Heumann's *magnum opus* reveals that this theory was certainly not ignored in Germany, but rather that its challenge was accepted. As a rule, a strategy was employed other than that adopted by British writers, who, like Fynes Moryson in 1617,<sup>5</sup> vehemently opposed the teachings of the prominent disseminator of the theory of climate, Jean Bodin, and who, while basically accepting the model of thought, postulated that their own country belonged to the privileged middle zone. What had appeared feasible to the apologists of Great Britain warmed by the Gulf Stream seemed very difficult to German authors. Since the era of the early humanists, the inclusion of the Teutons (see Tacitus) and their descendants among the northerners had been accepted and their

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<sup>4</sup> Heumann's name is not included in Christoph Gottlieb Jöcher's *Allgemeines Gelehrtenlexicon* (1750-51).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. his *Itinerary* (1617), which was re-issued in 4 vols. in 1907-08.

placing (which did not strictly conform to geographical coordinates) could not easily be challenged.

A didactic cosmic poem such as Richard Blackmore's *The Nature of Man* (1711), in which the (later) physician to George I sketched an anthropology in verse based on the theory of climate, is not to be found in the German literature of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Few if any German visitors to England may have encountered this poem in which the patent imperfections of the inhabitants of the extreme zones were explained with reference to the climate, and the national characters of the various European nations elucidated deduced from their relative position on the globe.<sup>6</sup> Some of the courtiers in the train of the Elector of Hannover, Georg Ludwig, who was to ascend the British throne as George I in 1714,<sup>7</sup> may have approved of Blackmore's branding of the peoples of the intemperate zones as subhuman due to their hostile environment shaped by the extremes of heat or cold. More pointedly than most other authors of long poems or descriptions of countries, who without exception referred to the disadvantages of extreme climates and the advantages of the temperate ones, Blackmore demonstrated a direct link between the climate of a zone or region and the intellectual potential and the poetic genius of (individual) nations. Heumann, who, a few years after the publication of *The Nature of Man*, began to serve as an inspector of schools in Göttingen and was later among the founding professors of the university there, shared this conviction. This he succinctly expressed in his *Acta Philosophorum*:

From this it is easy to deduce that those countries in which the air is cold and the blood is sluggish produce poor and passive talents: but those in which the air is overheated, engender ... fantastic talents. [...] The hot countries in the south can produce only very few philosophers for they are either complete barbarians or produce nothing but fanciful empty thoughts. Similarly, in the cold countries the mind is, as it were,

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<sup>6</sup> For a more detailed investigation of the presentation of national characters in this long didactic poem, see the following chapter on "Foreign Faces" in this volume.

<sup>7</sup> The consequences of the personal combination of the role of an Elector in Germany and of King of Great Britain for Hannover are presented in a catalogue at the Historical Museum in Hannover, *Hannover im Glanz und Schatten des britischen Weltreichs* (1977), esp. 16ff. The catalogue also documents the temporary contribution of members of the court who accompanied George to London in 1714.

frozen and shows little activity. Whatever is called learned and intelligent grows in the temperate regions.<sup>8</sup>

The European map sketched out in Blackmore's verse, in which the cultural and political achievements and the moral status of individual nations corresponded to their position on the globe, thus coincides with the convictions of Heumann. Accordingly, the talents and intellectual gifts of the various Europeans are said to depend on their respective situation, with the ideal being positioned in the middle zone in the northern hemisphere. It can come as no surprise to the reader of this poem that, within this zone, France commands a privileged position just as French advocates of the climate theory repeatedly claimed. Spain, on the other hand, is more exposed to the southern heat, and suffers from its negative consequences, which Italy, with its milder climate, is spared. Even more important is Blackmore's according of the ideal position to England, thereby demonstrating the ethnocentrism of his didactic poem. While the question whether Blackmore's pertinent verse in his tour-de-force was known to the author of the text of the Tableau is difficult to answer, it is evident that in Germany inferences very similar to Blackmore's were drawn from the theory of climate in contemporary publications. In Heumann's book it is the English who are conspicuously granted the best talents as a consequence of the temperate, even ideal climate of their country.<sup>9</sup> Here the question arises whether Heumann, in his reference to the consensus of earlier writers on the theory of climate in their praise of the English climate, was keeping in mind the fact that only two years before the Elector of Hannover had ascended the British throne.

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<sup>8</sup> Author's free translation of the original: "Hieraus ist nun leicht die Folge zu machen / daß diejenigen Länder / deren Lufft zu kalt ist / und also das Geblüte träge machet / schlechte und passiva ingenia hervor bringen: diejenigen aber / in welchen die Lufft allzusehr erhitzt wird / tumme oder phantastica ingenia zeugen: [...] die allzuheissen Länder gegen Morgen können blutwenig rechtschaffene Philosophos aufweisen / sondern sind entweder vollkommene Barbaren / oder machen nichts als nur Philosophische Narrens-Possen. So ist auch in denen allzu kalten Ländern der Verstand gleichsam eingefroren / und hat gar wenig activität. Was aber gelehrt und hoch verständig heisset / das wächst in denen temperirten Landschafften" (*Acta Philosophorum*, 633-634).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. his use of the phrase "summa aëris indulgentia" [the very great kindness of the air] in *Acta Philosophorum*.



Though this particular application of the theory of climate may have been prompted by political factors and/or considerations of a desirable career, the contemporaries of the engraver of the copperplate print (LS) and the author of the text of the Tableau of Nationalities (VT) would have been familiar with this model from schools and universities. They encountered it in Hippocrat's *De aëre, aquis et locis* and in the treatise *Quod Animi Mores* of Claudius Galen. They found it in the political writings of Aristotle and in the observations of Cicero and the classical ethnographers who continued to be a source of elements from the climate theory mode of thought until the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, in addition to the theory of climate zones the contrast between specific regions shaped by climatic differences was part of traditional lore. There could have been few among the learned who were not familiar with the contrast between the Athenians and the Thebans to which Cicero referred in a routinely cited passage from *De fato*.

The testimony of Heumann's *Acta Philosophorum* and Walch's *Philosophisches Lexicon* demonstrates that for all the debates on the nature of nations the influential systematic delineation by the 16<sup>th</sup>-century French lawyer Jean Bodin continued to serve as an authority well into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. His *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* and his comprehensive *De Republica Libri Sex* (1576) shaped the political ideas of generations. Admittedly, there was no German translation in contrast to the situation in England where Richard Knolles had published an English version under the title *Six Bookes of a Commonweale* (1606). Yet Bodin's pioneering ideas had been mediated in an eclectic, easily comprehensible manner by Pierre Charron in *De la Sagesse* (1601) and had reached many European readers, who encountered them in diagrammatic form in the large number of editions of the French original and the many translations.<sup>10</sup> The first of the two diagrams was integrated into a Latin translation in a textbook by Christoph Besold published in Tübingen (1632), which juxtaposed northerners and southerners under different aspects.<sup>11</sup> Charron's first diagram underlines the merits of the middle zone by

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<sup>10</sup> There were more than 20 editions of Charron's book in France, and no fewer than 11 English editions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and even a new English translation in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>11</sup> This Latin version appeared in *De Natura Populorum, ejusque pro Loci Positu, ac temporis decursu variatione* [...], 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Tübingen (1632).

contrasting the physical constitution, appearance and behavior of northerners and southerners. Their height and constitution of humors, their consumption of food and their social conduct, their talents and intellectual gifts, their attitude to religion or behavior towards their antagonists and partners are juxtaposed.

	Septentrionales sunt	Meridionales sunt
Corpore	Ingentes atq; praecelu: pituutosi, sanguine, albi, flavi, dediti conversationi, vocis contentae, cutis hispidae & mollis, cibi potusque appetentes: robust.	Parvuli, Melancholici, frigidi & sicci, nigri; solitarii, vocis acutae, cutis durioris, pilisque carentis, crispi : sobrii & debiles.
Ingenio	Obtusi, stupidi, stulti, faciles, leves, inconstantes.	Ingeniosi, sapientes, prudentes, astuti, pertinaces.
Religione	Non devote, nec sancti.	Superstitiosi, contemplativi.
Moribus	Militares, fortes, laboriosi, casti, non Zelotypi, humani.	A bello abhorrentes, pusillaniomes, scortatores, Zelotypi crudeles & inhumani. <sup>12</sup>

In his adoption of these diagrams Besold, a prominent professor of law at Tübingen, evinces his trust in the theory of climate and the dependence of the talents of the nations on their physical environment. In a long marginal gloss, he also demonstrates his familiarity with most of the authorities from Classical Antiquity and from the Renaissance who professed their belief in the theory of climate. He thus confirms the availability of this model, with all its ramifications, to German intellectuals of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Walch, who is indebted to Besold, fails to give the names of two of those principal authorities in

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<sup>12</sup> Quoted from Besold, *De Natura Populorum*, 21-22. It is to be noted that Charron’s English translator retained the attribution of “cruelty and inhumanity” to the northerners as well as to the southerners. However, Besold in his Latin version omitted this unfavorable feature of the northern nations. For the English translation of this diagram see the chapter on “The Theory of Climate in North American Texts” in this volume.

his *Lexicon*, sources which were probably known to the instructors of the authors of the text on the copperplate print and the Tableau. The first of those books remained very influential in Germany well into the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This was *Examen de Ingenios*, the pioneer work of the Spanish physician Juan Huarte, whose central ideas had been published in 1575 and some of which found a place in Charron's eclectic volume. Huarte's book certainly provided interesting material for discussion for several generations. In it he offered an ingenious typology based on the theory of climate and of climate zones which he distinguished between the aptitude of various European nations and the Egyptians, for various scholarly disciplines. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's translation *Johann Huarts Prüfung der Köpfe zu den Wissenschaften*, made the Spaniard's typology of talents more widely accessible to the German reading public in 1752 but according to the *Catalogue Général* of the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris at least eleven editions in French had previously been available. The ascription of particular feats of memory to the northerners (because of their "moist" brains), while attainments which presupposed a higher variant of the intellect imagination were attributed to the "dry and hot" brains of the southerners, including the Spaniards, repeatedly engaged scholars in German-speaking countries of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Huarte fostered a differentiation of the characteristic talents of the peoples, which continued to be offered in compendia of knowledge and also, to some extent, both in the copperplate print and on the Tableau.

The second (potential) source which Walch does not explicitly name in this context, but which was very familiar to his own teachers, had put ideas based on the theory of climate into memorable verse. The text in question is the ethnographic digression in *La Seconde Semaine* of the famous Huguenot poet Du Bartas. The long passage in the unfinished sequel to the biblical story in *La Première Semaine* is to be found in the part entitled *Les Colonies*. It was available after 1584, circulating in several French editions but also in translations in a number of European languages. It opens with a solemn invocation to nature before an accumulation of anaphora and parallelism presents the contrast between the northerners and the southerners in a very pointed way, using syntactic and prosodic strategies to mark the dichotomy.

Que tu es, ô Nature, en merueilles feconde! ...  
L'homme du Nor[d] est beau, celui du Midi laid:

L'vn blanc, l'autre tanné; l'vn fort, l'autre foiblet:  
L'vn a le poil menu, l'autre gros, frizé, rude ...

Tobias Hübner, a member of the 'Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft,' made this text accessible in Germany in a very graphic translation:

Wie bistu / o Natur / in allen deinen wercken  
So wunder fruchtbarlich! / Aller ort kan man mercken  
Der Menschen unterscheid / in dem gewechs und art /  
In sitten / stärke / gestalt / farb / augen / haar und bart:  
Der Mann vom Nord ist schön / heißlich der von Mittag,  
Deß einen stärke ist groß / deß andern nichts vermag:  
Jener weiß / hat dünn haar: dieser schwartz / hats verwirret:  
Der ein arbeitet gern: der ander nur studieret.  
(*Die Fortwanderung*, transl. Tobias Hübner, 327, ll. 541-544 and 551-554)

The high regard in which the versified theory of climate zones and ethnographic descriptions were held is demonstrated in striking fashion by the volume of the learned lawyer Besold quoted above. It is more than a coincidence that he inserts in an ostensibly scholarly disquisition "Ingenia hominum [...] a situ sedeque regionis praecipue formari, et pro locorum varietate immutari," a Latin version of this passage composed by Gabriel de Lerme/Lermaeus, himself a Huguenot poet:

Quam mirabilium dives natura creatrix! ...  
Ille albus, niger hic: hic debilis, ille valenti  
Robore: crispatis, crâsique hic crinibus, ille  
Tenuibus: hic Musas, duros amat ille labores.  
Hic calidus siccus, calidusque atque humidus ille:  
Hic ad laetitiam segnis, propensus at ille.  
Hic graciles alter plenas dat gutture voces:  
Hic est fucatus, sed candidus ille: malignus  
Hic, illi mitis morum clementia: et ille ... (18-19)

The approximately 50 Latin verses cited by Besold underline the undisputed authority of Du Bartas ('poeta dixit') even in the academic discourse of the time.

In addition to de Lerme's version of the cosmic poem by the Huguenot poet, which inspired the composition of similar versified contrasts, a psychological manual which similarly ascribed major significance to the theory of climate and which was regarded as an

authority on national characteristics found favor all over Europe: John Barclay's *Icon Animorum*, first published in London in 1614. Many compilers of the handbooks used in the Baroque Age referred to this work by a Scotsman who had spent his youth in France. His book became accessible in a large number of separate editions but was also published as part of *Euphormionis Lusinii ... Satyricon* with its discussion of national characters. It reached as large a readership as Barclay's roman-à-clef *Argenis*, and was still being consulted during the Enlightenment both as an important source and as a storehouse of national types in the manuals by Heumann and Walch.<sup>13</sup>

It must be granted that Barclay provides no rigorous and detailed theory of climate zones but only repeatedly implies its validity. He emphasizes, however, the dependence of the collective behavior of groups on the environment and he uses the continuity of national characters dependent on a specific *genius loci*. His remarks on the Spaniards and Italians, which Walch uses several times even 112 years after the first edition of the *Icon Animorum* as the basis for his own observations on the talents and vices of these nations, indicate that Barclay employs the other variant of climate theory, that which accounts for the contrast between ethnic groups with the help of regional climatic factors. The assumption of a genius of a region seems perfectly compatible with the contrast between zones as is apparent both in *Icon Animorum*, for instance, in its generalizations about the peoples of the north, and in the Tableau of Nationalities.

When the author of the Tableau or the engraved copperplate drew on the storehouse of epithets in his search for suitable attributes in his numerous categories, various reflections of the theory of climate in ethnographic, apademic and cosmographic texts, as well as their offshoots in verse, offered themselves as appropriate guidelines. The theory of climate zones appeared as an especially apt scheme and key to the storehouse of lists of characteristics. It was also helpful for the compilers of textbooks and cosmographies in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to be able thus to compensate for their own lack of information due to the absence of autoptic experience of foreign countries and peoples. Thus there is evidence that the authors of the Tableau and the engraved

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<sup>13</sup> A German translation of this key text disseminating the theory of climate and the conception of the genius loci appeared in 1660 (Joh. Barcklai, *Spiegel menschlicher Gemüths Neigungen*). An English translation by the poet Thomas May was published in 1631: *The Mirrour of Mindes, or, Barclay's Icon Animorum*.

copperplate possessed a fundamental knowledge of, and not merely a rudimentary familiarity with the theory of climate zones, which is mirrored in the description of the peoples of the extreme zones and also in the evaluation of the nations of Western Europe.

It is very strange that the inhabitant of the Ottoman Empire is simply labeled “Turk or Greek” (“Tirk oder Griech” VT) without any further distinction.<sup>14</sup> He is summarily characterized as being inclined to effeminacy, and displays several features of “southerners.” While his land is said to have a superfluity in “soft things” (“an zart Und weichen sachen”), he seems to be “lazy in war.” When his temperament is described as “tender” (“zärtlich”), its connotation is not favorable.<sup>15</sup>

In the category “knowledge” the representative of the diverse peoples in the Balkans is associated with “political perfidy.” Another allegedly typical quality of southerners, their tendency towards Machiavellian intrigues is also ascribed to him, which is compatible with the entry in the rubric “vice,” where he is defined as being “even more treacherous” (TG 7)<sup>16</sup> (in comparison with the Hungarian or the Moscovite) (“noch Veräterischer”). It is fitting that he is said to end his life “in fraud” (TG 17, “In betrug”).

Juxtaposed to the Turks or Greeks, who are thus marked by the vices and weaknesses of southerners, are the northern nations, a category under which the Tableau subsumes all nations ranging from the Swedes to the Muscovites. As the text of the tabulation does not offer any direct description of the outward manifestations of the nations (it is as if the pictorial depictions were to suffice), the category “manners” seems to describe not only their conduct but also their general appearance. In the case of the Swede this is said to be “strong and big,” while that of the Pole is “boorish.” Considering the negative expectations with regard to the peoples of the extreme zones it comes as no surprise that their nature is said to be “cruel,” “more cruel,” “most cruel,” or even “like the Hungarian” (“gut Ungerisch”). The

<sup>14</sup> The Levantine is identified indiscriminately as “Turk or Greek.”

<sup>15</sup> Grimm’s *Deutsches Wörterbuch* includes such an unfavorable denotation for the lemma “Zärt-lich.”

<sup>16</sup> Leerssen refers to the *national columns* as a matrix intersecting with *rows of geographical, social and moral characteristics* of the nationalities in question. In the following a capital letter indicates the nation (P=Pole, TG=Turk or Greek, SP=Spaniard, S=Swede, W=Walsch=Italian, U=Hungarian, M=Muscovite) and the number refers to the row in question.

way in which the sequence works has prompted speculations about topical reasons for the anti-Hungarian sentiments of the author of the text of the Tableau. It is apparent, however, that standard handbooks providing statements based on the theory of climate placed the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, including the Hungarians, in the category of the northerners. The deviation from the geographical coordinates is supported and clarified in a passage in Du Bartas' *The Colonies*. While the inhabitants of the Valley of the Nile in the ethnographic digression in this long poem represent the South, those nations situated on the banks of the Rhine and of the Danube are subsumed under the peoples of the north.

In the religious sphere the theory of climate had furnished plenty of ammunition for the polemics in Europe after the Reformation. Jean Bodin's conclusion that the magnificent temples of the southerners and their numerous religious rites reflected their own intense religiosity while the fickle northerners easily adopted new religions, was vehemently contradicted in England. The contrast between northern and southern Europe, manifest in the Catholic rites and practices dismissed as superstition by the Protestants, played a significant role in the consideration of the theory of climate in that tumultuous era. The religious division of Europe, which was often supported by the climate theory, seems to be less clearly mirrored in the Tableau. With the exception of the entry in the column on the English, whose "inconstancy" in religious services is mentioned, there is no explicit reference to the consequences of the Reformation in Europe. There is, however, a new dividing line in eastern Central Europe. At first sight it may seem strange that the Tableau suggests that Poles "believe anything" (P12, "Glaubt Allerley"). 17<sup>th</sup>-century accounts reveal, however, that the religious toleration practiced in the kingdom of Poland, which at that time also comprised Lithuania and the country of the Cossacks, was a source of wonder in Western and Central Europe, which was also well aware of the Islamic and pagan subjects of Poland. That the peoples of Western Europe are said to be superior in religion and that the Spanish are particularly lauded (their religious service is described in this respect as the "best," SP12, "Der aller beste"), suggests the Catholic background of the author of the text of the Tableau. The ethnocentric claim that the Germans are even more pious is also no surprise. As it may be assumed that the Tableau was composed somewhere in the vicinity of Augsburg, a free city of

the Holy Roman Empire, this may have suggested a mediating position as far as denominations were concerned.

Less certain is the attribution to the Swede, who is said to be “serious / zealous” (S12, “Eifrig in Glauben”). This may, on the one hand, be an allusion to the intervention of Gustav Adolph in the Thirty Years’ War on the side of the Protestant Union. When the Swede is dubbed “superstitious” (S7), however, this may hark back to older assumptions concerning northerners, especially the ancient concept that the North was the home to cults devoted to demons and witches. That in terms of intellect and scholarly practice precedence is granted to the peoples of Western Europe corresponds to their implied belonging to the privileged middle zone. They are spared the weaknesses both of the northerners and the southerners, and are generally characterized as being “clever and wise,” “cautious” (“firsichtig”) or “sagacious” (“scharfsinnig”). The distribution of attributes in this rubric shows that their achievements lie in theology, military affairs or canon law, and thus reflects, at least to some extent, typologies of talents to be found in books such as Huarte’s *Examen de Ingenios* or Heumann’s *Acta Philosophorum*, but also some of the striking achievements which immediately caught the attention of the whole of Europe.

In the two variants of the text of the Tableau of Nationalities (LS and VT) the vices and diseases rampant among the peoples of Romance background, especially the French and the Italians, are entered. Irrespective of their location in the middle zone with its advantages, and irrespective of available information about specific national characteristics, various weaknesses are generally ascribed to these southerners. Both the French, who are said to be victims of syphilis, referred to as their own disease (F9, “An Eigner”) and the Italians, who allegedly suffer from the plague (W9, “bösser seuch”), are treacherous and die as a result of vice (W17, “im Laster”).<sup>17</sup>

While the predilection of the French for military ventures is stressed in several entries, the Italians again evince qualities which clearly belong to southerners, thereby questioning the inclusion of the Italians among the nations of the middle zone. Treacherousness and

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<sup>17</sup> Here there is a significant deviation in the Styrian variant of the Tableau (VT). It suggests the death of the Italian “in a monastery” (“im Kloster”), while the earlier engraving, like other stereotypical accounts, displays major vices in their sexual conduct.



jealousy are listed in the rubric “manners” (W1, “Sitten”) and “personality” (W2, “Natur und Eigenschaft”), all qualities which, according to contemporary manuals, were at that time causally connected to the climate of the South.

Further implicit references to the theory of climate are scattered throughout the Tableau of Nationalities. Behind the willingness of the English to work we may possibly detect the indisputable preference and special talent of northerners for manual skills and crafts. In the column on the Swede further facets of the stereotype of northerners are adumbrated. The entry refers to the clothing of the Swede as being made of leather, thus alluding to a traditional pattern versified by Du Bartas in his juxtaposition of northerners and southerners.

That the Swede is said to spend his time eating and that he loves delicious food similarly fits in with the stereotype of the northerner, which includes *gula* (gluttony) and *ebrietas* (inebriation) as typical weaknesses of the northern peoples. This tallies with the “drunkenness” entry in the column “German”, an ascription which is based on evidence from classical antiquity, which rather projects the image of the ancients Teutons onto contemporary Germans than pretending to be a diagnosis of the real state of affairs.

In the portrait of the Swede may be found an observation which also occurs in presentations of the theory of climate in late Humanism. The Swede’s special achievements in the “liberal arts” (S5, “In Freuen Künsten”) seem at first sight to contradict the old prejudice against northerners. Whether this phrase is a reflex of a correction prompted by contemporary observations or whether it merely mirrors a passage included in the versified theory of climate in Du Bartas’ long poem in which considerable progress was recorded among the northern nations is not immediately obvious.

Yet the northern peoples situated even further to the east were not believed to be capable of similar progress. The author of the text of the Table of Nationalities seems to show a degree of impatience with them and through his choice of epithets summarily accuses them of a disdain for intellectual gifts and to have a barbarian preference for brute force. In this ascription he fails to do justice to the contemporary realities which in the empire of Tsar Peter the Great and in the domain of August the Strong in Poland had seen a remarkable cultural flowering. The author of the text for a series of engravings (*Laconicum Europae Speculum*) which were produced a decade

later,<sup>18</sup> apparently made an effort to compensate for this oversight and, by introducing additional columns, reports on recent changes in the various European nations. He concedes that [even] the nations of the northeast which had generally been looked down upon by the author of the Tableau of Nationalities possessed a genuine potential for cultural progress.

That the author of *Laconicum* held on to the notion of the key importance of the climate for the nature of the various nations is confirmed by the addition of a separate rubric in which the description of the countries inhabited by the individual nations is expanded with the category “Clima Poli et Aëris”. There is apparently a connection between the details based on empirical observation, and another newly appended rubric on “temperamentum illorum”, a connection which is reminiscent, though with some variation, of the close link between the scheme based on the theory of climate zones and the old lore of the humors.

There were numerous sources presenting the theory of climate and readily accessible in various kinds of texts and genres in Germany in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and there is a striking congruence in detail between the attributes employed in the Tableau of Nationalities and traditional lore based on the model of the theory of climate. It may thus safely be assumed that at least elements of the theory of climate zones exerted a significant influence on the presentation of the different nations in the various versions of the Tableau of Nationalities. The theory of the shaping power of the physical milieu, which continued to enjoy unbroken popularity in the period in which the Tableau was composed and copied, and which continued to be updated, was eminently suitable as the basis for such a tabulation. It facilitated orientation and explication when the text was drafted. The model of thought also functioned as a storehouse supplying material to fill in gaps in knowledge and assisted the author in the fulfillment of his almost impossible self-imposed task of providing an exhaustive contrast between the most prominent peoples of Europe in the various spheres of life.

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<sup>18</sup> On these texts and engravings, cf. Rupnow's essay in Stanzel, ed. *Europäischer Völkerspigel*, 75-96.

### Chapter 3: Foreign Faces: Physiognomy and the Theory of Climate

In the last few decades an increasing number of scholars interested in imagology have occupied themselves with the question of the genesis and dissemination of national types in literature and have looked for determining factors in the tradition of such schemes and patterns. When considering the connection between the rapid rise of physiognomy in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and the continuing popularity of various models of thought which seemed to substantiate the national identities postulated, the close connection in the history of the two typological models becomes apparent. Here we may cite the faith the Anglo-Irish author Oliver Goldsmith put in the theory of climate and the label Laurence Sterne's "My Father" gave to this model of thought, which he called "a north-west passage to the intellectual world" (*Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, 484). It therefore seems appropriate to focus on the antecedents of these hypotheses and to sketch the differentiated development of both patterns in Anglophone texts.

A connection can be found in the writings of the humanists of the early modern period, but it can also be traced back to sources in antiquity. The link is based on the conviction expressed and mediated by classical physicians and philosophers that there is an interconnection between character and disposition, on the one hand, and nature and environment, on the other. It can come as no surprise that physicians also played a crucial role in the tradition of this axiom in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. John Arbuthnot, Queen Anne's personal physician, whose *Essay Concerning the Effects of Air on Human Bodies* provided important inspiration for Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois*,<sup>1</sup> and Oliver Goldsmith in his essays and in his poem *The Traveller, or A Prospect of Society* confirm the contribution of medical doctors. Richard Blackmore, later physician to King George I,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Robert Shackleton's essay "The Evolution of Montesquieu's Theory of Climate" (1955).

was to represent the talents of the races and peoples of the world in a lengthy poem entitled *The Nature of Man* (1711) in which he regarded them as the direct consequence of their physical environment. The general familiarity with this model of thought is also mirrored in the New World, for instance, in the correspondence of Thomas Jefferson, who defines the contrast between inhabitants of the Northern and the Southern states as being in conformity with the then familiar model of climate zones.<sup>2</sup>

At the very beginning of the systematic account of climate zones in the *Corpus Hippocraticum* the intellectual and mental consequences of every environment are highlighted, whether in the north, the south, or in the middle zone of the inhabited world. In accordance with this model a tripartite division is established, with the northerners and the southerners (represented by the Scythians and Saromates, on the one hand, and the Egyptians and the inhabitants of Asia Minor, on the other) unfavorably compared with the Greeks in the privileged middle zone. The distribution of physical features and intellectual talents, as well as cultural and political achievements, corresponds to this tripartite division; its consequences are described in classical theories of the state, for instance, in Aristotle's *Politics*. The early physiognomic treatise *Physiognomonica* is also associated with his name, as it underlines the contrast between northerners and southerners in physique and conduct, and clarifies the causal connections.

In the same way as the differences between nations were made accessible to Occidental readers in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century in the course of attempts to popularize the classical authorities, the above-mentioned pseudo-Aristotelian treatise provided considerable impetus for diagnostic or prognostic operations concerning groups of people. The model of thought was adopted and brought up-to-date, for instance, in Giovanni Battista della Porta's *De humana physiognomoniam libri quattuor* (1586) and made available to future readers all over Europe.<sup>3</sup> In 17<sup>th</sup>-century England it was notably Robert Fludd, a disciple of Paracelsus, who propagated hermetic and neo-Platonic ideas and who contributed to the spread of physiognomic

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. the following chapter on "The Theory of Climate in North American Texts."

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the numerous Latin editions there were many early translations into Italian, French, and German. See *Die Physiognomie des Menschen*, ed. T. Lessik and W. Ring (1930), 11-14.

lore.<sup>4</sup> Its cognitive claims motivated the composition of a “Digression concerning Physiognomy” by the versatile John Evelyn, who repeatedly dwelt on the effects of the environment on the psyche and nature of man.<sup>5</sup> In the relatively numerous physiognomic texts of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries this branch of knowledge came to be fairly closely associated with chiromancy, palmistry and the world of astrology. It thus became increasingly discredited and its practice was for a considerable time threatened with religious and secular sanctions. There is evidence in the early Augustan age that physiognomy, in contrast to the theory of climate which the Baconians had accepted and updated, was still in disrepute after 1700. This fact was to change only after 1760, but then very quickly.

Congruent with medical semiotics in texts molded by physiognomy or the theory of climate, physical appearance is taken as an index of the inner being. The semantic scope of physiognomy is increasingly narrowed down so that by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the lemma merely meant the “language of the face.”<sup>6</sup>

While the emphasis in presentations of the theory of climate lies on the collective behavior of peoples, the individual takes precedence in the realm of physiognomy, though it is rooted in similar notions as the theory of climate as is illustrated by an instructive passage in John Dryden’s “Preface to the Fables.”<sup>7</sup> There the father of English literary criticism praises Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* because of the marvelous inclusiveness of his characterization. The poet is said to have carefully observed and completely represented “the various manners and humors, as we now call them, of the whole English nation. Not a single character has escaped him.” His figures are rendered “not only in their inclinations but in their very physiognomies and persons.” Dryden also refers appreciatively to an early advocate of physiognomy by suggesting that “Baptista Porta could not have described their natures better, than by the marks which the poet gives them.”

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<sup>4</sup> On Fludd’s importance, see F. A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966), 320-341. Fludd’s relevant ideas are contained in his *History of Two Worlds* (1617-21).

<sup>5</sup> His treatise on physiognomy was published in his *Numismata* (1697), while his warning against the pollution of the atmosphere appeared in *Fumifugium* (1661).

<sup>6</sup> See Chambers, *Cyclopaedia* (1741-43), s.v. “Physiognomy.”

<sup>7</sup> The “Preface” is contained in *Essays of John Dryden*, ed. W. P. Ker (1900), vol. 2, the pertinent are passages on 262.

This passage in Dryden's "Preface" raises the question whether the exact observation and description of variegated human types in one and the same country is not basically incompatible with the subordination of alleged national differences in a global scheme. Would it not have been reasonable to expect that the empirical study of physiognomy using empirical methods would have prompted a certain resistance to the establishment of sweepingly defined types? Despite this apparent contradiction, physiognomists since Aristotle have practiced the diagnosis of collective national features. Accordingly, the reality of "national physiognomies" is portrayed as beyond any question in Johann Caspar Lavater's *Physiognomische Fragmente* (1775-1778), the key text of this model of thought even in the Anglophone world. It is also illustrated by extensive quotes from old and contemporary treatises based on the theory of climate, for instance, in Johann Joachim Winckelmann's oeuvre.<sup>8</sup>

The rediscovery of *loci classici* of the theory of climate in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was of major significance for the attribution of definite qualities to individual nations, something which Lavater also regarded as indisputable. It is no coincidence that he opens the relevant section of his opus with a reference to the polar opposition between Moors and Englishmen, Laplanders and Italians, Frenchmen and the indigenous peoples from Terra del Fuego (Lavater, Book 4, 267). The theory of climate zones had helped the humanists and their disciples to fix and consolidate the attributes which in older ethnographic treatises had sometimes appeared almost interchangeable. The theory enabled them to account for the characteristics of nations drawn from ethnographic sources and to explain the ostensible collective behavior of members of nations which since the late Middle Ages had been differentiated. The extensive application of climatic premises is illustrated by the pioneering efforts of the Dutch physician Levinus Lemnius (*De habitu et constitutione corporis*, 1561), or the early

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<sup>8</sup> In the conclusion of the sixty pages devoted in the first edition to the "national and family physiognomies" (Book 4, section 5) the author claims that "their natural history is one of the deepest, most unshakable and eternal foundations of physiognomies" (my translation), after having opened the section with the assertion that both "national physiognomies and national characters are indisputable facts." In Thomas Holcroft's translation *Essays on Physiognomy for the Promotion of the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind* (1789) the section covers pp. 83-127. Some significant differences between the original and the English translation are pointed out by J. Wechsler (1993), 104-125.

psychological handbook by the Spanish scholar Juan Huarte (*Examen de Ingenios*, 1575). These books were also read in England and fostered distinctions between the European nations according to their talents and achievements.<sup>9</sup>

The physical version of the environmental theory was also employed in England in a wide range of texts (medical treatises, psychological manuals, cosmographies, travel guides, courtesy and conduct books, and even long didactic poems) to explain the behavior of peoples and their attainments, their vices and virtues.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, a variant of the hypothesis based on regional contrasts, derived from the widely held classical opposition between the intellectually dull people of Thebes in their humid and fertile region of Boeotia and the intelligent, sharp-witted Athenians inhabiting the arid hillsides of Attica with its dry atmosphere, was also used, thus stressing the effects of the individual *genius loci*.

It does not come as any surprise that French authors could easily adapt the theory of climate zones in such a way as to ensure that their nation would be located in the privileged middle zone.<sup>11</sup> English authors of the Elizabethan Age also adopted this model of thought. They did, however, have to grapple with many challenging negative implications due to the relatively high northern latitude of their country and they were thus eager to modify the model.<sup>12</sup> They came to prefer the regional variant of the theory of climate as a key to an understanding of the different natures of nations. Such a method had also been applied in the popular representation of European national characters in John Barclay's *Icon Animorum* (1614), which took into account the intricate connection between body and psyche.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. my book on *Die Klimatheorie*, 45-53 and 57-73, on the adaptation of the venerable theory to the European scene in these two key texts by Lemnius and Huarte.

<sup>10</sup> On Jean Bodin's application of the theory of climate to examine the veracity of historical accounts by testing the reports against the presumptive national characters, see my *Klimatheorie*, 79.

<sup>11</sup> On the dissemination of the theory in a popularized form, see Pierre Charron, *De la sagesse* (1601), cf. my *Klimatheorie*, 96-100, and other chapters contained in this section of the volume.

<sup>12</sup> An author like Fynes Moryson (1617) tried to extend the borders of the middle zone to include England. On Moryson, cf. *Klimatheorie*, 133-142.

<sup>13</sup> For more information on the (German) reception of this popular work cf. the chapter on "The Tableau of Nationalities" in this volume.

The intimate relationship between the theory of climate and elements employed in physiognomic practice can easily be observed in the binary scheme which is encapsulated in a striking passage of Du Bartas' long biblical poem, *The Semaines*.<sup>14</sup> The detailed and rhetorically pointed opposition between the fair, light-skinned, courageous, frank, energetic and strong northerner, on the one hand, and the dark-skinned, cowardly, melancholy southerner, on the other, offered in a long apostrophe to nature in *Les Colonies* (a segment of *The Seconde Semaine*) quickly gained the status of an authoritative statement. It sufficed for 17<sup>th</sup>-century cosmographies merely to refer to this passage as evidence for the nature of nations.

The northern-man is fair, the southern foul;  
 That's white, this black; that smiles and this doth scowl:  
 Th'one's blithe & frolike, th'other dull & froward;  
 Th'one's full of courage, th'other fearfull coward:  
 Th'one's hair is harsh, big, curled, th'others slender;  
 Th'one loveth labour, th'other books doth tender:  
 (*Du Bartas His Diuine Weekes and Workes. Translated by Iosuah  
 Sylvester, 1641*)

The familiarity of this dichotomy and the readiness to use such pointed (and memorable) oppositions of external features including physiognomic traits and correlating them to inner qualities can also be found in John Davies of Hereford, who, in his long poem *Microcosmos. The Discovery of the Little World* (1603) employs the theory of climate as the basis for a similar typology:

The Northern Nations are more moist, and cold,  
 Lesse wicked and deceitfull, faithfull, iust,  
 More ample, strong, courageous, martiall, bold,  
 And, for their bloud is colder, lesse they lust:  
 Then cold bloud being thicke, it follow must  
 They are lesse witty, and more barberous;  
 And for they inwardly are more adust,  
 They meate and drinke deuoure as ravenous,  
 The panch and pot esteeming precious (31).

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<sup>14</sup> On the influential poem by the Huguenot poet see my *Klimattheorie*, 149-171, and references in the preceding chapter of this volume on "The Theory of Climate and the Tableau of Nationalities."



When analyzing this contrasting scheme, no contemporary reader can fail to notice that the dichotomy has as its foundation a comparison of the male inhabitants of those zones: there is no mention of women. A scrutiny of similar contrasts between northerners and southerners in later physiognomic publications confirms this impression, though Lavater does offer illustrations of female profiles and also analyzes them. An anonymous French publication which appeared in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and includes hand-painted etchings (*Physionomies nationales des peuples*, 1815) following a detailed comparison of the outward appearance and the inner beings manifest in the physiognomies of the peoples of Europe also analyzes the Jews and other exotic races. Most significantly the author claims that the difference between the Europeans and foreign nations is only apparent in the males of the nations. He opines that the “moral” (social) and physical factors which shaped the nature of the humans in striking and even surprising ways in the various countries of the world are less effective in the character of women, who are claimed to be more independent of the climate. For this reason fewer differences can be discovered between the “companion of the wild cannibal” in New Zealand or the indigenous people in New Holland (Australia) and the Europeans than between their menfolk.<sup>15</sup>

The implications of this general remark for the evaluation and the hierarchy of groups and individuals need not be considered here. It merely highlights those tendencies which are also apparent in traditional catalogues of types. Only the male inhabitants of the (contrasted) zones are juxtaposed to each other, so that the German translation of Du Bartas’ *Les Colonies* by Tobias Hübner reads as follows,

Der Mann vom Nord ist schön / heißlich der von Mittag,  
Deß einen stärck ist groß / deß andern nichts vermag:

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. “Nous ferons ici une réflexion dont l’expérience confirmera la solidité: c’est que les causes morales et physiques qui modifient, d’une manière si frappante, le caractère des hommes des divers pays de la terre, ont infiniment moins d’empire sur le caractère des femmes. Celui-ci est plus indépendant du climat, du genre de vie et de la nature du gouvernement. On remarque moins de différence entre la compagne du féroce Cannibale de la Nouvelle-Zélande, ou celle du sauvage Indien de la Nouvelle-Hollande et l’Européenne, qu’entre leurs époux.” (*Physionomies Nationales des Peuples*) It is intriguing to note that thus there is no such hierarchical distinction between the females of the various peoples as is the case with the men.

Jener weiß / hat dünn haar: dieser schwartz / hats verwirret:  
 Der ein arbeitet gern: der ander nur studieret.  
 (*La Seconde Sepmaine Du Bartas. Die ander Woche ...*, 327)

The early documents disseminating the doctrine of climate zones and the physiognomic tradition thus share a focus on male individuals, while women remain in the shadows. We encounter a similarly pointed contrast between male representatives of two European nations in James Howell's *Instructions for Forreine Travell* (first published in 1642), a guidebook for the Grand Tour which almost graphically illustrates the differences between the Spaniards and the French in every walk of life.<sup>16</sup>

The efforts of the Baconians, which prompted the foundation of the Royal Society and led to the systematic exploration of those environmental factors which traditionally played a role in the theory of climate, were significant for the adaptation and elaboration of this model of thought. In contrast to the temporarily eclipsed study of physiognomics, the concepts of the theory of climate served as plausible explanatory tools in the natural histories of individual English counties and in the chorographies of the early English Enlightenment.

It is in long didactic poems that the differences between the peoples based on the premises of the theory of climate are explicated and the connection between the immediate environment, the physique and the psyche are presented in striking fashion. This is done most extensively in the long cosmic poem by Richard Blackmore, *The Nature of Man* (1711). In several thousand heroic couplets Blackmore deals with the dependence of the outward appearance of groups of human beings and of the character of nations on the angle of incidence and the intensity of the rays of the sun. In accordance with this assumption the peoples of the extreme zones are incapable of the achievements of the nations of the privileged middle zone.

... Sun burnt Nations of a swarthy Skin  
 Are sully'd o'er with blacker Clouds within.  
 Their spirits suffer by too hot a Ray,  
 And their dry Brain grows dark with too much Day.  
 For while the solar Orb, with Heat intense,

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<sup>16</sup> Howell claims that they differ "outwardly" but also "essentially." On this curious juxtaposition and its sources cf. my discussion in *Klimatheorie*, 289-300.

Concocts their Gold, it dissipates their Sense.

...

The various Nations of these various Lands,  
Opprest with scorching Heats, and Desart-Sands,  
Are, for the most, so ignorant and blind,  
So unreflecting, and so dull of Mind,  
They cast Reproach and Shame on humane Kind (*Nature of Man*,  
4,6).<sup>17</sup>

There is a coalition in this part of the cosmic poem, with its depiction of ‘alterity,’ between a Calvinistic doctrine of predestination and a deterministic scientific model. Even more instructive is Blackmore’s construction of identities on a map of Europe designed from the perspective of the theory of climate.<sup>18</sup> There is a complete parallelism between the geographic location (the latitude of the location) and the physical appearance and character of nations. This is asserted in connection with the French, whose temperament and talents are said to be the fruit of the mild climate. The more southerly position of the Iberian Peninsula is said to determine the physical constitution and the character of the Spanish. The “Iberian race” owes “their lean Bodies and their swarthy Face” to the “solar Rays.” Their “too fiery spirits” have their origin in the brain, and the thirst for pleasure, their amours and the laziness, as well as their notorious brutality towards Native Americans, are, it is claimed, the result of their proximity to “Mauretania’s shore” and to “the cruel Moor” (*Nature of Man*, 42).

A privileged middle position between the French and the Spaniards is ascribed to the Italians whose physical milieu has created preconditions for the cultural fertility of the country, which, in stark contrast to widespread contemporary laments on Italy’s decline, is remarkably positively evaluated (cf. *Nature of Man*, 46-47). The ethnocentrism of the self-confident Whig is, however, fully in evidence when it comes to his own fellow countrymen, who are lauded for their conduct and qualities, claiming the most favorable regional climate for England, Blackmore resolves in this way a question with which French thinkers clearly had fewer problems, as they could more easily place their own country in the privileged

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. also the chapter on “The Theory of Climate and the Tableau of Nationalities” in this volume.

<sup>18</sup> On the full implications of this application of the theory by the future physician to George I, see *Klimatheorie*, 515-540.

middle zone; thus the theory of climate was used to justify the claims to the hegemony of France and her culture.<sup>19</sup>

It cannot be denied that Blackmore fails to postulate exactly defined qualities for the English and to directly relate them to the climate of the island, although he locates England unequivocally in the middle of the privileged middle zone and praises its political and cultural achievements. This conspicuous absence conceals a fundamental problem which is implied in the theory of the power of the physical environment, which provides the basis both for the theory of climate and physiognomics in the construction of what might be called “homogenized alterity.” It is no coincidence that several thinkers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century are unable to discover in the people of their own country that uniformity of character which is otherwise and without hesitation ascribed to foreign nations. David Hume, for instance, highlighted the striking absence of such typicality in the English.<sup>20</sup> In a comparable fashion Lavater mentioned in his *Physiognomische Fragmente* that he was unable to diagnose a national type in Switzerland while he could readily observe typical features in foreign individuals.<sup>21</sup>

The English physician Blackmore, who had confidently asserted typical differences between individuals from various nations, felt compelled to admit the lack of homogeneity in his own nation. Considering the diversity of characters in his own country he attempted in his own periodical *The Lay Monastery* (1713-14) a medical explanation for the wide range of types of human beings in

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<sup>19</sup> On the use French thinkers made of the theory of climate to support French political and cultural hegemony see Gonthier-Louis Fink in his essay “De Bohours à Herder” (1985), 3-62. That there were also German intellectuals ready to use this model of thought (which Fink disputes) is argued in the preceding chapter in this book.

<sup>20</sup> This is granted by David Hume in his essay “Of National Characters;” see F. K. Stanzel, “Schemata und Klischees der Völkerbeschreibung in David Humes Essay ‘Of National Characters’” (1974), 363-383.

<sup>21</sup> Lavater himself remarked on the first pages of the long section on national characters and national physiognomies: “Die Schweizer überhaupt genommen, haben, den Blick der Treuherzigkeit ausgenommen, keinen gemeinsamen physiognomischen Nationalcharakter – sie sind unter sich so verschieden gebildet wie die entferntesten Nationen” (*Physiognomische Fragmente*, Book 4, 269-270). He concedes, however, the possibility that a foreign observer might recognize the general character of a nation more easily than somebody confronted with his fellow citizens. At the same time Lavater notices specific differences in the cantons of his country.

England. He ascribed this phenomenon to the particular role and effect of “Spleen” on the English, the primary cause of the diversity of types.

... let [an Englishman] travel from *Temple-Bar* to *Ludgate*, and he will meet among his own Country-men, the *French Man*, the *Spaniard*, the *Italian* and the *German*; ... in *Four and Twenty Hours the Dispositions and Humours of all the Nations of Europe*. (148)

Restrictions of space preclude a more detailed consideration of the effect of the environment on the literary products of the individual region as was claimed in a lively debate by English critics in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In particular, the liveliness of the English comedy was related to the influence of the climate and the desire of playwrights to counteract negative effects but also their creative response to the particular effect of the spleen was apparently more active in the English nation than elsewhere.<sup>22</sup> For a minority of critics the physical conditions of the milieu also predetermined the different quality of literary creations rooted in these foreign milieus, and so the theory of climate also came to foster a spirit of relativism which was gaining strength in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>23</sup>

While the theory of climate inspired far-reaching speculations in the realm of literary criticism, the widely accepted generalizations based on the climate theory only rarely influenced the depiction of individual representatives of countries or nations in prose fiction. A detailed depiction of the shape of the head, the shifting play of facial features of characters was neither practiced in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century nor in the early Augustan Age. In early prose fiction not only was the setting of the plot originally normally only vaguely adumbrated, but the concrete body of the characters is merely hinted at. Daniel Defoe thus paid a great deal of attention to the skillfully mended garments of Robinson Crusoe on his island, but not to the physiognomy of his Moll Flanders; even Samuel Richardson, who offers minute descriptions of the emotions and shifts of feelings of his characters, leaves it to the imagination of his readers to visualize the face of Pamela or Clarissa.<sup>24</sup> If the facial features of figures in novels are in

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<sup>22</sup> For the relevant claims by William Congreve and John Dennis, see *Klimatheorie*, 486-500.

<sup>23</sup> On the importance of this development see *Klimatheorie*, 580-586.

<sup>24</sup> The relative scarcity of such descriptions in the early novel is stressed by G. Tytler in *Physiognomy in the European Novel. Faces and Fortunes* (1982).

the following decades increasingly employed as an index to their human qualities, then this development is dependent on the rapid evolution of aesthetics in Great Britain and on the Continent. This procedure also mirrors a change in paradigm, resulting in the exact imitation of nature and in the reading of various signs including the human face.<sup>25</sup>

Henry Fielding repeatedly satirized the use of “description” in epic narratives and represented the physiognomic practice as frequently erroneous. The failure to read such signs properly frequently provides an impulse for the plot of his novels in the conflict between appearance and reality. In *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews* the amiable but eccentric and impractical Parson Adams habitually refers to the authorities and the practice of physiognomics, but experiences and bears the consequences of all too frequent erroneous diagnoses.<sup>26</sup> Several of Fielding’s fellow-writers until the 1760s offered ironic perspectives on the art of physiognomics, whose validity was thus questioned. They shared the skepticism which had been given life in the witty satire on the aberrations of abstruse sciences in *The Memoirs of Martinus Scribblerus*, which Swift, Pope and other members of the Scribblers’ Club had jointly composed.<sup>27</sup> Yet, instead of signaling his critical distance, John Arbuthnot accepted the formative influence of the environment and the climate on the nations in the political allegory *The History of John Bull*, which dates back to approximately the same period.

That the 1760s witnessed a shift in the attitude to physiognomy as a practical skill and that it was again taken seriously as an instrument of analysis and explanation, can be seen in Henry Brooke’s educational novel, *The Fool of Quality* (1765-70), where Mr. Fenton,

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<sup>25</sup> No doubt, Lavater’s close study of facial features contributed to this innovation. Cf. Tytler, 166-207.

<sup>26</sup> Parson Adams is repeatedly disconcerted by his own failure to read the facial features of his contacts correctly, for instance, that of a squire in whose face he had believed to see signs of Christian mercy. As an erudite reader of Cicero, Adams also refers to the anecdote about the mistaken assessment of Socrates by an Egyptian, who had misread the face of the philosopher as indicating a character who was “stupid and thick witted” and “addicted to women.”

<sup>27</sup> The errors committed by those trusting in physiognomy are illustrated by the behavior of Cornelius, the father of the eponymous figure Martinus, cf. *Memoirs*, ed. C. K. Miller (1988), 132.

the hero's mentor, extensively assesses the diagnostic art of physiognomy. In the following decades the practice of physiognomy was, after the pioneering achievement of Tobias Smollett, employed for the identification of national types, which increasingly came to serve as literary subjects in fiction. The depiction and decoding of the sentimental heroine, the Gothic villain and, later, of the Byronic hero, can only be comprehended against the background of the re-discovery of the venerable science of physiognomy or pathognomy.<sup>28</sup>

The growing interest in the science of anthropology and the evolution of the psychology of association, no doubt, contributed to the changes in the portrayal of the cast of characters in fiction, a phenomenon enhanced by the prompt reception of Lavater's essays on physiognomy in the English-speaking world.<sup>29</sup>

Limitations of space preclude an investigation of the extent to which physiognomics was received in North America and similarly inspired authors there. There was scope for physiognomic practice in the American sequels of the political allegory linked to John Bull,<sup>30</sup> and the concept was regularly employed also in the historical novels produced in the wake of Walter Scott. In this type of text an authorial voice introduces many characters explicitly labeled as representative and stresses the link between their outward appearance and their inner nature. In Walter Scott's novels various portraits of characters explicitly marked as national physiognomies may be found, and the reader encounters typical variants of the Native American in James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, for instance, his detailed depiction of Hard Heart in *The Prairie*, or of Magua in *The Last of the Mohicans*.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The evolution of these types and their typical facial and physical features are examined by John Graham in "Character, Description and Meaning in the English Romantic Novel" in his own collection on *Lavater's Essays on Physiognomy* (1979). See also the essays in *Physiognomie und Pathognomie*, ed. W. Groddek and U. Stadler (1994) about the connections between these two pseudo-sciences.

<sup>29</sup> The impact of Lavater's ideas can be gauged when considering the fact that within one generation five different translations into English appeared in twenty editions. That Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* contains evidence for the successful scrutiny of faces of the main figures should be noted, while other texts belonging to the tradition of the Gothic novel, such as Matthew Gregory Lewis' *The Monk*, show that individuals can successfully conceal their intention and character.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. G. E. Hastings, "John Bull and His American Descendants" (1929), 40-68.

<sup>31</sup> Both Walter Scott and James Fenimore Cooper make their authorial narrators assess the facial features of their characters in tune with Lavater's approach. While Cooper's

John Graham in his brief sketch on the impact of Lavater in American literature rightly observes that the literary fashion to borrow from the Swiss' physiognomics was continued even after phrenology became popular. Soon after 1830 George H. Calvert disseminated the ideas of Franz Joseph Gall in America,<sup>32</sup> which he had come to know during his extensive European travels. Later, Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman and Mark Twain repeatedly drew on this model of thought, though the fashion of phrenology did not totally eclipse physiognomics. Nathaniel Hawthorne's debt to its premises cannot be overlooked as he illustrates in detail the transformation of the outward appearance of Roger Chillingworth, a scholar corrupted by his desire for revenge. His portrait bears out the axiom of characterization related to physiognomy that the outward appearance mirrors the inner being and that the degradation of the soul shapes the physical aspect even to the facial features.<sup>33</sup>

That traditional patterns of national types based on the theory of climate and interpreted according to physiognomics ceased to function as a basis for ordering reality is shown in an essay written by an American correspondent in Europe and published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in the late 1860s. There the typological significance of foreign faces is again stressed, but this diversity in physiognomies and talents is now also found abroad, whilst in the past erstwhile both experts on physiognomy and the theory of climate had conceded such diversity only to the home region. The essay in *Atlantic Monthly* in 1868 seems to diagnose on an empirical basis a contrast between the generally similar faces of young Americans, shaped and molded by material goods and other factors of modernity resulting in a degree of homogeneity, on the one hand, and Europeans, who had remained individuals in their outward appearance, on the other. The great painters after the Renaissance, the author claims, had immortalized them in portraits that were incomparably beautiful but also

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debt to this approach is fairly familiar, critics seem so far to have failed to focus on the definite physiognomic traits of characters in Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland*, where the facial features of the stranger, who turns out to be Carvin, leave an indelible impression on the narrator at first sight and continue to haunt the central female character, Clara (cf. ed. 1991, chapter 6, 60-61).

<sup>32</sup> After his studies in Germany Calvert included among his important translations also Gall's phrenological work. See *Illustrations of Phrenology* (1832).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. T. Stoehr, "Physiognomy and Phrenology in Hawthorne" (1974), 355-400. Stoehr's essay focuses especially on *The House of the Seven Gables*.



disgustingly ugly, at any rate contrasting and diverse in nature. With this emotionally colored inversion of a traditional attitude the author expresses the widespread admiration for European culture and history:

In our country, which is the most perfect result of modern ideas, the uniformity of life, and consequent uniformity of faces, is more apparent than in continental Europe. ... On the Continent you will meet with a vast variety of physiognomics, individual, suggestive, and often full of charm ... far better ... than one of the million duplicates of Young America, whose face is bare of poetry, romance, and sentiment (Eugene Benson, "Foreign Faces," 545-46).

A new attitude to "alterity" seems to be manifest here, one which is emancipated from traditional practices of physiognomy, while the theory of climate continued to be employed in the period, partly in collaboration with the newly developed theory of races. It found its way into historical and political discourse and was to play a major role in the notions expressed by Anglophone historians on both sides of the Atlantic, when they came to use this theory as a justification for their imperialism until this model was also discredited in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Cf., for instance, H. T. Buckle, *History of Civilization in England* (1864), and Robert Haliburton, *The Men of the North and Their Place in History* (1869). On the coalition between racial theory and the theory of climate, cf. David Levin, *History as Romantic Art* (1959), and the following chapter on "The Theory of Climate in North American Texts."

## Chapter 4: The Theory of Climate in North American Texts since 1776

Few concepts seem to have engendered a livelier discussion in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe than the notion of the determining power of the environment on groups of individuals and nations. The age was clearly preoccupied with the exploration of those factors which produce the variations in universal human nature and could account for the varieties of national character. In the Enlightenment, with its keen desire for systematic knowledge, the 'theory of climate' appeared to quite a few observers as an ideal, or at least a sufficiently plausible model to account for the differences in the institutions and manners, the talents and morals of the various nations both in Europe and elsewhere. This traditional model of thought, which had been employed in its refined, updated, pseudoscientific form in Britain, e.g. by virtuosi and members of the Royal Society in their investigations, consequently appeared in numerous travelogues accounting for the specific character of countries like the Netherlands, Denmark or Italy. It also began to figure prominently in assessments of the culture of exotic peoples, like the Persians etc. The theory, which had had its roots in ancient medical treatises like Hippocrates' *De aëre, aquis et locis* and Galen's *Quod animi mores*, had already appealed to humanists and Renaissance thinkers like Jean Bodin, who developed the theory of climate into a relatively flexible tool suitable to explain the alleged characteristics of various peoples both in the past and in the present, and to assess the correctness of historical reports on these nations and their behavior in conflict. This early version of the environmental theory had also formed the basis for typologies of temperaments and for the mapping of intellectual talents in the world in 16<sup>th</sup>-century psychological handbooks.<sup>1</sup> Closely linked to the theory of humors, the climatic hypothesis had become widely accepted and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Juan Huarte's attempt to equate nations with constitutional types, cf. Zacharasiewicz, *Die Klimatheorie in der englischen Literatur und Literaturkritik von der Mitte des 16. bis zum frühen 18. Jahrhundert* (1977), 57-73.

had supported the tabulation of the supposed qualities of nations placed according to a zonal model in the North and South and in the middle zone. In spite of some inconsistencies and contradictions, the model had clearly captured the imagination of poets like the Huguenot Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas:

L'homme du Nor[d] est beau, celui du Midi laid:  
L'vn blanc, l'autre tanné; l'vn fort, l'autre foible.<sup>2</sup>

This memorable formulation of the theory stuck in the minds of ordinary readers and also of some 17<sup>th</sup>-century compilers of cosmographies, who through the authority of the poet felt relieved of the need to provide detailed evidence for the justness of their assumptions.

The dramatically increased awareness of the diversity of customs and habits, which stimulated the emergence of early anthropological and ethnological studies, and provided the basis for new 'human sciences,' prompted a comparative consideration of these phenomena. To not only a few did the theory of climate seem to furnish a particularly welcome explanation and to some characters inclined like "My Father" in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* may even have appeared as a "Northwest passage to the intellectual world." (Vol. 1, 484)

While the use of various new instruments (like the thermometer) facilitated exact and detailed observation of physical factors and increasingly supplied data for comparison (which were eventually to transcend the simple basic climatic model), the seeming refinement of the pseudo-scientific model fostered its omnipresence and general appreciation. It was especially dear to French commentators whose liking for the zonal model of the theory of climate is not unrelated to the ease with which one could accommodate the French nation in the privileged middle zone of the pattern. Considering the northerly position of their country, quite a few British writers, perhaps unexpectedly, often practicing physicians who 'doubled' as men of letters, like John Arbuthnot and Richard

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted from an early bilingual edition: Du Bartas, *Foure Bookes of Du Bartas* (1637) 128 [left column].

Blackmore, eagerly championed the theory.<sup>3</sup> They and later writers like Oliver Goldsmith, who as an essayist and compiler of natural histories was a devotee of this system, did much to popularize this notion in colonial America.

Colonial writers would have drawn on this theory even more readily if they had not been on the defensive against negative inferences drawn for the New World from the unfavorable climate alleged by French naturalists. Though late 18<sup>th</sup>-century American writers could not fail to become involved in the debate over environmental forces and their potential impact, especially on the nature of the African Americans and the American natives, they were probably more hesitant to include it on their own accord in independent reflections on the character of white settlers in the regions of the New World. We shall see that it was in connection with a conflicting, maybe incompatible model of thought that the theory of climate offered itself as a major support for the supposed characteristics of nations.

Montesquieu's magisterial exposition of the environmental ideology, especially in Book 14 of his *De l'esprit des lois*, had only touched upon the connection between the primitive state of the aborigines in the basically "hot and moist" climate of the New World, but his fellow-countryman Buffon in his comprehensive *Histoire Naturelle* had originally postulated a connection between the alleged "coldness" and "dampness" of the unhealthy American climate and the degeneration of humans as well as plant and animal species there.<sup>4</sup>

This notion was elaborated upon in Cornelius de Pauw's *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains* in the 1760s.<sup>5</sup>

Abbé Raynal's immensely popular *History of the East and West Indies* similarly regarded the American climate as damp and

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<sup>3</sup> For a detailed consideration of the English adaptation of the theory of climate see the chapter on "Foreign Faces" in this volume.

<sup>4</sup> Comte de Buffon, *Histoire Naturelle* (1749-88). Buffon was to revise and recant it only much later following Benjamin Franklin's prolonged efforts to make him abandon this prejudice.

<sup>5</sup> Berlin 1768. There the image deteriorated further and negative effects of the American climate even on the European settlers were maintained and life-threatening beasts and vermin were casually linked to the climate. Cf. also H. S. Commager & E. Giordanetti, *Was America A Mistake?* (1967).

“miasmatic,” which called for the active cultivation by colonists;<sup>6</sup> they, however, appear as poor exiles in a desolate and hideous country even in mid-18<sup>th</sup>-century British texts, e.g. in *The Deserted Village* (1770) by Oliver Goldsmith.<sup>7</sup>

A similar image is furnished in William Robertson’s *History of America* (1777), which dwells on the stagnation of the air in the American woods, the rankness of the vegetation, the distempers natural to the climate and the maladies rampant in this world, which naturally produced only “smaller and less robust animals,” a misconception which Thomas Jefferson was in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787) at pains to disprove by meticulous statistical evidence.<sup>8</sup>

In the face of the prejudices disseminated by French and also some British writers, Jefferson’s application of the zonal climate theory in a letter to the Marquis de Chastellux in 1785 looks like a continuation of his attempted refutation of the negative inferences drawn from the American climate by the French thinkers:

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. the English translation of Abbé Raynal, *A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East und West Indies*, 1783.

<sup>7</sup> The destructive force of the elements and the dangers caused by beasts of prey and snakes appear in Goldsmith’s poem as manifestations of the extremely inhospitable milieu.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. especially Query VI. For the question of degeneracy cf. the extensive discussion in Myra Jehlen’s presentation of “The Dispute of the New World” in her section of the first volume of the *Cambridge History of American Literature*, vol. I (1590 - 1820), ed. Sacvan Bercovitch (1994) esp. 113-125.

In the North they are	In the South they are
cool	fiery
sober	Voluptuary [sic]
laborious	indolent
persevering	unsteady
independent [sic]	independant [sic]
jealous of their own liberties, and just to those of others	zealous for their own liberties, but trampling on those of others
interested	generous
chicaning	candid
superstitious and hypocritical in their religion	without attachment or pretentions to any religion but that of their heart. <sup>9</sup>

A polymath like Jefferson was probably intimately familiar with the long tradition of the venerable climatic hypothesis and with the discussion going on in Europe, and especially in Scotland, about the predominance of “physical,” (that is environmental) or “moral” causes in the molding of national characters. Jefferson was possibly even acquainted with the charts based on Jean Bodin’s intricate presentation of the climate theory by Bodin’s popularizer Pierre Charron in *De la Sagesse*. Bodin had offered such a scheme in *Methodus* and in *Les Six livres de la Republique*, standard texts for students of law since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Jefferson may have known Bodin’s treatises or the tabulation of the climate theory furnished by Pierre Charron.

	Northerne people are	Middle are	Southern are
In their bodies	High and great, phlegmaticke, sanguin white and yellow, sociable, the voyce strong, the skin soft and	Indifferent and	Little, melancholicke, cold and dry, blacke. Solitary, the voyce shrill, the skin hard, with little haire, and curled, abstinent,

<sup>9</sup> *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. VIII (1953), 468.

	hairie, great eaters and drinkers, puissant.	temperate in all those things as neuters, or partakers a little of extremities &	feeble
Spirit	Heavy, obtuse, stupid, sottish, facill, light inconstant	Participating most of that region to which they are nearest neighbours.	Ingenious, wise, subtle, opinatiue.
Religion	Little religious and deuout		Superstitious, contemplative.
Manners	Warriers, valiant, painfull, chast, free from iealousie, cruell and inhumane		No warriers, idle, unchaste, iealous, cruell, and inhumane. <sup>10</sup>

In addition, he may have been conversant with the memorable versification of the dichotomy between northerners and southerners in the Biblical ‘epics,’ or rather, ‘cosmic poems’ of the Huguenot poet Du Bartas (*La première semaine* and *La seconde semaine*).<sup>11</sup> Jefferson’s lengthy entries in his early *Commonplace Book* taken from Montesquieu, of course, establish beyond doubt his familiarity with the more recent systematic elaboration of the theory in *De l’esprit des lois*, which was widely used in colonial and early federal America and which stood on the shelves of many private and public libraries.<sup>12</sup> Jefferson’s relatively brief scheme does not betray any direct debt to the most ambitious contemporary British demonstration of the climate theory in William Falconer’s *Remarks on the Influence of Climate*<sup>13</sup> (1781). Yet one cannot help speculating whether Jefferson was not familiar with this most recent and most comprehensive exposition of the theory, or whether he was, indeed, conversant with the painstakingly detailed account of the causal links between the quality of the air and that of the soil, the amount of precipitation etc. in

<sup>10</sup> Charron, *Of Wisdome Three Bookes* [*De la Sagesse livres trois*, Bordeaux, 1601], transl. Samson Lennard, (1608) 164.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Zacharasiewicz, *Klimatheorie* 150-166.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. also Paul Merrill Spurlin, *Montesquieu in America, 1760-1801* (1940) 153-154.

<sup>13</sup> It is true, Jefferson’s *Commonplace Book* (cf. esp. 270, 280-281), does not contain any excerpts from this or earlier ‘climatologists,’ but the absence of such entries does not reduce the plausibility of such an assumption.

various countries and the structure and institutions of the respective society.

It is also plausible to assume that Jefferson was conscious of the lively debate over the relative importance of physical or moral causes, conducted especially in Scotland, where Falconer had been a student, and which at that time (the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century) was the home and meeting place for some of the leading minds of Europe (who engaged in the debates and critical analyses which ushered in the rise of the human sciences). As is well known, David Hume and various members of the Select Society in Edinburgh denied the decisive influence of physical factors and Montesquieu's argument that the temperature had a direct impact on the fibers in the body and hence on physical and mental activity and potential achievement. Jefferson may also have known that other Scots like James Dunbar tried to mediate between the two extreme positions held by Montesquieu and Hume, attempting a reconciliation between the two beliefs, by arguing that the two sources of influence were complementary, not opposed.

When in the letter to Chastellux, Jefferson juxtaposed "cool" Northerners and "fiery" Southerners, the sober, laborious and independent Northerners and the voluptuary and indolent Southerners in the New World, he basically clung to the pattern current since Bodin's treatises. In positing polar opposites in the field of religion, Jefferson seems, however, to have had recourse to social reality and, perhaps, to have allowed some personal bias to come in, for he modifies the traditional dichotomy by attributing "hypocrisy" to "Northerners" and by discovering "no pretensions to any religion but that of the heart" in the South of the new nation. In thus deviating from the European zonal model and in further ascribing "generosity" and candor to the Southerners, not normally associated with the inhabitants of the southern zone, he was conceivably "original" and furnished some characteristics later linked with the image and code of the Cavalier, features which figured prominently in William Wirt's later construction of the legendary aristocratic Southerner. Yet in establishing a direct gradation in moving from the North to the South, and in finding the golden mean in the middle states, especially in Pennsylvania, Jefferson's brief exposition again harks back to Bodin's zonal model.



One need not underscore the fact that Jefferson here ignored the natives and restricted his comments to the white settlers. Elsewhere, of course, as for instance in his defense of the Indians he, like all early ethnologists clinging to the monogenetic theory, repeatedly referred to environmental forces. Nevertheless his negative assessment of the potential of the Negroes played down the importance of these factors and appealed instead to nature and inherited traits.

That the whole issue of environmental influence continued to hold the attention of early American intellectuals is evident in essays and orations by the prominent American physician Benjamin Rush. Many authentic accounts<sup>14</sup> and numerous fictitious travel letters composed in the decades after political independence had been won, when American cultural critics and *litterati* were increasingly concerned with distinguishing between their own national culture and its European and especially British antecedents, similarly allude to climatic factors. Charles Ingersoll's fictitious *Inchiquin: The Jesuit's Letters* (1810), which contains a long, epistolary disquisition on national characters bearing the stamp of David Hume's famous essay, is a case in point and documents the role the theory of climate played in accounting for the apparent or assumed persistence of physical and mental qualities of nations.<sup>15</sup>

*The Letters of the Eastern States* (1821) by William Tudor, the pioneer American essayist and first editor of *The North American Review*, which unexpectedly focus on the "genius, character and manners of the inhabitants of New England," (378) e.g. instructively refer to the unchanged characteristics of the French since the days of Julian Apostata, thus, like earlier commentators, implicitly attributing

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<sup>14</sup> Drawing on the storehouse of transatlantic generalizations on national character Benjamin Franklin's sometime protégé Elkanah Watson, according to Foster Rhea Dulles "the first tourist," thus speculated about the possible and desirable fusion of "American" characteristics shared with the mother country and the chief European ally, France, and envisaged for his nation a "happy compound of national character and manners, yet to be modeled" to be achieved through a combination of British and French traits. *Men and Times of the Revolution; or, Memoirs of Elkanah Watson* (1856) 88. Cf. F. R. Dulles, *Americans Abroad. Two Centuries of European Travel* (1964) 11-16, on this first "tourist" from America.

<sup>15</sup> *Inchiquin* 113-117. Ingersoll's *Inchiquin* belongs to the tradition of the *Lettres Persanes*, that is fiction and essays employing the (potentially satirical) perspective of a foreign observer on one's own country, and observations of Americans abroad, e.g. in London and England, evinced the topicality of the debate over national character, in which the notion of the environmental forces shaping it figured prominently.

the identity of the properties of the modern French and the ancient Gauls to the determining power of the climate. That the direct application of the zonal climatic model to America, however, posed considerable difficulties is evident from a note inserted by Tudor in his "Address Delivered to the Phi Beta Kappa Society," which on the basis of his experience in Europe admitted the remarkable contrasts (and extremes) in the climate in the middle and northern parts of the United States absent in Europe, and making "France and Germany more temperate than the United States."<sup>16</sup>

The need to modify the zonal pattern conspicuous on a "climate" map of European nations and countries was underlined twenty years later in the first comprehensive scientific investigation of *The Climate of the United States and its Endemic Influences* (1842) by Dr. Samuel Forry.<sup>17</sup> Forry allows himself only a glance at the evidence suggesting the need apropos the US to shift the boundaries of the middle zone most favorable to "the development of the active powers of man" and accomodating the nations "most distinguished for knowledge and civilization" (21). Isothermal lines corroborate, we are told, a relocation of these boundaries from latitudes 40° and 60° to the 32<sup>nd</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> parallels. The presence of a seasonal cycle is regarded as favorable to the achievements of man. The axiom of the climatic theory is underscored in the reference to the molding, "plastic hand" (22) of climate in each locality: "climate modifies the whole nature of man" (24).

Significantly, Forry does not ignore the rival concept potentially accounting for difference, the racial model. Not surprisingly, as an Antebellum scientist faced and grappling with the "peculiar institution" of slavery, he seems inclined to attribute the diversity of human properties and levels of achievement to the presence of five varieties of human nature, the five races.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Spiller, ed., *The American Literary Revolution, 1783-1837*, 135. Tudor noted that Boston "is in the same latitude with Rome, the cold in winter is occasionally as intense and the snow as deep as at Stockholm and St. Peterburgh," (134) but also remarked that it was "necessary to cross the Alps to find the same bright and beautiful atmosphere that surrounds us." (135)

<sup>17</sup> The carefully documented meteorological observations arrived at by the Medical Department of the United States' Army with instruments imported from Europe focus on the distribution and incidence of illnesses etc.

<sup>18</sup> There is also a significant nod in the direction of the stereotype of the military superiority of the more northerly nations, a topic we shall return to later, and an

Forry's detailed observations and cautious inferences appeared two generations after Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecoeur's more straightforward remarks on regional variants of the 'homo Americanus,' in which three regions were selected for detailed comment. The portraits of their inhabitants were clearly related to the basic premise of the intimate and intricate connection between the soil and air of a region and the manners of its inhabitants. This *locus classicus* in American intellectual history is too well known to call for detailed comment, but the environmental presuppositions so clearly visible in Letter 3, and the connection between physical and moral causes deserve a brief quotation:

Men are like plants; the goodness and flavour of the fruit proceeds from the peculiar soil and exposition in which they grow. We are nothing but what we derive from the air we breathe, the climate we inhabit, the government we obey, the system of religion we profess, and the nature of our employment.(45)<sup>19</sup>

While regional differences in the new nation invited a flexible environmental explanation, which was in the future to bolster the juxtaposition between Yankee and Cavalier, the need to refute the negative image of the milieu and its consequences disseminated by French naturalists, made it impractical for American essayists to claim a privileged position for their own country and imitate, for example, the strategy employed by the Augustan physician and poet Richard Blackmore in his didactic cosmic poem *The Nature of Man* (1711). The significant coalition of pseudo-scientific and religious arguments fused in Blackmore's self-complacent praise of the privileged location of (Augustan) Britain<sup>20</sup> found no counterpart in the New World, not even in New England. The combination of deterministic climatic thought and Calvinistic tenets on the predestined role of a people favored by God, who also granted them the advantages of a golden mean, ensuring their physical, intellectual and moral superiority, was

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allusion to the imminent conflict between the United States and Mexico, the outcome of which seemed predictable

<sup>19</sup> The French antecedents of Crèvecoeur's ideas (among the 'Physiocrats') similarly are too well established to need further explication.

<sup>20</sup> For an investigation of Blackmore's biased description of European national characters in conformity with the climate of their countries see the preceding chapter "Foreign Faces" in this volume.

too difficult to copy and apply to America. The sheer expanse and lack of homogeneity on the continent clearly limited the operational value of the climatic hypothesis as a tool to account for the national manners and morals of Americans. While the model of thought seems thus to have been less suitable for the explanation of political and social differences in the New World, components of the theory of climate surfaced in incidental comments in travelogues, both those rendering journeys in Europe and encounters with European nations, and in treatises dealing with various American phenomena. Among them the pioneer ethnological essays by Albert Gallatin published in the 1830s, hold a special place, as he relied on a more sophisticated form of environmentalism when recording and explaining the diverse cultures of Indian nations. He abstained, in particular, from positing the process of degeneration among the native tribes, which several French philosophers and ethnographers had traced to negative environmental forces.<sup>21</sup>

A new phase in the history of the climatic model was reached (and this takes us to a particularly relevant sphere in which the theory was indeed utilized in 19<sup>th</sup>-century America) with the appearance and reception of Mme de Staël's *De la littérature considérée* published in 1800, and republished in an English translation, under the title *The Influence of Literature on Society*, in America in 1813. It has been regarded as a résumé of 18<sup>th</sup>-century notions of environmental factors and their application to cultural and literary phenomena.<sup>22</sup>

The occasional inclusion of various manifestations of national cultures in the broad tradition of the climatic hypothesis since the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries had 80 years before culminated in Abbé DuBos' *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*, which also tried to explain the vicissitudes in the culture of individual countries by

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. Robert E. Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology* (1986) esp. 16-54. This idea, which had also colored passages in Crèvecoeur's letters (esp. about the people on the frontier), had been given much space in C. F. Volney's *A View of the Soil und Climate of the United States of America* (1804), which Charles Brockden Brown had translated and accompanied with critical footnotes trying to refute the prejudices and negative inferences of the widely travelled French scholar and philosopher.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. the thesis written by Frances Willard Hadley, "The Theory of Milieu in English Criticism from 1600 to 1801" (1925).

referring to assumed changes in the climate.<sup>23</sup> In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century a lively debate on the characteristic productions of the English temperament and genius in drama, at least partly regarded as dependent on the physical milieu, had already been generated and a comparative consideration of diverse national standards of taste became an important critical issue in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In a number of critical essays the climate theory furnished a basis for relativism and for various cosmopolitan attempts in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to understand the character of Eastern literature as the products of an Oriental genius. It also provided arguments for the gradually recognized creative talent among northern nations, especially after the 1760s when James Macpherson's famous *Fragments Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* captured the imagination of men-of-letters everywhere. The relativist trend fostered by the theory of climate reached its climax in Mme de Staël's juxtaposition of Oriental and northern literatures and in her whole-hearted espousal of Ossianic literature with its "melancholy brooding" and "mystic character" allegedly shaped by the cloudy skies and frequent storms on the wastes of the moorland. In her other seminal work, *De l'Allemagne*, Mme de Staël was to shift her attention from the physical aspects to social and intellectual phenomena, but the notion of the northern spirit in the culture of Germany was a formative element in her book at the centre of the debate about the rise of cultural nationalism in America.

Traces of Mme de Staël's environmentalist ideas furnished in *On Literature*, which is based on the rationalist hermeneutics of the Enlightenment, and in *On Germany*, in which the "intuitively informed understanding of the romantics" is given expression, can be found in many of the twenty-odd essays referring to her work before 1837.<sup>24</sup> Echoes of her ideas resound throughout Edward Everett's 1824 oration "On the peculiar motives to intellectual exertion in America." No doubt, the thirty-year-old Harvard Professor of Ancient Greek was familiar with the debate on climatic influences, which half a century before had permeated the discussion of the uniquely favorable environmental forces which presumably accounted for the

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<sup>23</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this text see the chapter on "The Theory of Climate and the Tableau of Nationalities" in this volume.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Kurt Mueller-Vollmer, "Staël's *Germany* and the Beginnings of an American National Literature," *Germaine de Staël: Crossing the Borders* (1991) 140-158.

originality and perfection of the Homeric epics.<sup>25</sup> Everett is equally conscious of the more recent debate on the “springs of national character” initiated by Herder and August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel, and raises the question as to which reasons can explain the different development of nations originally very similar.<sup>26</sup>

The axioms of the influence of external causes upon the character of a nation and of the impact of natural scenery and climate upon “the prevailing tenor of poetic composition” in national literatures were also advanced a few years later by young Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who while arguing for an indigenous American literature freed from mere imitation, especially of problematical “modern English poetry,” illustrates the shaping power of the environment.<sup>27</sup> He cites the beautiful descriptions of morning and evening, in which “the English Poets excel those of the South of Europe,” a fact which may be traced “to the long morning and evening twilight of a northern climate.” Conversely, Longfellow, having resided in Mediterranean countries during his first Grand Tour, asserts the interdependence between the high quality of pastoral poetry in Romance cultures (Italy, Spain, Portugal) and the “love of indolence and [...] warm imagination” of those peoples, which are “the effect of a soft voluptuous climate.”

The application of the seminal ideas associated with Herder, the Schlegels and Mme de Staël concerning the distinct national character which determines its supreme manifestation in the respective national literature, is again conspicuous twelve years later in a publication reviewed and endorsed by William Gilmore Simms under the title “Americanism in Literature.”<sup>28</sup> It had been enunciated at one of the regular academic rituals in Antebellum America, in an oration delivered by Alexander Meek of Alabama in Athens, Georgia. The expected rhetorical emphasis on national identity and national mission – in a period in which the concept of “manifest destiny” was first

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Thomas Blackwell, *An Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer* (1735), and Robert Wood, *Essay on the Original Genius of Homer* (1769).

<sup>26</sup> Everett touches upon the physical factors and conditions which affect the production of great literature before elaborating on the promising material to be found in the democratic country rapidly expanding towards the West. Cf. Spiller, ed. *The American Literary Revolution*, 286-287.

<sup>27</sup> Longfellow, Review of Sidney’s “Defense of Poetry”, rpt. Ruland, ed., *The Native Muse*, vol. 1, 240-260, esp. 252-256.

<sup>28</sup> *Views and Reviews in American Literature, History and Fiction* (rpt. 1962) 9.

formulated – seems easily compatible with granting the status of masterpieces to a variety of European texts. Orator and reviewer concur in the assumption that the genius of the American people must similarly be fashioned “by its skies, and by those natural objects which familiarly address themselves to the senses from boyhood, and colour the fancies, and urge the thoughts, and shape the growing affections of the child [...]” (19). This amended version of the environmental theory, which shows the impact of the association psychology of Archibald Alison, leads to the renewed affirmation of the theory of climate, with a deliberate glance back to the debate involving Hume and Montesquieu about the physical factors in the formation of literature and high art. “The sky of Attica would make a Boeotian a poet,” the orator asserts,

In all the higher productions of mind, ancient and modern, we can easily recognize the influence of the climate and natural objects among which they were developed. The sunsets of Italy coloured the songs of Tasso and Petrarch; the vine-embowered fields of beautiful France are visible in all the pictures of Rousseau and La Martine; you may hear the solemn rustling of the Hartz forest, and the shrill horn of the wild huntsman throughout the creations of Schiller and Goethe; the sweet streamlets and sunny lakes of England smile upon you from the graceful verses of Spenser and Wordsworth; and the mist-robed hills of Scotland loom out in magnificence through the pages of Ossian, and the loftier visions of Marmion and Waverly. (19)

This unambiguous profession of belief in the climate theory should be seen against the background of numerous texts in which the ramifications of the model are applied or find expression, as for example in James Fenimore Cooper’s fiction, where the environmental theory is repeatedly alluded to in connection with the natives.<sup>29</sup>

The persistence of stereotypes closely linked with the climatic hypothesis is later conspicuous in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s historical novel *Agnes of Sorrento* (1862), where the arsenal of clichés furnishes ammunition for authorial observations on “the climate of Southern Italy and its gorgeous scenery” which are “more favourable to voluptuous ecstasy than to the severe and grave warfare of the true Christian soldier.”

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Harry Hayden Clark’s demonstration in “James Fenimore Cooper and Science,” *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Art and Letters* 48/49 (1959).

Here [...] is the lotus-eater's paradise; the purple skies, the enchanted shores [...] the soothing gales [...] all conspired to melt the energy of the will, and to make existence either a half-doze of dreamy apathy or an awaking of mad delirium. (156)

The corrupting influence of “dreamy, voluptuous Southern Italy” becomes manifest in this novel, which shares with another important branch of literature of the Antebellum Period timeworn prejudices against the nations of the South.

David Levin has shown in his erudite study of *History as Romantic Art* how pioneer American historiographers<sup>30</sup> molded their voluminous studies on the historical romances in the sense that they tried to make history accessible to the ordinary reader by portraying the heroes of history as “representative men.” They depicted them as manifestations of the genius of the individual nations involved in historical conflict and for that purpose fell back on national, and more extensively on racial clichés. In so doing they fused and combined two fundamentally diverse and ultimately hardly compatible notions, and expressed their unqualified preference for the northern nations and their role in history. They exalted Teutonic peoples and dismissed southerners and antiprogressive “vanishing races.” In extolling the “germ of liberty” disseminated by the Gothic tribes and peoples and their successors, who regularly defeated the weak, effeminate and often corrupt nations of the south, American historiographers could, of course, draw on a tradition well established by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was due to the efforts of northern antiquaries and the appeal of their claims to early essayists like William Temple in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and to poets like James Thomson in his long poem *Liberty* that a (Whiggish) historiographical discourse emerged in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Britain privileging northern and Gothic virtues.

It deserves to be mentioned that the bias of these American historiographers ran counter to the basic premises of Henry Thomas Buckle. His (controversial) *History of Civilization in England* in its

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<sup>30</sup> George Bancroft in his *History of the United States* (1834-74), who was in many respects greatly indebted to Mme de Staël, Francis Parkman, the author of the *History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac* (1851) and a series of historical studies of the struggle of the French and English for colonial America, and John Lothrop Motley in his *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* (1856), and later *The History of the United Netherlands* (1860-68).



bold attempt at establishing a firm scientific basis for historiography and search for immutable laws, postulated that the growth and development of civilization in various countries depended on the interrelated factors climate, food, production, population and wealth. In doing so he explicitly dispensed with the other, more characteristic explanatory scheme in 19<sup>th</sup>-century thought, the idea that inherited characteristics shape the fortunes of the various races as argued by Comte Joseph Gobineau in his *Essay sur l'inégalité des races*.

That the practice of American historiographers was not exceptional is brought home to us by a consideration of texts composed in Canada in the first decades after the Confederation and the establishment of the Dominion north of the forty-ninth parallel. Members of the “Canada First Movement” made a virtue of necessity and resuscitated the climatic hypothesis in order to establish a rallying point and support an autostereotype with arguments derived from the theory of climate. Like some 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century British authors grappling with the unfavorable implications of the zonal model resulting from the northerly situation of their country, these Canadians deduced entirely positive effects from the coldness of the climate in Canada. Robert Haliburton, in particular, in *The Men of the North and Their Place in History* (1869) drew on segments of the climatic novel by claiming that the cold land would invigorate the free and dominant race established there. He inferred from the geographical location an immense increase in vigor and physical, moral and mental agility and energy. His contention presented with all the rhetoric of patriotic excitement also drew – it should be noted – on the racial theory, as he claimed that the settlers of the new dominion were all descendants of northern races of Europe, whose ‘gene pool’ would thus be further improved by the “creative force” of the environment, which would mingle and blend them together to form a new nation(ality) of “Northmen.” Haliburton can, indeed, anticipate a bright, great future for these people in Canada, which might properly be renamed Norland.

Carl Berger’s article on “The True North, Strong and Free” (1966) has collected further evidence for the assumption among Canadians late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the climate was one of the most valuable assets of their country, with Charles R. Tuttle in a popular *History of the Dominion of Canada* (1877-79) asserting that a hardy human race would be shaped by the natural features of the country.

Similarly Canadian ministers of the Methodist denomination on visits to the United States, for example, on the occasion to the centennial exhibition in 1876, were induced to generalize on the lax morals of Latin races to be deduced from their paintings, while those by northerners were usually “chaste and modest.” But the most frequently alluded to attribute of the Canadians associated with their cold environment was their desire for liberty, which is contrasted with the degeneracy and effeminacy of southerners. The martial spirit, which American historiographers in their discourse had similarly located in the north, was to bolster the role of the Dominion in the Empire and later to function in the Canadian support of British Imperialism.

The allegedly favorable fusion of racial, national and climatic factors is a salient feature of the ideology discernible in William H. Hingston’s *The Climate of Canada and its Relation to Life and Health* (1884), which in its assertions is significantly less reticent than the more tentative remarks of his American colleague, Forry, forty years previously.

These notions and models of thought found wide acceptance in Canada, and during the last 140 years since Confederation, Canadian society and culture has again and again been construed as typically ‘northern’. In fact, several comprehensive studies and a number of significant books of fiction have appeared, which, while sometimes disagreeing on details, all regard Canadian culture as shaped by and expressive of this fundamental notion.<sup>31</sup> Canada has integrated this idea though it should be observed that since those early nationalist critics in the St. Lawrence Valley spoke of the north, the north has changed dramatically, and has, of course, extended further and further into the polar region.

Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the human geographer Ellsworth Huntington presented his ideas implying a geographical determinism in his *Principles of Human Geography*. But while his concepts may now seem discredited and dated, the self-perception of Canadians as northerners has continued. The artistic depiction of their northern landscapes was a major achievement of the first autochthonous group of artists in their country: the Group of Seven. Painters such as Lawren Harris and J. E. H. MacDonald responded fervently to Scandinavian paintings in which stark northern landscapes were

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. Sherrill Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North* (2002).

presented, and in their own canvases painted in the Algonquin National Park (cf. Tom Thomson, “The Jack Pine”; MacDonald, “Falls Montreal River”) and on Lake Superior (cf. Harris, “North Shore, Lake Superior”), but also later in the Rocky Mountains and then in the Far North, they were inspired to present sometimes haunting pictures of their northern land (cf. Harris, “Mount Lefroy”).

Thus it is no coincidence that the first national Canadian novelist, Hugh MacLennan (in his first published novel, *Barometer Rising*, which takes the historic catastrophe of a gigantic explosion in Halifax Harbour in 1917 as its subject) envisages and visualizes from the perspective of a veteran returned from Europe his own wintry country, making it appear as a truly northern setting:

The sun had rolled on beyond Nova Scotia into the west. Now it was setting over Montréal and sending the shadow of the mountain deep into the valleys of Sherbrooke Street and Peel; [...] Now the prairies were endless plains of glittering, blueish snow over which the wind passed in a firm and continuous flux, packing the drifts down hard over the wheat seeds frozen into the alluvial earth. Now in the Rockies the peaks were gleaming obelisks in the mid-afternoon. [...] these people neither American nor English, nor even sure what they wanted to be, this unborn mightiness, this question-mark, this future for himself, and for God knew how many millions of mankind! (79)

The north and the harsh northern landscape have continued to appeal to Canadian writers and this preoccupation is mirrored in a sequence of novels which deal with failed expeditions, especially the total loss of John Franklin’s crew in the northern ice.

This widening of the vision, which incontestably enriches Canadian literature, has opened up fields and dimensions which 18<sup>th</sup>-century poets and travel writers could hardly have imagined. Rudy Wiebe, John Moss, and even Mordecai Richler and others have offered late 20<sup>th</sup>-century reactions to, and to some extent intimate views of, the peoples of the subarctic and arctic zones, and responses to the Far North. Their locations are much further north than the regions included in the *Semaines* by the Huguenot poet Du Bartas, or the locations evoked in the interest of sublime effects in topographical and cosmic poems of 18<sup>th</sup>-century British writers like James Thomson, the author of *The Seasons*, especially “Winter,” with its imaginative excursion into the polar zone, and David Mallett, the author of *The Excursion*. Images of the north with its vast expanse into the Arctic

have meanwhile come to abound in Anglophone literatures, especially in Canada.

We have thus briefly demonstrated how the climate theory, which per se appears as a neutral, seemingly objective model for explaining diversity and difference, came to be employed as a pseudo-scientific prop for various prejudices and negative evaluations, a flexible tool to discriminate against outgroups. Though fundamentally unprejudiced and temporarily used to sustain a cosmopolitan interest in variants of human culture, it was predominantly applied to support positive autostereotypes and negative heterostereotypes. While it served as a storehouse of arguments for the proto-imperialistic ideology, which also affected 19<sup>th</sup>-century North America, it was later employed as an encouragement for belated colonial and post-colonial aspirations against hegemonic models. It also came primarily to help account for the liminoid experiences of a growing number of writers whose world views were substantially affected by their exposure to alien environments, so different from the familiar locations in the temperate zone where the model of thought had originally been designed.

## **Images of Europe and Its Nations**

- Johannes Kepler, James Howell, and Thomas Lansius: The Competition between European Nations as a Literary Theme in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century
- Transatlantic Differences: (Mis)Perceptions in Diachronic Perspective
- Sketches of a Traveler: Observations on a Dominant Theme in Washington Irving's Work
- Remarks on the Tradition and Function of Heterostereotypes in North American Fiction between 1900 and 1940
  - A Separate Identity Asserted: Agrarian Affinities with European Culture

## Chapter 5: Johannes Kepler, James Howell, and Thomas Lansius: The Competition between European Nations as a Literary Theme in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century

### I.

In Samuel Butler's harsh satire on the members of the Royal Society entitled "The Elephant in the Moon" Johannes Kepler is mentioned among the ridiculous star gazers, those overeager astronomers fooled, through the lens of a telescope, by mosquitoes mistaken for warring armies battling on the surface of the moon. Their attempt to survey and explore the moon is said to resemble

A task in vain unless the German Kepler  
Had found out a discovery to people her,  
And stock her country with inhabitants  
Of military men and Elephants:  
For th' Ancients only took her for a piece  
Of red-hot iron as big as Peloponnese,  
Till he appear'd; ...<sup>1</sup>

It would be a mistake to read this allusion to Kepler as an indication that he was generally regarded in England as a mentor of such questionable "scientists." On the contrary, Kepler enjoyed a high reputation and throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century was, like Galilei, regarded as one of the teachers of the "Astronomia Nova" victorious in that century. Butler does not refer to Kepler as the astronomer who had discovered the laws regulating the orbits of the planets but to the Kepler who, in his leisure time, had composed the first imaginary interstellar journey. In their abstruse speculations the astronomers in Butler's satire take their cues from the fanciful description of the lunar surface which Kepler had combined with serious scientific reflections in his *Somnium*.<sup>2</sup> His remarks on the lunar inhabitants, the Subvolvans

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Butler, *Poetical Works*, vol 2., 140.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the edition of *Kepler's Somnium, the Dream, or Posthumous Work on Lunar Astronomy*, translated by Edward Rosen (1967, rpt. 2003). Since 1993 *Somnium* has

and, especially, the Privolvans, who reside beneath the lunar surface, gripped the minds of those pseudo-scientists and inspired them to misconstrue through their telescopes a dancing swarm of mosquitoes for titans fighting on the moon and a tiny mouse for a mighty elephant.

Kepler's imaginary journey to the moon was in all likelihood read in England more than two decades before it was published by Kepler's son Ludwig in 1634. Marjorie Hope Nicolson was the first to conjecture that a transcript of *Somnium* circulated in England briefly after its composition.<sup>3</sup> Her hunch gains in probability when the extraordinarily close cultural ties between Germany and England at that time are taken into consideration. The already close political and religious ties between the Protestant German princes and the English court intensified after the wedding of Frederick, the Elector of Palatine, with the English Princess Elizabeth in 1613. The dukes of Württemberg, in particular, had long cultivated this relationship. Frederick I of Württemberg applied for admission to the Order of the Garter and was, after a long delay (1592-1603), eventually granted this honor.<sup>4</sup> The motto of the order can still be found in his coat of arms on the gateway to Tübingen Castle. His two sons also had close contacts with the English court. The younger Ludwig Friedrich visited London twice on political missions, and his report on his visit in 1610 has interested literary historians because of a reference to a production of one of Shakespeare's plays (Robson-Scott, 83-84). The close ties between Württemberg and England are also apparent in the career of the Swabian Baroque poet Georg Rudolf Weckherlin, who was married to an English lady and composed poems both in English and German, before eventually holding a diplomatic post in London. The relationship of his fellow-Württemberger Johannes Kepler to England was shaped by the latter's admiration of King James I as the embodiment of a Biblical 'prince of peace.' Kepler's admiration for James may have been confirmed by Tycho Brahe who reported on the

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also been accessible in volume 11.2 of the *Complete Edition of Kepler's Works*, 315-438.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. M. H. Nicolson, "Kepler, the *Somnium*, and John Donne" (1940), rpt. in the collection of Nicolson's ground-breaking essays, *Science and Imagination* (1956), 58-79.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the very informative survey of the political and cultural relations between the English court and the Protestant German princes provided by W. D. Robson-Scott, *Travellers in England: 1400-1800* (1953), esp. 53-59.

impression made on him by the visit to his Danish observatory of the learned and well-read monarch. It is well-known that Kepler dedicated his *Harmonice[s] Mundi*<sup>5</sup> to the English king in 1619, writing that while still in Prague he had earlier thought of such a dedication to the philosopher on the throne. He had previously sent his treatise *De Nova Stella* to the English king from Prague in 1606.<sup>6</sup>

Kepler composed *Somnium* while at the court of Emperor Rudolf. That this futuristic imaginary journey to the moon also circulated in Germany as a manuscript soon after its completion came to be regretted by Kepler in light of the suspicion subsequently cast on his mother.<sup>7</sup> His enemies were able to suggest that in the witch Flothilda Kepler had offered a portrait of his own mother, who was accused of being a witch. In a note to *Somnium*, which was probably added by the author after 1620, Kepler opines that his text had fallen into the hands of an English writer who may have used it in a satirical text:

Fallor an author Satyrae procacis, cui nomen Conclave Ignatianum, exemplar nactus erat hujus opusculi; pungit enim me nominatim etiam in ipso principio. Nam in progressu miserum Copernicum adducit ad Plutonis tribunal, ad quod, ni fallor, aditus est per Heclae voragines.<sup>8</sup>

Here Kepler is alluding to a harsh satire against the Jesuits which John Donne had published both in Latin and English under the title *Conclave Ignatii* in 1611.<sup>9</sup> In this invective the English metaphysical poet adopts the concept of an imaginary journey through cosmic space, a notion that had before only been used by Kepler. As Kepler's *Somnium* had not yet been published, Donne must be assumed to have become acquainted with it as a manuscript circulating in England. Considering this link, which is referred to by Kepler himself, it is of interest that in 1619 Donne met the astronomer in Linz, Austria,

<sup>5</sup> This magnum opus appeared first in Linz, 1619. Today, the multivolume edition of Kepler's complete works, begun by W. von Dyck and continued by Franz Hammer, has made this text more widely accessible as vol.6.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 19, 344.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Kepler's Note 8 appended to *Somnium* in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 11.2, 334.

<sup>8</sup> "I suppose that a copy of this little work fell into the hands of the author of the bold satire entitled *Ignatius His Conclave*, for he stings me by name at the very outset. Later on he brings poor Copernicus to Pluto's court, which is entered, unless I am mistaken, through the chasms of Hekla." (*Somnium*, 38-39)

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Ignatius His Conclave*, ed. Healy (1969).



where the English poet stopped on his journey as a member of the entourage of the Count of Doncaster, the British envoy sent by James I (in a vain attempt to forestall and prevent the outbreak of hostilities following the Prague defenestration). At this encounter Donne was given a letter to Kepler's agent in London and expressed his readiness to support the astronomer in his desire to present copies of the *Harmonice[s] Mundi* dedicated to the English monarch.<sup>10</sup>

Kepler's respect and admiration for James I was no secret at the English court. Sir Henry Wotton, the English Ambassador in Venice, on the instruction of his monarch visited Kepler in Linz in December 1619, and invited the astronomer to England. Kepler's well-known letter to Bernegger, his friend in Strasbourg, provides evidence for this honor, but also reflects Kepler's reluctance to accept this invitation.<sup>11</sup> Wotton's report on his conversation with Kepler is an important document as it illustrates the close cultural links between England and Germany: the addressee of Wotton's letter is none other than the famous philosopher Sir Francis Bacon.<sup>12</sup> The influential English diplomat informs his learned correspondent of a remarkable experiment which Kepler had conducted and which he witnessed. In this way Bacon received immediate and early information on Kepler's optical experiments with the camera obscura.

In view of these documented contacts between the great astronomer and England<sup>13</sup> the reader will not be surprised by the inclusion of Kepler's name in a long list of German scholars and scientists to be found in a treatise by the English writer and future Historiographer Royal, James Howell (1593-1666). What is more striking, however, is that the list in Howell's book *A German Diet* (1653)<sup>14</sup> contains no fewer than one hundred names, primarily of

<sup>10</sup> With the exception of R. C. Bald in his biography of John Donne and Nicolson in her essay, Donne scholars are in general skeptical on that point. On Kepler's encounter with Donne cf. Wilbur Applebaum, *Philological Quarterly* 50 (1971), 132-134.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Kepler's letter to Bernegger of February 15, 1621, in Justus Schmidt, *Johannes Kepler* (1970), 258.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Logan Pearsall Smith, *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, vol. 2, 204-206.

<sup>13</sup> Kepler was also involved in a controversy with the English alchemist Robert Fludd, whose speculations Kepler criticized in an appendix to his *Harmonice[s] Mundi*.

<sup>14</sup> James Howell, *A German Diet: or, the Ballance of Europe. [...] At a solemn Convention of som German Princes in sundry Elaborat Orations pro et Con. Made fit for the Meridian of England [...] 1653*. The collation of this folio volume poses some

savants from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, some of whom had achieved prominence and fame in Europe.

Among the German astronomers, in addition to Copernicus, Kepler and Braheus, i.e. Tycho Brahe, a certain Stöfflerus and Mestlitis (presumably Kepler's teacher and friend in Tübingen, Michael Mästlin) are named (H. I, 12). The list of prominent German theologians includes the "Excellent Hafenriffus," an individual known from Kepler's biography. This is the influential theologian and later Dean of the Stift in Tübingen, Matthias Hafenreffer, who was also a longtime friend of the astronomer. Even when considering the intensity of cultural relations between England and Germany, and Württemberg in particular, this and similar information provided seems to reflect a strikingly thorough knowledge of German cultural institutions unique in the English literature of the period. But *A German Diet*, which has so far been practically ignored, may also capture the attention of the general reader because of its theme. In this book Howell has a number of German noblemen discuss the merits and demerits of the various European countries, as well as the virtues and vices of their peoples, with all details being related to the central question of the preeminence of any one nation among the countries of Europe. The volume contains about 190 pages of text and offers abundant material for both the historian and the literary scholar. It deals exhaustively with a topic which is broached in other publications from Howell's prolific pen: the salient features and characteristics which help distinguish the individual European nations from each other.

Roughly a decade before, in 1642, Howell had published his *Instructions for Forreine Travell*, a book which provided a blending of factual information, good advice, and entertaining material intended to serve as an early version of *Baedeker* for young Englishmen on their Grand Tour. Based on his individual experience during several journeys and longer sojourns on the Continent, especially in Spain and Italy, and on his extensive reading, Howell had composed a guidebook which replaced earlier handbooks and became a bestseller. In his *Instructions*, remarks on the fundamental differences in the character

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questions. The pagination is relatively reliable but twice begins anew. References in this essay therefore use Roman numerals to indicate the segment of the book before the page numbers, signatures B-S making up part I, signatures 2A-2R comprising part II, signatures 3A-3N part III.

of the nations of Europe, their customs, physical appearance and their behavior played a central role. Additionally Howell included reflections on this theme in his overwhelmingly fictitious *Familiar Letters* (*Epistolae Ho-Eliaanae*, 1645-1655).<sup>15</sup> His travel letters in this seemingly intimate correspondence, which gave an impetus to a new kind of text, namely the private letter intended for publication, offered repeatedly opportunities for short essays on this question. In the later volumes of his *Familiar Letters* the form of the epistle was used by Howell several times as a framework for a discursive treatise on various aspects of the differences between European nations, their languages, religions, etc. This theme was dealt with even more prominently in Howell's less known first publication entitled *Dendrologia: Dodona's Grove, or the Vocall Forest* (1640). In this book, which presented an allegorical survey of contemporary European history from approximately 1610 to the present, Howell met the expectations of a contemporary readership whose taste had been formed by John Barclay's *roman-à-clef* *Argenis*, in which contemporary events had been presented in an appealing form. In his early allegory Howell furnished short characteristics of the various nations by transposing human beings into flora, thus achieving an alienation effect.<sup>16</sup>

There are no parallels to the formal structure of *A German Diet* in the rest of Howell's *oeuvre*. In this text, statements concerning the various European nations and countries are not offered in allegorical form but are presented in well-formulated orations in the context of a fictitious assembly or council of noblemen in which contrasted images of these nations are provided in great detail. A careful reading of *A German Diet* reveals quite a few stylistic signs which give this book a special place among Howell's works. There is a certain prolixity in the text which does not correspond to the relatively easy style of *Familiar Letters*. The accumulation of examples and of long lists of names may be partly explained as a consequence of the arrangement of the text as a disputation, but it does not fit Howell's usual inclination to provide information on historical and contemporary conditions in more modest doses and with a far lighter touch. The very thoroughness with which the achievements and failures of the Germans, the Spaniards, the

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. the instructive comments in the rpt. by Joseph Jacobs, *The Familiar Letters of James Howell*, 2 vols. (1890-92).

<sup>16</sup> A similar method was used in his *Parables Reflecting upon the Times* (1643).

English etc. are juxtaposed creates the impression of the fairly balanced critical stance of the author. Howell's reticence is conveyed in his preface to *A German Diet* which suggests both toleration and his abstinence from personal intrusions in a debate which is conducted with great verve and thoroughness. A modern reader may interpret this as the result of the author's sophistication and tolerance.

William Harvey Vann, one of the few scholars who have considered James Howell's work as a whole, stresses his aloofness from national prejudices and maintains that "an admirable impartiality is displayed, even in the case of England" (36-37). As there is a regular alternation between praise for a country and a critical counterstatement immediately afterwards neither should be read as Howell's opinion of his own country. For this reason doubts may be raised concerning the claim made by Willi Radczun, who, in his analysis of the image of Germany in England until the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, quotes from this "curious volume" and construes a passage in the oration on Germany which eulogizes German urban culture as Howell's own assessment of the conditions in the Empire (86-87). A familiarity with other texts by the polyglot author and "journalist" leads the reader to greater skepticism and a sharing of the reservations of Joseph Jacobs. In contrast to Radczun's uncritical reception of this text as a testimony to Howell's own experience, Jacobs expresses reservations about Howell's authorship of the book: "I have the impression that the whole is a translation or adaptation, but I have failed to find an original" (LVII).

Yet, in addition to the stylistic and formal aspects mentioned above internal evidence provides some clues supporting the validity of this conjecture. In the book, which was brought out by Humphrey Moseley, Howell's publisher, the fictitious German princes and noblemen present a panorama of Europe which, by the time of its publication, no longer corresponded to reality. The speaker, for instance, who employs his eloquence to praise Germany still considers the Netherlands and Switzerland as parts of the German Empire. The intervention of France and Sweden in the Thirty Years' War had so dramatically changed the balance of power on the Continent that the claim of this orator, who argued for granting preeminence to the German Empire, was merely academic: the Swedes, who had become firmly established as a political force in Germany, are not even taken into consideration by the speakers as potential competitors for

political preeminence. For his part Howell showed himself well-informed about the political situation on the Continent both in several of his *Familiar Letters* but especially so in his *A Discourse of the Empire* (1658). Thus, the fact that Howell's orators are not up-to-date in their presentation of the current political realities fuels the reader's skepticism. In addition, the fact that Howell's inclusion in some of his more popular books of ideas borrowed extensively and without compunction from other writers suggests the advisability of a critical examination of his potential sources.<sup>17</sup>

So much traditional lore is accumulated in the long catalogue of foreign princes and scholars, and in the numerous examples included that it can easily be believed that Howell drew on historical manuals and cosmographies. Joseph Jacobs speculated that Howell may have been inspired by Fynes Moryson's detailed descriptions of European nations in his *Itinerary* (1617).<sup>18</sup> We might similarly conjecture that some passages of *A German Diet* were inspired by sections of Thomas Coryate's *Crudities*.<sup>19</sup> The reader of Howell's volume may remember the eloquent "Praise of Germany" by Professor Hermann Kirchnerus from Marburg which Coryate included in his multi-faceted book as well as the former's recommendation of the advantages of a Grand Tour. An inconspicuous but helpful allusion to his sources is given by the author himself in his preface where he admits his indebtedness to many sources "...there were Stones fetched from many Quarries (where of the learned and well-read Lansius afforded most)."

Thomas Lansius (1577-1657), born in Upper Austria and a teacher of jurisprudence at Tübingen, published in addition to numerous Latin commemorative orations, a voluminous book with the promising title *Friderici Achillis Consultatio de principatu inter provincias Europae*.<sup>20</sup> Structurally, this book displays a remarkable

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<sup>17</sup> On Howell's borrowings in his *Instructions*, cf. my monograph *Die Klimatheorie in der englischen Literatur und Literaturkritik*, esp. 288-303.

<sup>18</sup> Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary Containing His Ten Yeeres Travell through the Twelve Dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, ... Italy ... Scotland & Ireland* (1617), 4 vols. (1907). On Moryson's treatment of national characters, and their assumed dependence on the position of various nations on the globe, see *Die Klimatheorie*, esp. 134-142.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Coryate, *Coryat's Crudities* (1611), 2 vols. (1905) vol. 2, 71ff., and vol. 1, 122ff.

<sup>20</sup> Library catalogues give altogether seven editions of the *Consultatio* in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, dated 1613, 1620, 1626, 1635, 1636, 1655, and 1678.

similarity to Howell's volume. A preliminary cursory examination of the Latin text reveals such a far-reaching correspondence between Howell's *A German Diet* and the *Consultatio* that the conclusion can only be that the *Consultatio*, which went through several editions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, was Howell's immediate source.

With the origin of the source identified, the deeper meaning of the slightly obscure subtitle of *A German Diet* also becomes clear: "Made Ready for the Meridian of England." Howell thus not only conceded in veiled fashion his extensive dependence on his model but also indicated the principle he followed in his adaptation. An examination of the exact extent of his borrowings sheds light on Howell's literary practice. Spot checks reveal that *A German Diet* is more than a mere product of plagiarism. Yet the question of how far the image of Europe in the fictitious orations in Lansius' book differs from that conveyed in the English text merits attention. Revealing differences in the descriptions of the various nations and their claim to preeminence can be expected. At the same time the reader may hope to discover through a comparison of the images some of the roots of the intellectual climate which fostered the literary dissemination of national characters.<sup>21</sup> The study of the apparently popular Latin text reminds the reader of the fact that Howell's ostensible hobby-horse, juxtaposing the nations of Europe and national characters, was part and parcel of a literary convention. The scheme, which is fully developed in *Consultatio* and *A German Diet*, appears in a more concise form in many English plays of the Elizabethan and Stuart periods. In the exposition of such plays, or in moments when the tension slackens, travelers returning from abroad entertain the audiences with an enumeration of the various virtues and vices of individual nations, and even on occasion establishing certain hierarchies among them. No attempt is made below to investigate this popular stage device.<sup>22</sup> A detailed comparison of the disputation on

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<sup>21</sup> On this topic, which since the 1970s has received extensive treatment, see, for instance, Stanzel, ed., *Europäer: Ein imagologischer Essay* (1997), and many studies by Joep Leerssen and Manfred Beller, esp. *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A Critical Survey* (2007), and Beller's *Il Confronto Letterario* (1997).

<sup>22</sup> Such juxtapositions of several European nations in 17<sup>th</sup>-century English plays deserve closer scrutiny. Examples can be found, for instance, in Henry Glaphorne, *The Ladies Priviledge*, Act iii, in: *Plays and Poems*, vol. 2, 126-28, and in Thomas

the preeminence of European nations, which was composed in the German province in which Johannes Kepler had grown up, with its adaptation by the English historiographer James Howell, however, promises to be very instructive. Such an analysis makes sense because the author of the *Consultatio* also belonged to the circle of Kepler's friends in Tübingen and sent him the first edition of the book in October 1614. As his correspondence reveals, Lansius together with Christoph Besold also advised Kepler during the defense of his mother when she was tried for witchcraft (1620-21). Later, early in 1630, Lansius was also invited to the wedding of Kepler's daughter Susanna in Strasbourg.<sup>23</sup>

## II.

A comparison of the lists of speakers in the Latin version of 1620<sup>24</sup> reveals that Howell makes the same noblemen address the same topics as in Lansius' original. The list in *A German Diet* is shorter, only sixteen instead of twenty-two names, but on closer examination all speakers appear to deliver their orations though the list is incomplete and also incorrect in the forms of names used. Georgius Kölderer, an Italophobic speaker, is transformed into George Rolderer, and the two barons of Wensin are introduced as the Lords Bensin. In the book the contribution to the debate by Nicolaus Buwinckhausen de Walmerod is attributed to a Bawnickhausen of Balmerod. More important than these changes, which are apparently due to a misreading by the compositor,<sup>25</sup> is the regrouping of the sequence of orations. While in Lansius' book the opening words of the president of the assembly are

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Heywood's *The English Traveller*, Act i, in: *The dramatic works of Thomas Heywood*, vol. 4, 7-21.

<sup>23</sup> In the edition of Kepler's complete works there is evidence for his close contacts with Lansius, for instance, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 17, 122-23 and 133-34, vol. 18, 126 and 187 (letters of Lansius sent to Kepler in Linz). Thomas Lansius must not be confused with Kepler's other friend, Stephan Lansius, who, in a letter furnishes an important account of Kepler's death and funeral. Cf. *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 19, 236-237.

<sup>24</sup> The edition of 1620 was the first to have the name of Lansius on the title page.

<sup>25</sup> Apart from the omission of the names of some speakers, which may be due to the wish of the publishing house to preserve a balance and only allow one speech in favor and one against a certain country, a close reading shows a number of typos and errors. It also reveals that there must have been several compositors at work simultaneously. That the book was produced with some haste is, however, evident in the inconsistencies in the index.

followed by orations “pro Germania,” “pro Gallia” and “pro Hispania,” Howell keeps strictly to a symmetric pattern. Every oration lauding a country and its people has its antithesis, an “oratio contra;” this pattern is repeated in Howell’s book

The individual orations in Howell’s volume seem largely to correspond in their arguments and even in their vocabulary to *De principatu*. In the opening address of the Duke of Württemberg, Howell sticks closely to his model, even though his style is more flowing than the ponderous style of Lansius, who inserts extensive citations taken from classical antiquity, from Biblical sources and from key texts of Humanism. In the manner of travel guides<sup>26</sup> both Lansius and Howell highlight the importance of the Grand Tour and denigrate the arrogance of the isolationist Chinese. The latter practice is exemplified with a Chinese saying<sup>27</sup> familiar to Europeans of the 17<sup>th</sup> century ever since the dissemination of *Mandeville’s Travels*, suggesting that only the inhabitants of the Middle Kingdom had two eyes, while the Europeans had merely one eye, and all other peoples were blind.

The cosmopolitan spirit manifest in this speech is contradicted by Franciscus Carolus / Francis, Duke of Saxony, who stresses the dangers of imported customs and diseases. He seems alarmed at the negative effects of the Grand Tour on German youth and lists the names of the countries of origin of the new vices and stupidities. Howell’s text elaborates on this lament concerning the unfavorable consequences of a Grand Tour and draws on his own experience when he supplements the argument by a satirical diagnosis:

How many have gone to *Spain* with cheerfull & well-dispos’d humours, but come back with a kinde of dull Melancholy? ...  
How many have gone to *England*, and come home with Tobacco-pipes in their mouths? (I, 6)

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. the entertaining survey of the genre by E. S. Bates, *Touring in 1600*, esp. 35, and recently, the amply documented, comprehensive study by Justin Stagl, *Eine Geschichte der Neugier: Die Kunst des Reisens, 1550-1800* (2002). An earlier English version appeared in 1995.

<sup>27</sup> This tradition goes back to “fanciful journeys” such as *Historia Orientalis Haythini Armenii*. Cf. *Mandeville’s Travels*, ed. P. Hamelius, 2 vols., and even versified geographies such as Richard Zouche, *The Dove: or Passages of Cosmography* (1613), make use of this concept.



This remains one of Howell's methods in his adaptation of the fictitious council of princes (and noblemen): as soon as he senses a potential area where he might suitably include proverbial phrases or satirical attacks on his fellow-countrymen, he adds his own material. He condenses the prolixity of learned disquisitions to be found in Lansius' arguments "pro Germania." After his warning concerning foreign influences during a Grand Tour, the Duke of Saxony addresses the main issue and intones a eulogy on the German Empire, enriched with citations in verse and prose. He underlines the progress of the country since antiquity and praises the religious genius of its people, claiming that its numerous thinkers and scholars as well as its famous universities have ensured its reputation in the world.

It is in the context of the long list of famous Germans that the passage with the allusion to Johannes Kepler may be found. This also explains the conspicuous reference to Mästlin and Hafenreffer, for in a eulogy put into the mouth of a German nobleman, Lansius naturally intended to pay tribute to the worthies and functionaries of his university. He has his patriotic speaker deal extensively with the skills of German artisans, who provide the basis for wealth in the flourishing cities and towns. In the corresponding passage of *A German Diet* Vienna is mentioned as an important center of trade and of commercial activity. The strong bastions of the city are, however, and in this respect Howell goes beyond the source, "indebted" to an English monarch ("for which tis true we are beholden to an *English king*," H.I, 16). The eulogy on the various regions of the Empire also includes brief but enthusiastic praise of Austria (specifically, "*Styria* and *Austria*, what are they but a kind of Paradis ?"), which he took directly from Lansius. Here we also discover the passage which Radczun mistakenly regards as primary evidence for the positive view and image of Germany in England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century:

... high *Germany* is so thick with Citties, that they may be sayed to shake one another by the hand, and all of them are most beautifull, both for amaanity of soyl, for firmnesse of structure, for statelinesse of Palaces ... (H. I, 16 – L. 51f.)

As this passage turns out to be a mere borrowing, its contents cannot any longer be read as the autoptic experience of the English historiographer. The demonstration of Howell's dependence on his Latin source, however, raises the more general question of how many

of the travel reports and chorographies of that period, which have so far been regarded as authentic accounts, may have simply repeated earlier sources. When examining such texts, a degree of suspicion as to their originality seems advisable.<sup>28</sup>

Further analysis of the “Oratio pro Germania” shows that the Duke of Saxony, like all the other speakers, sticks to a fixed order in the topics raised. As was the case in cosmographies ranging from Sebastian Münster, Giovanni Botero to Pierre d’Avity he reports on the morphology, the agricultural products and mineral resources of the individual country and the state of its economy. Then he offers a sketch of the physical appearance and behavior of its inhabitants. It is significant that, as always in contemporary ethnographic texts, the features ascribed to individual nations are intricately related to historical circumstances. A continuity of the national character since classical antiquity is obviously assumed, and ethnographic texts or comments regularly serve as the basis for national stereotypes.<sup>29</sup> In his plea for Germany, the Duke of Saxony claims the virtues of frankness, chastity and courage for his fellow-countrymen, virtues ascribed to them even in Roman antiquity. That Lansius eulogizes aristocratic German families, including the Habsburgs, may easily be interpreted as a bow to his audience. The English adaptor can naturally radically shorten these patriotic words.

This panegyric is immediately followed by a rejoinder articulated by John Gulielm of Retwitz, which in Lansius is placed near the end of the book. Howell’s speaker does not share the optimism of his predecessor and, instead of claiming any continuous development of Germany, he posits the notion of its decline and degeneration. In the political sphere he documents the loss of power in the secession of several provinces of the empire and in the conflicts and dissensions in Imperial diets. The main target of his attacks are, however, the vices of the German nation: while Lansius offers many historical examples illustrating German “perfidia” and “crudelitas,” Howell furnishes some gruesome anecdotes, such as the legend of the

<sup>28</sup> The need to examine the authenticity of presumptive accounts of witnesses which may be merely borrowings from earlier reports is also hinted at in diachronic surveys of travel books. Cf. Ludwig Schudt, *Italienreisen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, 21-22.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Margaret T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, especially 35-44 and 178-185. See also several essays in Stanzel, ed., *Europäischer Völkerspiegel*, especially the long introduction by the main editor and the essay by Ingomar Weiler.

miserable death of Hatto, the heartless Archbishop of Mainz,<sup>30</sup> which would have been familiar to the English reading public from Münster's *Cosmography* and from the stage. He adds an obscure report on the evil deeds of a butcher in Bremen and the familiar story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. With an eye to effect, Howell adds episodes illustrating the religious fickleness of the Germans. In the Latin *Consultatio*, which had its origin in a Protestant province, Martin Luther would not have been referred to as "that Shaveling Monke *Luther*," who is disrespectfully described in the English text as the person who "fell in love with the Abadesse, to enjoy which he made Religion his bawd..." Howell's hatred of religious sects had already manifested itself in his allusion to the notorious John of Leyden, the leader of the Anabaptists of Münster, who was mercilessly portrayed by Nashe in his *Unfortunate Traveller* (1594).<sup>31</sup> This antipathy combines the official British hostility to the Dutch, against whom the First Dutch War was being fought during the printing of *A German Diet*. This accounts for the virulence of the verbal attack of Howell's speaker against the cosmopolitan and tolerant city of Amsterdam and its inhabitants.

...what an opprobry to Christianity is that *Amsterdam*, wher such a confusion of Religions is allowed! & no wonder for she is one of the nearest to Hell of any town upon earth ... a confusion of beliefs is fallen upon these men by dwelling too low, and cousening the fish of ther inheritance, for indeed the Fish shold inhabit that Countrey which they have forced out of the jawes of the Sea and therby may be called tru Usurpers (H.I, 35).

This graphic description of the Netherlands as a kind of limbo (a region stolen from the fish of the sea) comes as no surprise when it is recalled that even Puritan poets such as Andrew Marvell yielded to the temptation to compose a similar invective in his "Description of Holland" in the same year.<sup>32</sup>

In the catalogue of German vices, "voluptas" is extensively treated both in Lansius and Howell. The many bathhouses and spas

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<sup>30</sup> This gruesome story found in Münster's *Cosmography* had reached an English audience by 1572 in *A Briefe Collection and Compendious Extract ... out of ... S. Munster*. The story was also used on the stage, for instance, in the play *The Costly Whore*.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. R. B. McKerrow, ed., *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, vol. 2, 234-236.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, vol. 1, 95-97.

are mentioned as favorite locations for such practices, places sneered at by many travelers but whose notoriety was also widely disseminated by German ethnographers.<sup>33</sup> To Howell, such baths are “rather brothel Houses of lust” (H.I, 36) satisfying sexual appetites instead of curing maladies. Several anecdotes about lascivious noblemen are used to refute the image of German chastity, which harked back to Tacitus and other classical authors, and was promoted by the champions of Germany. That Howell substitutes more topical examples for the older ones contained in his source supports the assumption that he possessed much information for his satirical sketch. The representation of the vices and weaknesses of foreign nations was in the 17<sup>th</sup> century considerably more popular than any description of their merits. This is particularly conspicuous when Lansius employs the term “ebrietas” to expose the chief vice of the Germans. Howell first clings to his model but later offers new variants of the familiar picture of German revelry. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries drunkenness figured among the stock features in the character of German and Dutch figures on the stage.<sup>34</sup> In accordance a tradition going back as far as Tacitus, Germany was regarded as the origin and home of this vice, which spread from there:

Touching Intemperance, especially the vice of ebriety and excesse of drinking; where hath it such a vogue as in *Germany*? it is her bosom peculiar sin, and she hath infected all other Nations with it (H.I, 37).

Among those the Germans are said to have so infected are the inhabitants of Belgium and the Netherlands as well as the English, about whom Howell caustically remarks that they have superseded their masters in this vice.

... it found passage over with wind in poop to *England*, which are good at it, being of a *German* race, and therefore apt to take. Nay, as they say, the *English* are good *Inventis addere*, to improve any new invention, so they go beyond us (H.I, 37).

This questionable praise from a foreign orator (and Howell’s readership was at least at times conscious of the fact that this opinion

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. Coryate’s amazement at the bathing habits in Baden in *Coryat’s Crudities*, vol. 1, 141-142.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Eckhardt, *Ausländertypen*, 74-76.

was expressed by a German speaker) was probably accepted by his readers. Drunkenness was part of the autostereotype of the English in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. It appeared, for example, in the drinking scene in Shakespeare's *Othello*, in which Iago, asked about the origin of a drinking song, stresses the mastery of English revelers:

I learn'd it in England, where indeed they are most potent in potting: your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander – Drink, ho! – are nothing to your English ... [your Englishman] drinks you with facility your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit ere the next pottle can be fill'd. (*Othello* II.iii, 76-85)

A comparison of the passage quoted in Howell's book with the original shows that in Lansius' *Consultatio* English dipsomania is also mentioned, even if the English are not yet described as champions in this respect:

Inde et Angli, gens omnium Septentrionalium antea minime bibax, ex nuperis Belgicis bellis didicerunt immodice potu se proluere, et saluti propinando suam adfligere salute, malo ebrietatis per universum regnum tanta contumacia grassante, ut illud legum severitate cohibere nostro tempore, primum fuerit necesse. (L. 840-841)

In a marginal gloss Lansius refers to William Camden's *Annales Angliae ad A. Ch. 1581*, thus showing the factual basis of Shakespeare's and Howell's satirical allusions. The marginal glosses in Lansius are thus promising as a useful tool in the search for the origin of remarkable opinions concerning individual European nations.

Yet, Howell does not restrict himself to this insertion with the dubious eulogy on his fellow countrymen but draws on a storehouse of proverbial phrases which he was to edit a few years later in a collection in folio. At first it seems as if he ascribed to the English a greater ability to hold their liquor than to their continental rivals but then he grants first place in the hierarchy of drunkards to the Dutch. "The Dutchman" is characterized as an "Animal that can drink more than he can carry, as also one who useth to barrel up more then he can broch..." (H.I, 37). Howell rounds off the picture by adding two anecdotes of his own concerning German drunkards. The second episode concerns a group of dipsomaniacs who, shaky on their legs

and believing themselves to be aboard a ship in a stormy sea, flung tables and chairs out of the windows to save themselves from imagined shipwreck. Howell's readers knew of this episode from his *Familiar Letters* (459). That he drew on this particular anecdote furnishes an instructive example of his working methods, which typically included self-citations. It is also revealing that this incident, to be found in a classical source as well as in Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, had occurred in Sicily<sup>35</sup> and that Howell moved the setting of the episode to Holland. This illustrates the gravitational force of certain national stereotypes, which Howell certainly did not resist. Into this stereotype fitted easily the entertaining story of a count from Goricia able to hold his drink well who wanted to verify the legitimacy of his children by subjecting them to such a test. Howell quickly borrowed it from Lansius (L. 842). Instead of further examples the Englishman quotes five possible motives explaining the frequent recourse to the cup in Germany and cites the opinion of a Jesuit linking the Protestant demand that the laity could also drink from the chalice to German constitutional inebriety. He is then content to merely summarize further arguments against German preeminence. The obsession of German, and especially Austrian noblemen with titles, which Lansius dwells upon, was apparently not sufficiently interesting to Howell who skipped the topic.

After this examination of Germania it is the turn of Gallia. The champion of France, Joachim(us) Ernest(us) first praises the natural gifts of the country. Following his model Howell next dwells on the cultural centers of France, especially magnificent Paris. His encomium of French virtues, supported by many historical examples in Lansius, is radically shortened by Howell. He copies, however, the long list of worthies, great theologians, lawyers, physicians, historians and poets, always regarded as a weighty argument for French preeminence. Among the latter he mentions Ronsard, Joachim [Du] Bellay and Sallust Du Bartas. A glance at the text of the *Consultatio* of 1620 shows that here Du Bartas' name is missing, as well as the associated anecdote concerning Ronsard and his respect for Du Bartas. A closer examination, however, reveals that the presumptive addition by the British historiographer is already part of the expanded version of the

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<sup>35</sup> Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, vol. 1, 372.

*Consultatio* published in 1626 (228), which supplies an important clue that a later edition of the Latin book served as the model for Howell's book.

The extensive panegyric to the French monarchy is followed by a rejoinder by a Saxon duke, who claims that three furies have subjugated France: "Impiety, Injustice, and Corruption of discipline" (H.I, 54). To the prosecuting counsel, it seemed obvious to present the Massacre of St. Bartholomew as a shocking testimony to French impiety. The anger at the atrocities perpetrated by the Catholic League (the "Hydra Ligue") against the Huguenots and Ravaiillac's assassination of Henry IV, which shapes the oration in Lansius' book, is also noticeable in *The German Diet*. Howell certainly tones down the rhetoric condemning this outrage and its breeding grounds (Angoulême and Paris), which was understandable in a source composed only a few years after 1610 (L. 274: "O prodigium, non hominem! O monstrorum cubile Engolismiam! O parricidarum hospitium Lutetiam! ..."). Typically, Howell concludes the description of the violent deaths of three French kings each bearing the name of Henry with a proverb. In it unrest and civil war are pointedly and memorably presented as everpresent characteristics of France while murder by poison is referred to as an Italian specialty:

When *Italie* doth *poyson* want,  
And *Traytors* are in *England* scant,  
When *France* is of *Commotions* free,  
The World without an *Earth* shall be (H.I, 57).

The alleged "levitas" and "temeritas" of the French then furnish perfect ammunition for the critic. With reference to Caesar and Tacitus the French are labeled "[l]evissimum hominum genus" (H.I, 59 – L. 293). The orator in Howell's text defines their character with the instructive phrase "a most light race of people, that ... have more of *imagination* then *judgment*, more words then common honesty." The use of the term "imagination" in this negative context shows that Howell shared the disdain of neoclassical critics in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries for this faculty.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> That Howell ascribes to the French a preponderance of imagination over judgement corresponds to a conception of the distribution of the two human faculties of fancy or wit and judgement. It was later used by Laurence Sterne in *Tristram Shandy*, cf. Stanzel, "Tristram Shandy und die Klimatheorie" (1971), 19.

After severely criticizing the famous lawyer and political thinker Jean Bodin, who is said to have praised his countrymen at the expense of their German neighbors (Howell dismisses him as a “base, ignorant sciolist,” i.e. a pretender to knowledge (H.I, 60)) the orator returns to the chief vices of the French: their unreliability and rashness. The judgment passed by authors from antiquity on the Gauls offers considerable support for such an opinion, which Howell graphically formulates. “... the *French* have a whirlwind in their brains, they have quicksands in their breasts, which tosseth their Councils, and cogitations to and fro” (H.I, 60, cf. L. 297). The vices of the French nobility are encapsulated in a satirical portrait which the “Dux Saxoniae” includes in his speech. Howell does not omit an excerpt from Pontamarius (*l’Academie de la Noblesse Françoise...*). He copies both the French and Latin text from Lansius and adds his English translation of the graphic description of a constantly moving, fashionably dressed, arrogant and chicken-hearted fool (H.I, 60-61). This sketch, which had probably been prompted by Pontamarius’ desire to instruct through a satire of his own nation, is thus presented as a very plausible, authentic description of the French nation.

It may seem appropriate here to consider briefly the premises and the expectations of the readership of this passage in the two books. German readers were acquainted with typical portraits of foreign characters, not least from a comedy by the neo-Latin playwright in Tübingen, Nicodemus Frischlin, *Julius Redivivus* (II,iv: Allobrox Mercator; III,iii: Caminarius). Howell’s readers were equally cognizant of stereotyped foreign characters in the theatre as they had populated the English stage since the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. Their taste had also been cultivated by reading numerous “characters,” which had been composed in the course of a renaissance of Theophrast’s characters.<sup>37</sup> They no doubt took pleasure in the concise and concrete details in the depiction of the bearing and behavior of a typical Frenchman, and were thus ready to consider the portrait a persuasive rendition.

Having accused the French of lasciviousness and sodomy, the orator next addresses the topic of the national language dear to the

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. G. K. Hunter, “Elizabethans and Foreigners,” *Shakespeare Survey* 17 (1964), 37-52. See also Benjamin Boyce, *The Theophrastan Character in England to 1642* (1947).



philologist. He calls French an effeminate tongue and contrasts the suitability of the chief languages of the Occident for specific purposes:

... it is fittest to speak to God in *Spanish* for the Majestie oft [sic] it, to Princes in *Italian* for the *gravity* of it, to the enemy in *Dutch* for the *manfulness* of it, to women in *French* for the *softnes* of it (H.I, 61 – cf. L. 311).

The anecdote of the dispute between a Spanish Don and the Imperial Ambassador at the court of Charles V fits well into the speech “Contra Galliam” as, just as the Spanish, every other Romance tongue appears in the words of the quick-witted German envoy as “*fraudum & callidorum consiliorum tragulis aptissima*” (L. 311).<sup>38</sup> While God pronounced from the Garden of Eden “*majoris terroris causa Germanica lingua*,” the devil used Spanish [or French] to seduce Eve.<sup>39</sup> The plea to honor the maternal tongue<sup>40</sup> (expressed in Latin) is followed by a condemnation of the literatures in the Romance languages. In their themes and in their genres they are said to mirror the nature of the “loose lascivious tongs of *Spain, Italy and France*.” French is said to be particularly suitable

... to make wanton loves and complements, to compose amorous sonnets, and attract femal bewty, or frame such odd Romances, and hyperbolical stories, as *Amadis de Gaule* ... what a world of wanton books are ther in *French* which tend chiefly to amuse the understanding with vicious thoughts, and to corrupt maners? what stories they have of adulterious loves, of unbridled lusts ...? (H.I, 62 – L. 312).

After this warning against the pernicious cultural influences of France, reminiscent of similar attacks by Roger Ascham on Italy and of some puritanical voices in Germany, the French fad for fashion attracts the attention of the moralist. Howell claims that the itch for novelty is a French characteristic, responsible for the uncertainties in the legal framework (H. I, 63). It is only in the complaints about the muck and

<sup>38</sup> Their language is said to be “most suited for darts of cheating and cunning tricks.”

<sup>39</sup> Howell offered variants of this popular episode, ascribing different roles to the European languages in paradise and juxtaposed various Romance languages (for instance, in *Instructions*, 39), and on another occasion contrasted the German and the Italian languages, cf. *Familiar Letters*, vol. 2, 463.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Martin Opitz, *Aristarchus sive De Contemptu Linguae Teutonicae*, a few years after the first edition of *Consultatio*.

odure in the streets of Paris, where modern carriages are sorely required, that Howell's own experience is reflected.<sup>41</sup> The rest of the oration against France turns out to be merely a condensed version of the remarks of the Latin speaker expressing his Gallophobia.

In the interest of symmetry the champion of Spain comes next. A Württemberg nobleman draws a favorable picture of the charming Spanish landscape and its equitable climate, which significantly contrasts with the phrase in *A German Diet*. "I put my self under that hot Clime" (H.II, 1). Following a familiar pattern the orator praises the magnificence of Spanish cities, paying tribute to the Escorial, the ports of Sevilla and Valentia,<sup>42</sup> the latter depicted as resembling Paradise. Howell borrows from this Latin source the character of the courageous and patient Spaniard who is said to be jealous of his liberties (L. 213-225 – H.II, 5-7). He also uses the military victories of Spain as a world power, the voyages of discovery and exploration of its naval heroes and conquistadores as arguments in the debate on the primacy among the countries of the Occident. The Spanish contribution to the Christianization of the New World should also be taken into account. Subsequently, he lauds the institutions of scholarship and culture on the Iberian peninsula and lists great Spanish theologians, lawyers, philosophers and poets. That the list of "worthies" in Howell's book includes St. Teresa (H.II, 9), the founder of an order of nuns, provides another clue concerning his source, which again must have been a later edition of the *Consultatio*.<sup>43</sup> The sheer extent of the Spanish Empire on which the sun never sets, the splendor, the political wisdom and the moral strength of a monarch like Philipp II (H.II, 11) substantiate Spain's claim to primacy in Europe.

A Baron of Limburg emphatically opposes this eulogy by first stressing the extraordinary infertility of Spain:

... I find Spain to be the most unhusbanded, and the sterillest Country of *Europe*, the thinnest of people, the fullest of fruitlesse Hills ... (H.II, 14 – cf. L. 348)

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. one of the early letters in *Familiar Letters*, vol. 1, 42-43.

<sup>42</sup> Howell takes almost the same phrases from *Familiar Letters*, vol. 1, 59.

<sup>43</sup> The relevant passage can be found in the third edition of *Consultatio*, 298.

The description of food shortages and of poor accommodation, which bothered many contemporary travelers to Spain, prompts some additions by Howell, suggesting some basis in experience:

... there is no man can judge of *Spain* but he who hath travell'd the Countrey, where his Mule and he must lodg together in som places, and haply the Mule may fare better then the Master ... (H.II, 15).

From the description of economic factors, for instance, the facts that many foreigners are employed in the Iberian peninsula as artisans and that since the expulsion of the diligent Moors, people from the Gascoigne in the south of France are now needed to support the Spanish economy, may be inferred a salient feature in the Spanish national character: the image of the indolent, dignified Spaniard strongly reminds the reader of a long passage in Howell's *Instructions for Forreine Travell* (33-39, esp. 37-39), in which the author effectively juxtaposes the ceremonious and grave Spaniard with the mercurial, light-hearted and unpredictable French.<sup>44</sup> The character sketch of the Spaniard in *A German Diet* lacks the foil which Howell presented in his guidebook. The speaker here regards laziness and a predilection for rituals in everyday life not as the character traits in one of two contrasted types but as vices and weaknesses of the Spanish nation. The judgment he passes on the Spaniard is even harsher, as he presents the Jesuits as true sons of Spain:

... I have touch'd upon the *Jesuits*; who are a tru Spanish of[f]spring, and the most intimat Confidents of the Catholic King ... by laying open these men, you will better discover the humor of the Spaniard (H.II, 16).

In a fierce invective (L. 358-375, H.II, 16-20) their implacable enemy exposes their plots, treasonable doctrines and practices, their unconditional loyalty to the Pope as was characteristic in contemporary religious disputes. While the English poet John Donne had, in his *Conclave Ignatii*, banished the Machiavellian Jesuits to the deepest circle of hell, the Baron of Limburg contents himself with demanding the expulsion of these traitors, a measure which had fortunately already been adopted in several countries. In the Latin

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<sup>44</sup> These portraits are investigated in my *Klimatheorie* where Howell's immediate source is also documented.

source this proposal is preceded by a detailed description of the political and educational activities of the Jesuits, including mention of the strength of the Austrian province of the order (“... quas turbas in regionibus Austriacis; in Bohemia, in Hungaria ...” L. 364). While Limburg is annoyed by the fact that the Jesuits offer education free of charge (“gratis docent Jesuitae... Gratis nocent...” L. 370), Howell substitutes in his more moderate critique a versified passage circulating at the Spanish court, which documents the dislike of the Jesuits among the Spaniards (H. II, 18), though it has to be conceded that this insert makes the earlier passage, in which Jesuits are subsumed under the rubric “Spaniards,” seem problematical.

After some remarks about the inquisition Howell returns to the presentation of the Spanish national character. In conformity with the stereotype the inveterate pride of the Spaniard and his tendency towards ostentation are targeted. Though Spaniards are said to parade with measured steps and to be accompanied by many servants, they do not have anything more to eat at home than “a loaf and a radish a peece.” But this does not diminish their self-importance. In dignified fashion they manage to maintain appearances and do not betray their scanty food or even hunger. The opposing speaker naturally avoids interpreting the frugal meals of the Spaniard as signs of his temperance as was frequently the case in contemporary texts. That the outward appearance of the inhabitants of the Iberian peninsula shaped by these habits was part of the established image during that period<sup>45</sup> will be further considered below.

The proverbial vanity of the Spaniard is illustrated with several anecdotes both in Howell and Lansius, one concerning the poor Spanish woman who angrily rejected the offer of a French shoemaker to take one of her sons as his apprentice:

... God forbid I shold cast away my childe to a stranger, and to so  
Mechanick a trade, for who knowes but he may be Viceroy of *Naples*  
or *Mexico*? (H. II, 21 – L. 381)<sup>46</sup>

While Howell, in contrast to Lansius, omits any mention of Spanish lasciviousness (possibly an indirect correction which may have been

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. the parallels to their presentation in Henry Peacham’s *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), chapter 16.

<sup>46</sup> This anecdote occurred first in John Barclay’s *Icon Animorum* (1614) and found its way into the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Consultatio*.

influenced by his long residence in Spain)<sup>47</sup> he borrows from his source a report on a Spanish lunatic asylum. It is instructive to observe that the frequency of specific pathological cases of madmen suffering from illusions of megalomania corroborates apparently the stereotype of the haughty Spaniard. A juxtaposition of this interesting passage in *Consultatio* and *A German Diet* can illustrate both Howell's dependence on his source and his stylistic adaptation and effective condensation of the argument:

Hanc vero gentis insolentiam, illum nigrorum hominum fastum, vestitum et incessum pompaticum, omniaque dicta ac facta turgida et ventosa, merito tribuimus adustae eorum naturae atque profundae melancholiae. Nam melancholicos eos esse, praeter alia multa, declarat frequens in illorum civitatibus Melancholia morbus. Et una est in Hispaniis Caesaraugustae domus, in qua multi adeo, qui valetudinis vitio furunt, morantur; ut non solum totam civitatem mira lamentatione, vario plangore, et fremitu conficiant, verum etiam totam Hispaniam mirandis suis dictis ac factis compleant. Alius enim ibi Imperatorem se dici et esse contendit serio : alius, qui mitram gestat, summum Pontificem, itaque crucis signo hominibus benedicit ... (L. 382-383)

... this fancy of pride raignes in the *Spaniard*, more then any other, for if one shold go to a *Casa de Locos*, a Bedlam house in *Spain*, and observe the humors of the Prisoners; he will find that one will say he is an Emperour, another that he is King of such a Countrey, another that he is Pope, and so he shall observe that ther will be more of this kind of madnes then of any other distemper (H.II, 21).

Both Lansius and Howell question the uniqueness of Spanish voyages of discovery to the New World, with Howell, however, offering new arguments against the exaggerated respect for this feat:

... the Spaniards were not the first discoverers of *America*, for ther was a Welsh Epitaph found there upon *Madoc* a British Prince... And... ther are divers British words found amongst them to this day (H.II, 22).

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<sup>47</sup> Howell's omission of any reference to Spanish *luxuria* is contrasted with numerous allusions to their lust in Jacobean dramas. In his *Familiar Letters* Howell does not resist the temptation to allude to the old stereotype by punning on the link between "Goatish" and "Gothic" (cf. 210).

Howell's pride in his own region (he came from Wales and was the first to publish a collection of Welsh proverbs) must have prompted the insertion of the theory, popular in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, that British Celtic princes had journeyed to America.

After the condemnation of Spain for the notorious methods of colonization of the conquistadores, the Spanish national character is once again submitted to critical analysis. Cowardice not courage is said to be the characteristic of the inhabitants of the Iberian Peninsula. Arrogant phrases such as "one *Spaniard* is worth four *Germans*, three *Frenchmen*, and two *Italians*" (H.II, 26 – L. 424) cannot hide the reality. This weakness, which had been ascribed in English literature to the Spaniards since the defeat of the Armada, is established as a prominent feature by Howell, who inserts a long speech of a vainglorious Castillian Captain. He reads this example, which in its Spanish source was presumably a satirical and humorous text, as symptomatic of the Spanish national character. A quotation from a verse epistle of the Scottish humanist George Buchanan, in which France and the Iberian Peninsula are juxtaposed, functions as an effective final point.

A baron of Stubenberg (H.II, 29-30 – L. 429-431) offers a rejoinder to these extensive attacks on Spanish claims of primacy. Referring to the ancient geographer Strabo he tries to discover in the topography of Europe a hierarchy among the countries of the Continent. Spain is said to be the head, Germany the back of the European eagle. The poverty of Spain is said to have been exaggerated by its enemies. "Is Spain so hungry, that she must eat grasse?" is his rhetorical question, and he defends both the skillful financial policy of the country and the honor of Spanish soldiers. In this context he relates the sentimental story of a Spaniard who on his deathbed asks forgiveness of a Flemish lady whom he had assaulted.

After this short addendum in support of the Spanish claim to primacy, the next speaker proposes granting the palm to Great Britain. The expectations of the reader that Howell might offer new arguments in favor of his own country are, however, initially disappointed. Was he unable to advance additional reasons? The praise of the mild English climate (H.II, 33) opens the speech as it does in the Latin source, before the advantages of England's insular location are explicated upon. It is only in the description of the English as the "wellfavourdest, and best complexion'd people of any upon the

surface of the Earth” that Howell inserts a passage lauding the “excellent Intellectuals, sucking Capacities, and spacious Understandings” (H.II, 34 – cf. L. 467) of his compatriots. This assertion serves as a transition to the list of the worthies of the islands, among whom pride of place is given to theologians and missionaries. Howell expands this catalogue with a few names (II, 37: “*Perkins, Mountagu*, those great speculative Lords *Bacon* and *Herbert*”) but also stresses the presence of “divers excellent Dramatique Poets,” and in a passage catching the attention of the literary historian regrets the fact that

it is a great wrong to the Commonwealth of learning that their works are not made intelligible in a larger tounge then that Insulary Dialect ... (H.II, 37).

Howell himself contributed to making books from the Continent accessible to English readers, and thus it is understandable that he notes the absence of translations of English literary texts.

The further remarks of England’s advocate in *A German Diet* are taken from the *Consultatio*, including many anecdotes from the history of England. The marginal glosses in Lansius help to explain why Howell chose to follow Lansius so closely: Lansius drew largely on the work of the English historian and antiquary William Camden (*Britannia*, 1586, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. 1607) which, in Howell’s lifetime, was still the most reliable source of information. Occasionally, Howell contributes some new ideas, for instance, in his eulogy of the English monarchy (inserted during the Commonwealth). By relating the enthusiastic welcome given to Prince Charles by the citizens of London after the failure of his courtship of the Spanish Infanta, he included the remembered experience of his older readers. In the ensuing systematic description of the English counties he again sticks closely to Lansius, who gave an account of remarkable natural phenomena and more important cities. A careful comparison shows that Howell also borrows entertaining anecdotes associated with certain places. He speaks with more enthusiasm about the university towns than his source, and celebrates the old Gothic cathedral of St. Paul’s. Especially in his description of the western counties he adds some new details. A touch of local pride can easily be detected in the entry on the “happy” garden of Herefordshire where Howell had

grown up and had attended grammar school. People are said to live as long as patriarchs there:

... judge you of the salubrity and wholsomnesse of this County, when in the Town of *Hereford*, there was a Morrisdance of tenne men taken up on the *Welsh* side, that made above a thousand years betwixt them, the one supplying what the other wanted of a hundred ... (H.II, 46).

Rounding off his eulogy with praise for the kingdom of Ireland and the tribute to the young English navy (H. II, 50), yet another speaker then seconds this plea for Britain with a short statement to the effect that the noble character of the English dogs supplies an important argument in the debate over the primacy in Europe (L. 518-521 – H.II, 51-52). Howell supplements this curious contribution to the debate pointing to the excellence of English fighting cocks: “*Great Britain* has also the most generous and sprightfull Cocks of any Country ...” (H. II, 52). It is thus argued by implication that England must also be home to a nobler race of men meriting the first place among the Europeans. That dogs, which later cartoonists frequently associated with England, and first rate fighting cocks are used as the support for the English claim to supremacy is less surprising in light of a passage in Nicholas Barbon’s *A Discourse of Trade* (1690) which reads:

The inhabitants are naturally Couragious, as appears from the Effects of the Climate, in the Game Cocks, and Mastiff Dogs, being no where else so stout ... (60).

The popularity of this notion is based on a model of thought which played a crucial role in Howell’s work: the theory of climate.<sup>48</sup>

After this “weighty” argument a gentleman named Daniel Bensin energetically opposes the granting of the primacy to the island, using as evidence the extent of infertile land in England. In Howell’s text he adds to his counter-arguments the lack of initiative shown by the English in the use of the sea:

... the *Hollanders* make more benefit upon their coasts then they themselves, and which is a very reproachfull thing, they use to buy their own fish of them. Tis incredible how many hundreds of Busses

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<sup>48</sup> On Howell’s reliance on the theory of climate cf. my monograph *Die Klimatheorie*, 277-313.



they of *Holland* put forth every yeer, and what infinit benefit they make thereof (H.II, 53).

This insertion is not a mere coincidence. At the same time as Howell was, probably, putting the finishing touches to *A German Diet*, economic questions were high on the political agenda. After this topical allusion the speaker turns to an analysis of the English national character. The unreliability and inconstancy of the people is presented in a long simile taken from nature:

... as the sea tumbleth perpetually about the Countrey, so their braines do fluctuat in their noddles, which makes them so variable and unsteady (H.II, 54).

The decline in religious life and cultural activities as well as the laziness of its inhabitants serve as additional reasons for not granting a special place to Britain. The arrogance of English travelers who, when abroad, praise their own country to the skies, a bad habit which Howell himself had confirmed in his *Instructions* when reporting on incidents during Prince Charles' courtship of the Spanish Infanta (*Instructions*, 29), is severely criticized. Both Lansius and Howell (L. 526 – H.II, 54) then characterize life on the island with the proverbial phrase:

... *England* may be call'd the *Hell of Horses*, the *Purgatory of servants*, and the *Paradise of Women*.

This familiar "definition" is used by Howell also in another context but here he tries to explain it in detail (*Instructions*, 69). The poor treatment of horses which the English harm by unnecessarily making them gallop ("as if they were going for a ghostly father, a midwife, or a physician for one mortally sick" – H. II, 54-55), or in many races, not to speak of the lack of consideration for their servants who are forced to keep up with their master while he is riding on his horse, justify the first two phrases in the proverb. The privileges enjoyed by the women of England are, it is admitted, attributed to their beauty and their exquisite complexion. In the guise of critic, Howell shows less chivalry when referring to the phlegm and the unwomanly stoutness of many English ladies, which neutralize their otherwise appealing traits.

Conspicuous in this part in Howell's book is the absence of the ensuing attack against the English theater and the companies of actors touring Germany contained in Lansius, which reminds the reader today of the practices of English comedians such as those who performed at the court of the Archduke (Ferdinand) in Graz in 1608. The Latin source regards the successes of the English actors as problematic:

Anglis intereagulae voluptatibus ... et rebus nihili, atque adeo histrioniae jugiter operam dantibus; in qua sic profecerunt; ut jam apus nos Angli histriones omnium maxime delectent. Sed qui sunt isti homines? Sunt ludiones, sunt mimi; quos Imp. viles et inhonestos appellant, indignos, qui in honesto loco adnotentur sive collocentur (L. 525).

Howell's cuts were probably prompted by the fact that even when slipping into the skin of the opponent of England he did not want to join in the chorus of diatribes on the stage and the actors after the closing of the theaters by the Puritans. Moreover, he admired the "excellent Dramatique Poets" in this country (see above). But he castigated "insolentia" and "luxuria" as true English vices, with Henry VIII serving for Lansius and Howell as the prototype of the unscrupulous tyrant and bluebeard. The pristine courage of the English is said to have been lost through the importation of vices. "...their warrs are now in Tap-houses and Tobacco-shops" is Howell's effective formulation, and he illustrates the theme through two anecdotes involving James I, the archenemy of smoking (H. II, 56). That beer, a substitute for the native ale, and adulterated wine are also responsible for this degeneration, is used as a new argument in Howell's text.

After the description of the judicial murder of Maria Stuart, Howell's mouthpiece censures the passion for the bloody sport of hunting. Additionally he relates, again closely following Lansius (H. II, 58-59), several assassination attempts against English monarchs, including the Gunpowder Plot. As in the preceding "Oratio pro Britannia" a systematic account of English counties follows as a critical counterpart in which infertile landscapes are stressed, abuses described and gruesome incidents related. Some of Howell's additions provide interesting illustrations of the strategy with which this Royalist, forced to restrain himself under the Commonwealth and

spending many years in Fleet Prison, where he probably began this book, expressed his criticism of contemporary society. He finds fault, in particular, in the disorderly and excessive growth of London. “She is like the *Spleen* in the natural body, by whose swelling the rest of the members pine away ...” (H. II, 60-61) That he rails against the stubbornness of the Puritans in London because, in spite of regulations, they continue to construct their houses with wooden beams instead of stone or brick, may be partly ascribed to his antipathy to the citizens of London, the main supporters of the Parliamentarians.

But indeed such is the crossgrain'd and contumacious perverse nature of the Londoners, specially the schismatical part, that they suspect, or repine at any new command that comes from authority (H.II, 61).

How well founded Howell's anger at these “obstinate selfwitted people” was became painfully obvious in the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Following the description of the English counties, taken from Lansius with little alteration, the ire of the speaker increases as soon as the name of Scotland is mentioned. Uncharacteristically Howell's verbal assault gains in virulence as soon as he comes to deal with this country, where the limitations of his often praised wise reticence are evidently reached. The country of Scotland is for Howell's mouthpiece a kind of stony desert in which Judas might not even have found a tree on which he could hang himself, as is significantly noted (H. II, 63). The inhabitants of Scotland are said to be destitute; they live in wretched and dirty huts and are revoltingly ugly: “The sight of an ordinary *Scots* woman is a remedy against Lust; for they are as big as Cows in the middle: ...” (H.II, 63). Away from their home the Scots needed to earn their living as traveling peddlers. Howell is only too eager to borrow from his model older negative assessments of the northern neighbors of the English, presenting the “Highlanders or Redshanks” as gangs of robbers who are even accused of cannibalism (L. 522). Howell's antipathy towards Scotland is displayed in his own critical controversies with Scottish scholars and thinkers, among whom George Buchanan is exposed as a true representative of Scottish ungratefulness and malice. Howell reprints a long invective of this radical Protestant humanist against Mary Stuart

but not without introducing it with a preface reminiscent of Thomas Nashe's thoroughness, in his endeavor to destroy his opponent:

...these pedantick dunsticall incongruous lines, this most base and scurrilous Libell which hee vomited against her with that virulencie (H. II, 64).

As if infected by the aggressive tone of his vituperation, Howell has his speaker add a complaint concerning the ungratefulness of the Scots vis-à-vis Charles I, a text which is punctuated by interjections and rhetorical questions, and which conveys the anger of the speaker. In spite of many acts of kindness received they delivered him to his enemies:

O monsters of men! O horrid ingratitude, and perfidiousnes, which hath cast such foule blemishes, and indelible *Spotts* upon that nation, that I believe all the water of the *Tweed* will never be able to wash away (H. II, 65).

The excessive use of rhetorical strategies here demonstrates how eagerly Howell took advantage of the opportunity to condemn the political enemies of the executed king in the guise of a (fictitious) foreign speaker. Considering the harshness of his phrases it is not surprising that a notorious satire against Scotland published in 1649, and reprinted in 1659, was consistently ascribed to Howell.<sup>49</sup> At any rate his *A German Diet* offers evidence for the significant deterioration in the image of the Scots in English literature. As a consequence of the events after 1640, they were repeatedly labeled treacherous, greedy and stingy have-nots.

As for Ireland, Howell merely summarizes his Latin source (H. II, 66-67 – L. 556-561). Only in the concluding statement is there any new emphasis. In addition to the indolence of the English, who purchase fish and bacon specially prepared abroad, he censures their political incompetence, the craze of the nobility for fashions and their inclination to imitate foreign manners.

The scope of this essay precludes an analysis of the speeches for and against Poland and Hungary. That their advocates can argue in

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. *A Perfect Description of the People and Country of Scotland* (1649). The author of this invective, which was reprinted in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when anti-Scottish sentiment was at its peak, was probably Sir Anthony Weldon.

their favor for preeminence in Europe underlines the close ties existing between them and the other nations of Europe in the early seventeenth century. Incomparably more significant are the reflections, pro and contra, on the preeminence of Italy first put forward by the Lord “Laurentius von Wensin/Bensin” (L. 639-708 – H. III, 20-33.). Here again the established pattern is observed. The speaker first praises Italy’s fertility in the production of grain and excellent grapes, and then admires the splendor of great cities (“holy and magnificent *Rome*, ... gentile, and odoriferous *Naples* ...” H. III, 22 – L. 649). Next the genius of Italian artists and artisans is celebrated. In their supreme skills may be recognized “[t]he Divine ingenie, and inventive brain of the *Italian*.” The long list of great men on the Apennine peninsula is impressive enough, a list in which the names of Roman poets, philosophers, rhetoricians and politicians appear as well as those of Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio and Guiccardini. Howell copies many details concerning the description of the university towns of Italy found in cosmographies and chorographies together with a list of worthies containing military leaders and great discoverers and explorers, such as Columbus (H. III, 24-25 – L. 665-676). Among the Italian states, Howell pays particular attention to the Republic of Venice with its arsenal, palaces, and confluence of many nations, aspects which he knew fairly well from his own visit there; he then focuses on papal Rome. The incomparable spiritual power of the Popes is the subject of the last third of the speech “*Oratio pro Italia*,” with their secular power receiving more emphasis in Howell’s text than in his source:

How many Emperors have held the bason while he wash’d his hands,  
 ... How many thousand Princes have kiss’d his Pantouffle, and carried  
 him in a Chair upon their shoulders ... (H. III, 30).

The remarks on the successes of papal fiscal policies, which make capital out of the beliefs of the religious (H. III, 32), pave in Howell’s version of this speech (more than his comments on English monarchs deposed by the Pope) the ground for the following oration “*Contra Italiam*.”

For George Roelderer (H. III, 34-43 – L.: Georgius Kölderer, 709-805) this country in the south of Europe is merely a shadow of its former self. It has become the seat of diseases in both the natural and moral spheres. Before this implacable enemy of Italy, but especially of

the Papacy denounces the vices of its people, he is eager to refute the erroneous belief that the Apennine peninsula enjoys a very favorable climate. After mentioning the extreme heat, the frequent thunderstorms and the infertility of large districts he subjects individual regions and their inhabitants to severe criticism. The Neapolitans come off very badly. Their city is characterized with a familiar proverbial saying as a “paradis inhabited by devills” (H. III, 36 – L. 717-718). Additionally the Genovese, whose notoriety is indicated in Howell’s *Instructions* (41) by the label “white Moores,” have no redeeming features. Howell, it is true, has reservations concerning the four lines used by Scaliger who had chastised them, probably because, as Howell puts it, “the tartmouthed *Scaliger*” (H. III, 36) had, as a satirist, in the same context also disparaged the English. Though Howell himself had at times censured his fellow-countrymen, he, like writers of every generation, strongly disapproved of foreigners who took similar liberties. Howell thus omits the list of national characteristics found in the third book of *Poetices* by J. C. Saliger which Lansius had borrowed from the Italian humanist:

Germani fortes, simplices, animarum prodigi, veri amici, verique hostes ... itali conctatores, irrisores, factiosi, alieni sibiipsis, bellicosi coacti, servi ut ne serviant, dei contemptores ... (L. 719).

We can only speculate why Howell cut this passage from his text. Possibly he was irritated by Scaliger’s gibe against the “Angli” which had also offended Howell’s contemporary Peter Heylyn in his *Cosmography in Four Books*.<sup>50</sup> Howell also seems to have disagreed with Scaliger on a number of points, for instance, in the attribution of certain characteristics to the Spaniards. The adjectives “alacris, bibaces, loquaces” did not correspond to Howell’s own view of that nation as expressed in earlier books. He may also have objected to Scaliger’s method of merely lining up negative epithets (“huddling up a company of Epithets” H. III, 36) for the individual nations. He preferred a more extensive description livened up with proverbs and anecdotes and the juxtaposition of national characters. The question

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<sup>50</sup> See Justus Caesar Scaliger, *Poetices libri septem* (1561). The passage which Lansius reproduced but which Howell omitted can be found in chapter 17 of *Poetices* (“Natio sive Gens”). Both Lansius and Heylyn, who resented this passage, relied presumably on later editions of Scaliger’s *Poetices*.

why such a catalogue should appear in a book on poetics merits further analysis.

After this digression the Italians are generally blamed for perverting their talents and obtaining perfection in wickedness:

I will not say the *Italians* are ignoble, but the corrupters of Nobility;  
They are not illiterat, but the perverters of letters: They are not  
vicious, but the very cutthroats of vertu (H. III, 36 – L. 720).

The corrupting influence of this nation is illustrated by a proverbial saying which figured in variations in Italophobic publications and which, recoined for the English had occurred in Roger Ascham's emphatic warning against journeys to Italy:

*Tudesco Italionato é un diavolo incarnate* (sic, H. III, 36).

The achievements of the Italians extolled in the preceding speech cannot be denied. The opponent therefore restricts himself to stressing the general decline in culture and the current absence of patrons of the arts there. The indisputably rich Italian literature is rejected as it is morally highly dubious.

...touching the older sect of *Italians*, Authors [*sic*]<sup>51</sup>, there is more vice then vertu to be found in most of them; witnes those triumvirs of wanton love, *Catullus*, *Tibullus*, and *Propertius*; *Ovid* might be called a pander to Venus in some of his works... (H. III, 37-38 – L. 730).

In an intriguing addition to the Latin model Howell debunks Virgil, who, long before Homer came to be celebrated as the great natural genius, is presented here as a mere “ape” of the Greek epic poet.<sup>52</sup> The reader may be surprised by the vehemence of the attack against the Roman poet whom Dryden and the Augustans came generally to regard as a model for poets. While Scaliger, for instance, had patriotically granted place of honor to Virgil, some Elizabethan critics, among them George Chapman, the translator of Homer's epics, had expressed a different opinion. Probably relying on unorthodox continental critics who were engaged in a lively debate concerning the relative merits of the two epic poets from antiquity, Thomas Cutwode

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<sup>51</sup> “Authors” is an evident mistranslation for “Auditores,” those who are listening.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. H. O. White, *Plagiarism and Imitation*, 163.

dubbed Virgil “the curious ape of *Homer*,” without, however, expressing condescension or even contempt for Virgil’s imitation of Homer. Howell most likely drew on his own experience when he mentions a painting in which Virgil’s dependence on Homer is drastically presented:

I have seene *Homer*’s picture in a posture of vomiting and all the Latin poets about him licking up what he had spewd, but *Virgil* lapp’d up more than all the rest (H. III, 39).

Having settled his accounts with the humanists as mere imitators of the Romans, the Italophobic speaker increases his vehement attack when addressing the issue of the claim to power of the prelates. A historical survey introduces his polemic against the papacy and culminates, in Lansius, in a fictitious demand of the Emperor for the Pope to resign (L. 747-750, esp. 750) and in the recommendation, clearly intended as flattery, to place a theologian from Tübingen on the Apostolic See to initiate the necessary reforms. Howell omits the worst verbal assault against the Pope, though he also rejects the Church’s claim to secular power, and he radically shortens the seemingly endless list of Italian vices and criminal acts (L. 753-805). He adopts only a few of the numerous examples illustrating the alleged avarice and cupidity of the Italians, but he retains the stereotype of the Italian as the champion among murderers employing poison:

What various inventions have they of poysoning, sometimes by the smoak of a candle, sometimes by the suavity of a flower, sometimes by a poyson’d glove or handkerchief ... (H. III, 42).

The notorious story of the revengeful Milanese serves as a crowning example of the wickedness of the Italians, a story that Elizabethan writers copied from Henri Estienne, Gentillet and Jean Bodin, and which played a crucial role in Italophobic propaganda.<sup>53</sup> Compared with this monstrosity the ill treatment meted out to the wife of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa by the Milanese appears as a mere macabre joke. While the antagonist of Italy is carried away by his excited denunciations of Italian wickedness, Howell terminates the

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. my argument in “Der perfekte Rachemord,” included under the title “Perfect Revenge” in this volume.



harangue fairly abruptly. With his predilection for pointed phrases he borrows from his source a list of cities in which each is presented as an instructor in a particular vice which the “Transmontani” come to know on their “Giro di Italia.”

Whereas in Lansius’ text Germany is then subjected to critical examination, Howell immediately passes on to L. Nicholas Bawnickhausen. His remarks, which are programmatically labeled “An Apology” (or as “a Temperament to the preceding *Orationes*” H. III, 45), largely correspond to Bawnickhausen’s plea for Germany (L. 857-900). The speaker shows considerable insight when he begins with a defense of the individual countries and nations, stressing the common lot of humanity, the “humanum genus,” and when he tries to prevent the iniquity of individuals from damaging the reputation of a nation as a whole.<sup>54</sup> Thus he states with reference to the Spanish, “... All *Spaniards* are not like the Duke of Alva” (H. III, 46 – L. 861). Howell tightens and rearranges the parts of this speech delivered in a conciliatory tone. The lines referring to the military achievements of the English stem from his pen. In parenthesis the fortifications of Vienna are again attributed to an Englishman (cf. H. I, 10) who had concluded an agreement with an archduke to that effect. Possibly this allusion is a curious rendition of the conflict between Archduke Leopold and Richard the Lionhearted and the use the ransom paid by the latter was put to. Howell also takes advantage of this last contribution to the disputation to praise the character of the English nation even in adversity and to lament the political union between England and Scotland: “... that addition of *Scotland* to *England* was unhappy and fatal to her, for from that cold Northern dore blew all her troubles” (H. III, 47) is his phrasing in accordance with a proverbial saying which he himself employed several times in his texts (for instance, in *Tears for England*, 1644). The attempt of the pro-German speaker to make light of the dipsomania of his fellow-countrymen gives Howell an opportunity to satirize the bad habits of his own countrymen to consume large quantities of alcohol without eating, and here too he uses an earlier passage with only slight variation (H. I, 37):

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. the similar enlightened attitude of Sir Thomas Browne in his *Religio Medici*.

For wheras the *German* doth *pelt* the brain with small shot, ... the Englishman doth use to *Storm* it with Canon Bullet, I mean with huge drawghts at a time (H. III, 49).

In the eyes of the enlightened and moderate speaker even Rome and Italy are kindly treated, which does not, however, prevent him from granting Germany the laurels in the contest for preeminence in Europe.

After some brief positive interventions by other noblemen Howell has Duke Frederique close the Diet. While Fridericus Achilles in Lansius' book, in spite of his role as president and umpire of the Diet, does not conceal his preference for Germany (L. 903), Howell's Frederique (H. III, 51) abstains from even suggesting the preeminence of any country and nation. Instead of any general expression of respect for the nations of the Occident (L. 902-903), Howell has him briefly list the merits of the individual European peoples, their virtues and talents:

Let *Germany* glory that ... *Caesar* keeps his court in her. Let *Spain* be the *Queen of Mines*, *France* of *Men*; let *Great Britain* be the *Queen of Iles*, *Italy* the *Queen of Policy*, with all sorts of *Elegancies*; let it be granted that the *French* and *Pole* are best a[t] *Horseback*, the *Englishman* and *Hollander* upon a deck, the *Spaniard* at a siege, the *Italian* in a *Treaty*, the *Hungarian* upon a rampart, &c. (H. III, 51).

Behind the speaker of this peroratio we can recognize Howell himself, a man whose urbanity was apparent in the advice contained in his *Instructions*. In the same way as the polyglot author recommends to his pupils the value of the study of continental languages (and thus shows a degree of empathy and pedagogical talent) Howell advises them not to disseminate crude generalizations and gross heterostereotypes. Yet, though he does not forget to add the admonition: "... it is a generous kind of civility to report alwayes the best" (*Instructions*, 65), Howell was himself inclined to generalize and transmit traditional clichés. This human frailty, however, bears fruit when he evinces a readiness to acknowledge the particular achievements of other nations. This frame of mind is reflected in the concluding words of the Duke at the end of *A German Diet*:

Every Nation hath a particular aptitude to something more then another, and this by the common decree of Nature, who useth to

disperse her benefits, and not powre them all together upon any one peeple. (H. III, 51).

Howell's refusal to reach any decision in the contest over preeminence in Europe in his adaptation of Lansius' book may be regarded as his original contribution to the idea of toleration which had been aired in Lansius' book. This was by no means a negligible accomplishment in a century torn by strife especially in the country where *A German Diet* had ostensibly convened. This achievement to some extent justifies the praise which he received for *A German Diet*.

Both in the *Consultatio* and its English adaptation the president of the assembly acknowledges the contributions of the participants. He expresses the fact that Europe had never been so closely examined, toured within such a short time ("his paucibus diebus," L. 902), and with such relatively little physical effort. Even at the very end of the book the illusion is maintained that an assembly of princes had debated the issue of the hegemony in Europe, an undertaking which, considering the size of the volume, would indeed have taken a few days. It seems therefore appropriate to ask whether Lansius' *Consultatio* (and its English adaptation) was merely a fanciful fictional exercise as had been assumed at the beginning of this investigation.

### III.

The prefatory material contained in the *Consultatio* in the edition of 1620, which has formed the basis for this comparison, is omitted in Howell's version. The *Consultatio* is opened by a letter to Frederick, Duke of Württemberg in which the hostile reaction to the book is mentioned. Lansius defends his work, which had been put on the notorious Index librorum prohibitorum. In his epistle he refers to the Diet as "auspiciis Celsitudinis T. fratris, Ducis Friderici Achillis, & ante annos aliquammultos in Illustri Collegio habita" (sign. a). This formulation suggests that the volume was, indeed, the protocol of a disputation among princes which Lansius had (merely) edited. The matter-of-factness with which Lansius added material to later editions of the *Consultatio* and thus expanded it considerably, however, makes it plausible to assume that he was not only the editor but also the author of this compendium of the countries and nations of Europe, and that his use of the division of the material into speeches 'pro' and 'contra' individual nations was simply a successful strategy for

presenting the material. That he made Frederick Achilles, the younger brother of the current duke the president of the assembly of German princes, might thus be interpreted as an original form of eulogy.<sup>55</sup> The following “Praefatio ad Lectorem,” in which Lansius defends the fruitfulness of juxtaposing vices and virtues as a useful method of revealing the truth in the context of the national contest, seems compatible with such a reading. The conflict of opinions of the speakers is incidentally also reasonably explained by including mathematical reflections. The innumerable combinations of monosyllabic words in two lines of verse demonstrate the plurality of both the characteristics and opinions concerning foreign nations. The message of greeting which immediately follows, “Ephorus Illustris Collegii, Joannes Joachimus a Grüenthal” (sign. A), contains a valuable hint concerning the true character of the *Consultatio*. On March 25, 1613 von Grüenthal issued an invitation on behalf of the “Collegium illustre” to a public function to take place the next day, in which princes and noblemen would participate under the chairmanship of the “Princeps.” This passage in the text confirms the assumption expressed above that the *Consultatio* in its original form, published under the name of Fridericus Achilles, represents the minutes of an assembly spread over several days. The repeated mention of the “Collegium illustre” also provides a clue to the kind of function. Lansius, who thus served (merely) as a kind of secretary to a diet of noblemen, was according to the surviving manuals, a teacher at this “Collegium illustre.” In this function he had from the outset a formative influence on the book and was thus qualified to add new material in its later editions.

Naturally, the noble participants of this academic function are also of interest. The registrar’s records of the University of Tübingen include the names of several of the speakers. N. Buwinckhausen, for instance, had been matriculated on July 29, 1607, while two knights from Holstein, Daniel and Laurentius Wensin, the one functioning as the opponent of Britain, the other as the advocate for Italy in the *Consultatio*, were entered in the register on October 9, 1611.<sup>56</sup> Most of

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. Schmidt, *Kepler*, 285.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. *Matrikeln der Universität Tübingen*, ed. A Bürk and W. Wille, Vol. 2: 1600 bis 1710 (1953), 43 and 75.

the speakers cannot, however, be found in the registers,<sup>57</sup> the reason being that the Collegium illustre, the academy of noblemen which owed its existence to an idea of Duke Louis, had developed since its opening in 1592 into an autonomous institution outside the University of Tübingen, where teachers instructed Protestant noblemen from Germany and abroad. The pupils, who were taught principally in law and history, were not regular students of the university but lived and studied in the company of their instructors, even with their own preceptors in the building of the Collegium. They were accommodated in this impressive edifice, whose round towers give it the semblance of a fortified building, which today under the name of Wilhelmsstift, houses the seminary of Catholic Theology of Tübingen University. This institution was built not far from the dwelling of Kepler's teacher Mästlin, who at that time initiated him into Copernican astronomy, and was dedicated in a solemn ceremony on September 27, 1592. Directed by "senior stewards," among whom von Grüenthal was the most successful, this academy had won an excellent reputation by 1613. This is the reason why so many names of princes and higher-ranking noblemen appear in the list of speakers in the *Consultatio*, prepared by Lansius, a longtime teacher of this institution. The *Europäische Stammtafeln*, family trees of European nobles, include from among the speakers Joachim Ernest von Holstein, a relative of the Danish wife of King James I of England,<sup>58</sup> who, in the *Consultatio*, pleads the case of France, and whom the reader later encounters as a guest and traveling partner of the English diplomat Sir Henry Wotton.<sup>59</sup> Of the two dukes of Württemberg participating in the "Consultatio," Fridericus Achilles, aged 27, takes the chair. His brother Magnus was, according to the genealogical tables, at that time only 13 years old. This fact must not be ignored in an analysis of the text of the *Consultatio*. The fluent Latin of the speakers, the innumerable learned citations cannot conceal the fact that this function was merely a disputation of noble pupils and students, an exercise required by the constitution of the academy, with the clear purpose of fostering the rhetorical skills of the pupils. This didactic character has

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<sup>57</sup> Cf. the essays by K. W. Schüz (1850), Eugen Schneider (1898), and the short monograph by August Willburger (1912).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. *Europäische Stammtafeln*, Vol. 1, 76 and 89.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Smith, *Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*, vol.1, 165-167, vol. 2, 174-175.

been lost in Howell's book. By changing the framework of the book the text appears as the description of a serious council of princes.

One of the speeches at this meeting is conspicuous for its brevity and content, that of Wolfgangus, baron de Stubenberg, who praises England because of its noble breed of dogs (L. 518-520 – cf. H. II, 51-52). As a certain George of Stubenberg also takes part in the debate, readers with some interest in regional history may wonder whether these two speakers were members of the influential provincial Styrian house of Stubenberg. They might have wished to receive their education at a Protestant academy for noblemen in Württemberg, this heart of Protestantism, after the closing of the Protestant academy in Graz, Styria. When consulting the genealogical tables of the Stubenberg family drawn up by Johann Loserth, we do in fact discover two sons of Georg Hartmann of Stubenberg with the names of Georg and Wolfgang. As they were only fifteen and thirteen years old, it would not seem plausible to assume that they were participants in the "Consultatio" if one did not know that Magnus von Württemberg was only thirteen as well when he delivered his speech at this public event. The somewhat naïve tone of Wolfgang's speech in favor of England may thus be explained by the youth of the speaker. That the two young Styrian noblemen were really participants is made more probable by the presence at the Diet of another nobleman whom Wolfgang refers to as "cognatus" (L. 518) and who, according to the genealogical tables mentioned above, married Wolfgang's older sister Sidonia: Paul of Eibiswald. These reflections are confirmed by Johann Loserth's *Geschichte des Altsteirischen Herren- und Grafenhauses Stubenberg* (237-238), where its author, on the basis of fragments of a family album, infers that the two young noblemen spent some considerable time in Tübingen. The final confirmation of this point is provided by Jacob Ramsler's valuable documentation of the students at the Collegium illustre from the ranks of the nobility kept in Tübingen. There, among the numerous coats of arms from all German provinces, as well as from Sweden and Denmark, there are also illustrations of the coats of arms of the two young members of the Stubenberg family and the coat of arms of "Paulus von Ejbeswaldt." Ramsler's beautiful but rare volume also includes the name of the province of origin and the date of their immatriculation (which was August 4, 1612, in the case of the two Stubenberg sons; Ramsler, 16). Ramsler incidentally also notes in his

slim volume the names of the private tutors of the Styrian participants in this debate on European nations on a large scale, a fact which may interest experts in regional history. Wilhelm Richter von Duscof accompanied the two Stubenberg youths while Johann Prückh von Buzbach was the tutor of “Eybeswald” [sic] (Ramsler, 41).

The participation of the two sons of a prominent Styrian nobleman in whose house Johannes Kepler lived after his wedding is thus confirmed. The participation of members of a leading aristocratic family may possibly also explain the fact why the University Library in Graz possesses no fewer than five copies of this work. The controversial *Consultatio* must have drawn the attention of Catholic and Protestant noblemen in the province, not to speak of the Jesuits in Graz, especially if they knew that the nephews and godchildren of the powerful George the Elder of Stubenberg had participated in this public disputation. Following the emigration of George of Stubenberg after Ferdinand’s Edict of August 1, 1628 against the Protestant nobility, forcing them into exile, the former pupils of the Collegium illustre, who had in the meantime converted to Catholicism, now assumed leading positions among the Styrian nobility. This fact may later have played a role in the acquisition of the fourth edition of the *Consultatio* by Styrian librarians. To an even greater degree the popularity of the book must have been fostered in the Protestant regions of Germany by the involvement of prominent speakers. Yet the lively interest in this intense disquisition on the virtues and vices of the nations of Europe was not prompted by political or merely regional factors. The literary historian will look for the factors which ensured a large readership for this volume and which shaped the content and the form of the *Consultatio*.

The numerous references to sources in the marginal glosses of the Latin book provide a lively impression of the world in which the disputation was rooted: the historical manuals of Guicciardini, Thuan, Bodin, and the cosmographies by Merula, Botero, or Münster. Among others, Joannes Boemus functioned as a pioneer for future ethnographers in his *Omnium Gentium Mores Leges et Ritus* (1520)<sup>60</sup>. The material contained in his innovative survey of the customs, institutions and characteristics of various nations was almost completely borrowed from sources in classical antiquity. That his

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Stanzel, *Europäer: Ein imagologischer Essay*, 26-28, and *Europäischer Völkerspigel*, 14 on Boemus.

successors retained his method accounts for the high degree of consensus in the description of the individual nations. These shared roots also help to explain why James Howell needed to make only minor changes in his adaptation of the *Consultatio*.

While Boemus devoted much space to the exotic peoples of the Old World, his contemporary Cornelius Agrippa in his treatise *De Incertitudine et Vanitatae Scientiarum* restricted himself to the juxtaposition of European peoples. In this work he put into words an axiom of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries when stressing the unmistakable features of national character and illustrated this conviction (widespread among the humanists of the second generation) with the detailed comparison of the four most important European nations in every sphere of life.<sup>61</sup> Agrippa's juxtaposition serves as the nucleus of a scheme which became remarkably popular in an age in which national feelings and a national consciousness were first stirring. This pattern seems to have borne fruit especially in Germany and to have been intensified in the concept of a contest between the nations. The shared European tradition is mirrored in the non-fiction of that age. Limitations of space preclude any discussion of these lists of characteristics of European nations, for instance in the early travel guides, such as Hieronymus Turlerus' popular *De Peregrinatione* (1574), which was used far beyond the confines of Turlerus' German patria or in the extensive description of nations provided in the impressive atlases such as Gerardus Mercator's awe-inspiring *Atlas sive Cosmographicae Meditationes* in the 1623 edition.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> On Agrippa von Nettesheim cf. *Europäischer Völkenspiegel* 18-19. Before Agrippa provides a schematic and evaluating representation of the character and the behavior of 'Germani,' 'Itali,' 'Hispani' and 'Galli,' he offers a general statement on the unmistakable differences of the nations in every sphere of life: "Habent singulae nationes à superis agnate sibi morum discrimina per quae facile a se invicem discernantur, vt cuius quisq. nationis sit oriundus, à voce, à sermon, ab oratione, à consilio, à conuersatione, à victu, à negotio, ab amore & odio, ab ira ac militia, similibusq. exercitijs facile cognoscatur." *Opera*, 2 vols., rpt. 1970, vol. 2, 131. An English translation H. C. Agrippa, *Of the Vanitie and Uncertaintie of Artes and Sciences* was available from 1569 onwards, cf. page 72: "Every nation hath a particulare difference of his manners giuen him from aboue, by the which the one is easily knowen from the other ...". On Agrippa and Joannes Boemus see also Hodgen, *Early Anthropology*, 180 and 131-143 respectively.

<sup>62</sup> For a recent learned study of early guide books and the practice of the Grand Tour and traveling in general see Justin Stagl, *Eine Geschichte der Neugierde: Die Kunst des Reisens, 1650-1800* (2002).



The integration of this pattern of thought in the work of Justus Caesar Scaliger has already been stressed. In his *Poetics*, which were based, with a significant variation, on Aristotle's concept of mimesis, the difference between nations appears as an important category, and the truthful sketching of representatives of individual nations is regarded as an important task of the poets. While the consideration of (stereotype) national characters was thus defined as an important concern of the poets, many dictionaries offered appropriate vocabulary, which was primarily taken from classical authors. In the European context the famous *Epithetorum Thesaurus* of the French humanist Ravisius Textor probably reached the widest circle of users. Based on this thesaurus were other manuals listing the stock of suitable epithets "ad usum delphini" which belonged to the shared cultural tradition at the time. Such dictionaries were used in Latin schools where the pupils were not only instructed in a good Latin style but also acquired ostensibly, in this fashion, valuable secular knowledge. It is evident that the Collegium illustre in Tübingen, with its chief teacher Lansius, pursued a similar goal.<sup>63</sup> In this academy students were, of course, able to build on knowledge acquired in Latin schools and could thus develop a panorama of the whole of Europe which was appropriate for the future tasks of the young (Protestant) noblemen. How important the role of schools was in the tradition of notions of the character of other nations is thus apparent.

Another literary factor in a narrower sense seems to have contributed to the composition of the *Consultatio* and its arrangement in orations shaped as eulogies or satirical invectives: the cultivation of Theophrastian characters in European literatures from about 1600 onwards. The speeches pro and contra share one feature with these "characters:" the tendency towards polar opposites, the intensification of qualities ascribed to the represented object. The law governing this literary genre in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was succinctly described by Richard Flecknoe in 1665 when he claims that the character "extols to *Heaven*, or depresses into *Hell*; having no midplace for *Purgatory* left."<sup>64</sup> This

<sup>63</sup> The continuing interest in the question of the primacy of individual nations with patriotic implications in the work of the Collegium is exemplified in a text by Hermann Flayder, which has not survived: "De principatu urbium excellentiorum in Europa: ubi semper Germanorum urbes urbium aliarum nationum opponuntur et praeferuntur." Cf. Gustav Bebermeyer, *Hermann Flayders Ausgewählte Werke*, 192.

<sup>64</sup> Quoted from Greenough's essay "Characters of Nations," rpt. In W. C. Abbott, ed., *Collected Studies of Chester Noyes Greenough*, 230.

practice results in the somewhat archaic, crude features of this genre. In the *Consultatio* extreme opinions and assessments are integrated as contributions to a debate, and thus became part of the dialectics of a whole which leads to a certain moderation in the final assessment.

It is probably no coincidence that John Barclay's *Icon Animorum* appeared for the first time in 1614, in the year following the publication of the *Consultatio*. This book by a Scotsman, who had grown up in France, provides a detailed account on the various European nations and, like the *Consultatio*, reveals much about the climate of opinion of that epoch. Both books became remarkably popular both on the Continent and in England, with their popularity not impeded by the fact that for a number of years there were no vernacular translations of these books as Latin was still the lingua franca of the time.<sup>65</sup> Thomas May provided an English translation of Barclay's book in 1630, which gave new readers access to this text. Howell did the same for the *Consultatio* when he published his adaptation as *A German Diet*. A direct influence of his work is noticeable in at least two texts which reflect the contentious spirit of the late Commonwealth years.<sup>66</sup>

The anonymous author of the *Character of Italy* (1660) is satisfied with a primitive listing of a number of disparaging remarks excerpted from Italophobic pamphlets. The speech against Italy in Howell's book apparently offered some material for this unscrupulous vituperation as shown in the description of the Italian practice of murdering through poison, or of the notorious act of immortal revenge by a Milanese assassin; this presumptive link is demonstrated by identical phrasing and some proverbial sayings scattered throughout the text (Cf. *Character of Italy*, 47 and 50-51). Another loosely structured pamphlet, *The Character of Spain* (1660), is also largely bogged down in crude vituperations. Its author seems to have borrowed material for his invective from Barclay's *Icon Animorum* and Howell's *Instructions* and *A German Diet*. Moreover, he seems to be indebted to Howell's speech against Spain for material for

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<sup>65</sup> Proficiency in Latin was not limited to a restricted circle of scholars. Even tavern keepers in Germany seem to have had a working knowledge of the language. Cf. Bates, *Touring in 1600*, 47-48. There are several copies of the *Consultatio* in the British Library. One of them (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. of 1620), which has been used in this essay as the basis for the comparison with the English version by Howell, bears the coats of arms and the signum J.R. It may have been part of the library of James I.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Boyce, *The Polemic Character*.

anecdotes supporting his attacks against the Jesuits, who are presented as typical Spaniards, and for the description of the atrocities perpetrated by the Spanish against the Native Americans (*Character of Spain*, 19-33; 36-38). That the author of this crude concoction should, in the concluding passage, make an about-turn and list the virtues of the Spanish and the attractive features of their country similarly seems to suggest some reliance on Howell's *A German Diet*.

The unequal distribution of emphasis (on virtues and vices) illustrates that the speeches against various nations in the *Consultatio* and its English adaptation found a stronger echo than their positive counterparts. The former may be assumed to have come to serve as a storehouse for anti-Catholic propaganda. The arguments of the critics of individual countries were apparently more easily remembered than the pleas in favor of them, even by participants in the disputation in Tübingen. A very illuminating piece of evidence can be found in a hitherto unknown letter by Georg of Stubenberg<sup>67</sup> who had spoken at the Tübingen "council" in favor of Spain. A few years later on January 23, 1620 he wrote from Seville to his godfather and mentor, Georg the Elder of Stubenberg, and after a short apology for his long silence reported how unbelievably impoverished Spain was in spite of the fleet of ships bringing silver from the mines of Latin America. Before reporting on his revulsion of the superstition of the Spaniards:

Leur Religion est pire que celles des Indiens; il y force sorciers entre les prestres de ce pais ici, qui sçauent voler en l'air & aller sur le manteau comme est peint par tout en leurs eglises. & quant les diables les a dechirer [sic] en pieces ils ramacent les pieces ...

Offering a strange, distorted account of the veneration of saints and of relics, he blames the laziness and the pride of the Spaniards for their poverty. His remarks remind us strongly of the speech of his antagonist in Lansius:

L'occasion que le pais est si pauvre, est que les gens ne travaillent point. & sont tous gentis hommes paisans aussi bien que Contes.

Presumably, the young Stubenberg nobleman is not presenting his autoptic impression in his epistle but is using polemical

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<sup>67</sup> Familienkorrespondenz, 9/48, House of Stubenberg Archive, Steiermärkisches Landesarchiv, Graz.

representations which are available, for instance, in the oration “Contra Hispaniam.”

That in that age of irreconcilable conflicts with religious and political enemies the scheme of nations and the questions of the preeminence of individual peoples entered literary texts also in other forms is evident in a passage in Kepler’s *Somnium*. As this passage illuminates one aspect of the problem discussed in this essay but remained obscure to the German translator of Kepler’s imaginative journey to the moon, it seems appropriate to consider it at the end of this chapter.

At the beginning of the report proper on the moon the “Daemon of Levania” lists all those who seem unsuitable as astronauts, and he catalogues potential travelers through outer space:

Nulli a nobis sedentarii adsciscuntur in hunc comitatum, nulli corpulenti, nulli delicate; sed legimus eos, qui aetatem veredorum assiduo usu consumunt; aut qui navibus frequenter Indias adeunt, pane biscocto, allio, piscibus duratis, & cibis abhorrentibus victitare sueti. Inprimis nobis aptae sunt vetulae exsuccae, quibus inde a pueritia trita est ratio, hircos nocturnos, aut furcas, aut trita pallia inequitandi trajiciendique per immania terrarum spacia. Nulli e Germania viri apti sunt; Hispanorum sicca corpora non respuimus (*Gesammelte Werke* 11.2, 323).

We admit to this company nobody who is lethargic, fat, or tender ... On the contrary, we choose those who spend their time in the constant practice of horsemanship or often sail to the Indies, inured to subsisting on hardtack, garlic, dried fish and unappetizing victuals ... We especially like dried-up old women (60), experienced from an early age in riding he-goats at night or forked sticks or threadbare cloaks, and in traversing immense expanses of the earth. No men from Germany are acceptable; we do not spurn the firm bodies of Spaniards... (*Kepler’s Somnium*, 15).

In one of the notes composed later Kepler explains and justifies the final remark of this passage, which may have offended some, and supplements the assessment contained in the passage:

Laudem tamen habet, ut Germania corpulentiae et edacitatis, sic Hispania ingenii et iudicii, et frugalitatis. In subtilibus igitur scientiis, cujusmodi est Astronomia (et praesertim haec Lunaris, constans positione insolenti, si quis ex Luna spectaret), si pariter annitantur Germanus et Hispanus, multum hic praevertet (*Gesammelte Werke* 11.2, 339-340).

Even so, Germany is just as famous for corpulence and gluttony as Spain is for genius, discernment, and temperance. Therefore in the exact sciences, the category to which astronomy belongs (especially the lunar astronomy, which stands in an unusual position if an observer looks out from the moon), should a German and a Spaniard exert themselves equally, the latter would come out far ahead. (*Kepler's Somnium*, 65-66)<sup>68</sup>

For the contemporary reader no explanation was necessary why Kepler's stressed the lean Spaniards among the qualified candidates aspiring to such an interstellar journey, which demanded a subtle nature and limited weight. His readers were familiar with the contrast between the well-fed German inclined to intemperance and the gaunt, lean Spaniard with his frugal meals. That this also implied a contrast in the faculties of the mind was one of the key ideas of contemporary psychology. If Kepler ostensibly contrasts at least semi-seriously the sophisticated mind of the Spaniard suitable for achievements in astronomy with the heavier, more ponderous soul of the German, he borrows a concept which had been seriously and systematically outlined in contemporary psychological studies such as in Juan Huarte's influential *Examen de Ingenios*,<sup>69</sup> which offered an analysis of national talents. That Kepler was familiar with the *Consultatio* of his friend Lansius, however, may be presumed as he had received this book as a gift. His short allusion to the contest between nations in the note later added to his *Somnium* thus possibly mirrors his own reading of Lansius' book in which a much favored idea of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century found its most thorough and systematic representation.

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<sup>68</sup> Cf. Rosen's translation (65) of the rest of Kepler's nota 61 (in *Gesammelte Werke* 11.2, 323). "In thinking up jokes, you should bear this, too, in mind, that while you believe you are winning the approval of one listener within the hearing of another, you deeply offend the latter and also his neighbor. [...] And that is why I predicted that this book would be laughed at by the Germans, but held in some esteem by the Spaniards."

<sup>69</sup> Cf. chapter 8 of this important psychological handbook which attributes certain talents to individual nations of Europe and the Mediterranean. Huarte allocates to the Germans and their neighbors a retentive memory but only a mediocre "understanding," while attributing "strong reason" to the Spaniards. On Huarte see the remarks in my *Klimatheorie*, 47-53.

## Chapter 6: Transatlantic Differences: (Mis)Perceptions in Diachronic Perspective

A dramatic increase in differences of opinion between spokespersons and political decision-makers on both sides of the Atlantic was noted by observers from the late 1990s onwards. Political tensions within the Atlantic community reached their climax in the Iraq crisis during the military intervention of Allied troops, a development that “experts” such as Robert Kagan<sup>1</sup> commented on with pointedly polarizing remarks on the Pax Americana. The military intervention occurred without the proper resolution of the Security Council desired by the closest allies of the USA. The debate was accompanied by a set of negative judgments which fell not only on the US Administration of the day, but also on America as such, and its brutal enforcement of its economic interests; on the other hand, polemical and stereotyped comments on the ungrateful, effete Continental-Europeans incapable of any action were also loud.

If we take into consideration the emergence of such strikingly divergent voices (voices which in the US also raised the possibility of a breach with Old Europe and even suggested that the remains of fallen GIs ought to be brought home from French territory and which in Europe led to the rise of the harshest anti-American sentiments since Vietnam) these developments make it necessary to dig deeper, to the very roots of these different modes of perception of vital questions in a globalized world. In the following the sources for these divergent collective patterns of behavior are identified throughout various spheres of life in both societies.

Before we move on to the discussion of these problematic issues from diverse disciplinary angles,<sup>2</sup> it appears appropriate to

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. his analysis in *Paradise and Power* (2003), which initially appeared in *Policy Review*.

<sup>2</sup> The original version of this essay in German served as an introduction to a collection of essays based on an international colloquium and thus alluded to several of the following articles. References to these essays are omitted here.

delve into the eventful history of the relationship between the two Atlantic continents from a cultural historical perspective. I would thus like to briefly reconsider the images that have over the past 200 years emerged regarding the respective 'other'. An insight into these constantly evolving perceptions of the other, which were always influenced by the preconceived opinions of visitors and by reciprocal misunderstandings, promises to be beneficial for a dialogue that today appears more necessary than ever. Thus the following contribution, which also considers socio-psychological factors, draws upon analytical strategies, terms and concepts employed in the field of comparative imagology.<sup>3</sup>

If we consider the history of transatlantic relations, we are confronted with the question whether the differences in perception mentioned above are reflected repeatedly in the texts, or whether the American and European auto- and heterostereotypes are temporary phenomena, linked to political upheavals, to demographic or other processes of change. Might we discern phases of greater divergences, of strong polarization due to increased ethnocentrism in Atlantic societies since early colonialism? Are there moments in which the image of the corresponding part of Atlantic culture in each case drastically evolves, possibly even changes into the opposite?

The acute awareness of crisis and the differences in perception are echoed in a large number of publications. Numerous texts from over two centuries reveal that individuals from the Old World have hardly ever looked on America from a neutral position. They have regarded the US as a fascinating or an inspiring undertaking, as a great chance and reason for hope, or as a menace, a misfortune and even as a nightmare. However, many of these viewpoints that are to be found in non-fiction and literary texts alike, have their origins in preconceived and borrowed opinions. Conversely, American

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<sup>3</sup> Comparative imagology was developed in the field of comparative literature and within cultural studies approaches across the philological branches. After the publication of Hugo Dyserinck's trailblazing essay "Zum Problem der images and mirages und ihrer Untersuchung im Rahmen der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft," (1966), a number of monographs, collections of essays and independent essays by Günther Blaicher, Franz Karl Stanzel, Joep Leerssen, and Manfred Beller illustrated the value of this imagological approach. Beller has also provided a thematic bibliography in *Il Confronto Letterario* (1997). For a discussion on the future and potential of imagology, cf. Leerssen, "The Rhetoric of National Character: A Programmatic Survey" (2000).

intellectuals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries measured the merits of their own country in relation to Europe only, a truth that is perhaps hard today for European visitors to comprehend as they observe a tendency in the American media to neglect Europe.

Various aspects concerning the emergence of an US-American self-conception, which developed in stark contrast to Europe, can be detected through an analysis of documents from historical phases from the late eighteenth to the middle of the twentieth century. These can roughly be divided into five periods, during which the transatlantic relations changed most obviously:

1. the decades before and after 1776
2. the years before and around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (approximately 1837 to 1850)
3. the decades after the Civil War
4. the war and postwar years between 1915 and 1930, and
5. the decade between 1945 and 1955.

I would like to describe different modes of perception that have been dominant since the age of the Pilgrim Fathers, or later, the age of the Founding Fathers; perceptions, which would eventually determine representatives of American proto-imperialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and those expressing the sense of mission of the new major power. We will thus focus especially on the American nation's perception of itself. The related perspectives of Europeans on America, however, which too changed repeatedly in the course of the two centuries, shall only be briefly discussed and rather in relation to their implied role in American discourses.

Our first period, the era of the American War of Independence, displays clear patterns of contrast. These become obvious in a *locus classicus*, in which the differences between the New and the Old Worlds are explicitly emphasized. In *Letters from an American Farmer*,<sup>4</sup> Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecoeur contrasts the Old World's rigid hierarchical system, its inequality, and the poverty of its hardworking inhabitants with their opportunity to develop freely after emigration to the New World. There, in the "great American asylum", where origins do not matter, everything would be possible for French, Irish, German, and Dutch people alike. "What then is the American, this new man?" the author, who himself did not stay in the New World

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<sup>4</sup> The book was devised earlier but was only published in London in 1782.



all his life, asks via his narrator.<sup>5</sup> It should, however, be noted that his question “What is an American?” does not yet refer to the citizen of an independent country, thus of the future United States, but rather implies a settler of the British colonies, in which social differences appeared obsolete and religious tolerance was practiced.

The superiority of this new society develops into an even more prominent issue once political independence is obtained. It is no accident that after the triumph of the American Revolution Royall Tyler’s *The Contrast* (1787)<sup>6</sup>, the first autochthonous play performed by a professional company of actors in New York, postulates the moral supremacy of American society. This is particularly underscored in the play’s stereotypical figures such as the idealistic veteran of the War of Independence, Colonel Manly, and Dimple, who has been corrupted through the cynical worldly wisdom which he acquired during his travels in Europe. The opposition between a solid ethics, on the one hand, and Machiavellian practices of intrigue, on the other, as well as the ignominy of ‘imported’ European behavior are strikingly illustrated.

The success of this play was not necessarily due to the unctuous maxims expressed by the gravely striding Colonel, but rather to the presence of Jonathan, an inexperienced yet likeable and commonsensical country boy. He is forced to adjust to, and assert himself in the urban setting of New York, and in doing so he develops his comical talent. His actions give some relief to the otherwise complacent message of the play, and as a stage character, the Yankee Jonathan initiated the emergence of a lively theatrical tradition to be found in many variants in the following decades.<sup>7</sup>

Tyler’s polemical assessment of Old Europe was no exception at the time. Two years earlier, Thomas Jefferson addressed a letter to a young relative, John Banister, warning him against traveling to

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<sup>5</sup> This question is most prominent in Letter III of the text that dates back to the period before the War of Independence; most easily found in *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of the 18th-Century America* by J.H. St. John de Crèvecoeur, ed. Albert E. Stone (1981).

<sup>6</sup> The text can be found, for example, in the *Anthology of American Literature*, ed. George McMichael et al. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1980), 440-482 (The anthology is by now in its 6<sup>th</sup> printing).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Jürgen Wolter, “Die Helden der Nation: Yankee, Pionier und Indianer als nationale Stereotypen im amerikanischen Drama vor dem Bürgerkrieg,” (1979), 246-63.

Europe. Jefferson, who well knew the French Ancien Régime of the rococo age, was worried that his relative might become attracted to “European luxury and dissipation”.<sup>8</sup> In another letter Jefferson even expresses his wish for a true barrier, an “ocean of fire between us and the old world”.<sup>9</sup> His earlier explanations in the *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785)<sup>10</sup> show that he fundamentally disapproved of the Industrial Revolution then underway in Britain and that he was inclined to defend the agrarian society of the New World. He even suggested that the production of industrial goods ought rather to be left to the Old World, as urban settlement would lead to an overall decline of moral values. In Jefferson’s view, the two hemispheres should thus be free of any economic competition and instead cultivate a division of labor, with the young republic remaining an agricultural country.

However, the attentive reader of the *Notes* might also notice that Jefferson’s critical perspective on Europe is linked to an apologia of his own country, which he defended against the accusations put forward by representatives of a degeneration theory, developed by Comte de Buffon and later extended by two Abbés, Cornelius de Pauw and Guillaume Raynal and popular among contemporary French intellectuals.<sup>11</sup> It asserts that the New World merely produced shrunken versions of animal species living elsewhere in the world, and that the indigenous people, as well as the European settlers, were negatively affected by the climate as was evidenced by their weakness and infertility, and by their lack of intellectual achievements.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Letter of October 15, 1785. Cf. Thomas Jefferson, *Writings*, ed. Peterson (1984), 838.

<sup>9</sup> His wish “that there were an ocean of fire between us and the old world,” expressed in a letter to Gerry Elbridge on May 13, 1797, was probably caused by the difficulties the US had due to the coalition wars in Europe. Cf. Thomas Jefferson, *Writings*, 1044.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the version edited by William Peden (1954; rpt. 1972), which includes a highly instructive commentary.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Georges Louis Leclerc Buffon, *Histoire naturelle générale et particulière* (1749-1804); Cf. Peden’s edition of *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 47-48, 63-65, 268, 275. Cf. Abbé Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains*, (1768-69), and Abbé Guillaume Thomas Francois Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (1770).

<sup>12</sup> This crucial transatlantic conflict is discussed in *The Old World’s New World* (1991) by C. Vann Woodward, whose overview on the multiple stereotypical perception of the New World by Europeans draws on Antonello Gerbi’s *La disputa*

Jefferson rejects the latter observation by referring to the paradigmatic American Benjamin Franklin, whose achievements were highly regarded in Europe, and to the comparatively large number of cultural contributions of the US in relation to its population. The heated dispute on the alleged degeneration of animals and humans in the New World represents an early example of the conflicts which were, at times, fierce, within the Atlantic World. In this particular case the conflict had been generated by European prejudice that did not stand up to close critical assessment. Significantly, none of the French commentators mentioned had ever been to North America.

Jefferson's caution on the negative influence that the European "conditions" exerted was in tune with another critical train of thought, that of the Connecticut Wits,<sup>13</sup> who sought to maintain the Puritan tradition in an era of secularization. At a time when even the Divinity School at Harvard was losing its orthodox Calvinism, this was something on which the educator and deistic "polymath" could agree with them. The fact that the Founding Fathers in the Enlightenment retained the Pilgrim Fathers' missionary vision in a secularized form, undoubtedly the major commonplace in America's cultural history, facilitated this concordance of thought. The earliest Congregationalist settlers in Massachusetts strongly believed that their community would have to function as a beacon for the whole world, and that it would also lead the way for those who fled from a corrupted Europe to the New World. This conviction was not only central in homiletic practice throughout the seventeenth century. In the ritually repeated admonitions in their jeremiads, ministers appealed for a recovery of the former zeal and later, during the recurrent revivalist movements, sought to bring the advancing secularization process to a halt: the "faith" of the Pilgrims would eventually be integrated into the patriotic rhetoric of politicians.

In the complex interplay of power relations, religious reform movements have dominated American society only on occasion. However, various schools of religious thought and doctrines evidently found their way into the 'Civil Religion,' which emerged in the nineteenth century. In a second phase, a counter movement against

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*del Nuovo Mondo* (1955), translated as *The Dispute of the New World*, ed. Jeremy Moyle (1973).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. similar remarks made by Timothy Dwight, later president of Yale University, and by John Trumbull; cf. Leon Howard, *The Connecticut Wits* (1943).

Calvinist faith with its belief in predestination (and against an empiricism based on John Locke) became the source of inspiration for the autochthonous philosophical and literary movement of transcendentalism. It was supported by a group of young intellectuals in New England in the former heartland of Calvinist practice, and eventually evolved into a movement of fundamental optimism, paired with both an individual and collective cult of self-awareness and self-confidence. Against this initial tendency in the USA to continue aping the culture of the mother country and Europe generally, the transcendentalist movement propagated an independent national model.<sup>14</sup> Six decades after the political Declaration of Independence, in a speech entitled "The American Scholar" (1837), also referred to as the "Cultural Declaration of Independence," the most prominent disseminator of transcendentalist thought, Ralph Waldo Emerson, rejected Europe as a cultural role model ("We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe").<sup>15</sup> He postulated an optimistic outlook for the future of the expanding democratic nation and continued to express his conviction in numerous lectures and essays; subsequently, two decades after his 1837 speech, he was to encourage and celebrate the democratic pathos of Walt Whitman. It is important to note at this point that such cultural phenomena (for example, Emerson's optimism and the pride of the American landscape painters in the incomparable, sublime landscape of their homeland)<sup>16</sup> correlated with the policy of expansionism at the time. It is no coincidence that in 1845, on the eve of the American-Mexican War,

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<sup>14</sup> For more detailed background information on this development and its consequences, cf. Benjamin T. Spencer's comprehensive study, *The Quest for Nationality* (1957).

<sup>15</sup> This speech, which was held at the beginning of the academic year in Harvard, was a culminating moment in the movement that had been developing since the War of 1812; it supported emancipation from the cultural and literary patterns of the mother country towards an independent national culture and literature. Cf. Robert E. Spiller, ed., *The American Literary Revolution* (1967). Emerson's speech can be found, inter alia, in the *Anthology of American Literature*, ed. McMichael, Vol.1, 1024-1036.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Cole, Asher Brown Durand and others belonging to the Hudson River School, such as Frederick Edwin Church, John Frederick Kensett and later Albert Bierstadt, worshipped in their paintings and celebrated in their letters, speeches and essays the landscape and nature of the young republic, which had hitherto been ignored as a subject. This was documented at an internationally acclaimed exhibition entitled *America* in the Upper Belvedere palace in Vienna, 1999. Cf. the exhibition catalogue, ed. Stephan Kojas, *America* (1999).

the journalist J. L. O'Sullivan creates and promulgates the slogan of 'manifest destiny': it conceptualizes the mission and duty to take possession of the whole continent, from one ocean to the other. Only briefly before, President Andrew Jackson had taken and implemented the not particularly glorious decision to relocate the indigenous population from Georgia, the Cherokees, and in doing so blithely ignored existing treaties and a Supreme Court ruling.<sup>17</sup> The vision that the US might represent a New Rome, which had already influenced the iconography of the Founding Fathers, was repeatedly expressed and propagated.<sup>18</sup>

That the politics of early imperialism sparked protests within American society itself even in this period, points towards a fixed component of American culture. Here, we may refer to the classic text of one of the early dissenters, Emerson's disciple Henry David Thoreau, *Of Civil Disobedience*,<sup>19</sup> who continues to be read throughout the world and emulated as a pioneer of passive resistance.

At the same time, the understanding of self constructed in the pathos of the Enlightenment and the special position of the young nation formulated out of a spirit of nationalism, the nation's exceptionalism,<sup>20</sup> was questioned until the 1860s. Before the middle of the century the majority of the numerous visitors from Europe replaced the initially positive depictions<sup>21</sup> for utopian scenarios of the future with critical reviews of the republic's cultural shortcomings. They eagerly exposed the widespread materialism and vulgarity of the

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. President Andrew Jackson's alleged reaction to a judgment announced by the Chief Justice Marshall: 'John Marshall has made his decision, now let him enforce it!'

<sup>18</sup> Cf. C. Vann Woodward, "America as Metaphor," 63-83; especially on the use of Roman symbols for coins and seals, and in architecture, as well as the debate on whether the reliance on Greek models would not enable a more glorious, less problematic line of tradition.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Anthology of American Literature*, ed. McMichael, Vol.1, 1477-1492.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism* (1996). Cf. also several essays in the two volumes by Roland Hagenbüchle and Josef Raab, eds., *Negotiations of America's National Identity* (2000).

<sup>21</sup> Wynfrid Krieglleder analyzes what this meant for the image of the young republic in the German-speaking part of Europe in *Vorwärts in die Vergangenheit* (1999). Vann Woodward also discusses the disappointment in the New World articulated repeatedly in the age of the Vormärz (the eve of the 1848 German revolution) and later, cf. especially 16-30. The negative perspective on the US in the German-speaking countries is also surveyed by Dan Diner in his wide-ranging *Verkehrte Welten: Antiamerikanismus in Deutschland* (1993), 102-114.

American people, and also critically commented on the conformity of behavior induced by democratic structures (cf. Frances Trollope, *The Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832), and ten years later, Charles Dickens' *American Notes*, and many others).<sup>22</sup> Conservative European critics repeatedly emphasized the problematic nature of the individual realization of the American Dream, a widely popular myth that promised advancement from rags to riches; yet, they claimed, in the young nation self-fulfillment was reduced to the pursuit of the dollar. Moreover, there existed a whole tradition of literature expressing overall disappointment, more often than not based on second-hand 'insights' and reports. Here we may cite, for example, Ferdinand Kürnberger's *Der Amerika-Müde*, which fictionalizes the negative experience of Nikolaus Lenau and his deprecatory statements in letters about American pettiness and the related cliché of the absence of nightingales in the country (which, incidentally, was also conversely applied to Germany).<sup>23</sup> By way of contrast, Alexander de Tocqueville's *De la démocratie en Amérique* (1835)<sup>24</sup> presents a well-balanced and insightful picture of the relation between democracy, individualism, and the specific Protestant religious tradition.

European visitors were also forced to question the American democratic pathos in the light of the unresolved discrepancy between the noble principles postulated in the Declaration of Independence and the economically lucrative slave trade, rejected by abolitionists yet still common on the large cotton plantations in the South. This practice reduced or even eliminated in their eyes the propagated

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Malcolm Bradbury, *Dangerous Pilgrimages* (1995), 91-93, 102-114.

<sup>23</sup> For more details on Kürnberger and Lenau, cf. Diner, 41-50, and Manfred Durzak, "Nach Amerika. Gerstäckers Widerlegung der Lenau-Legende," *Das Amerikabild*, 38-59. Ironically, Jefferson had observed a similar absence of nightingales in certain European countries. While in the south of France, he mused that, as no nightingales were to be found in Germany, it was hardly a surprise that the country also lacked poetic accomplishments. Jefferson's conclusion, "[I]t explains to me another circumstance, why there never was a poet North of the Alps, and why there never will be one", in a letter composed at the "Canal of Languedoc" (near Toulouse) in May 1787, also reveals that he had not yet become aware of the blossoming of German poetry during the *Sturm und Drang* and early classical periods. Cf. Jefferson, Letter from Languedoc, May 21, 1787. Facsimile reprint and transcript Monticello (Charlottesville, 1956).

<sup>24</sup> His extensive study already appeared in an English translation in the US in 1838. It was later republished in new translations, i.e., by George Lawrence as *Democracy in America* (1966), which includes a highly informative introduction (xi-lxxxiii).

distinctions made within the hierarchical societal structures of society in Europe. Conversely, many spokesmen of the American South turned to Europe in the antebellum years. Some of them even developed a strong affinity to specific regions of the Old World during their studies in continental Europe; such was the case with James Johnston Pettigrew of Carolina, who studied in Europe around 1850 and was later to become a respected lawyer in Charleston and officer in the Confederation Army until his fatal injury at Gettysburg. Like several others, he emphasized the contrast between Southerners and Yankees with reference to a close transatlantic kinship; he praises the Viennese, while the Prussians appeared to him too similar to the Yankees:

Vienna is truly the most agreeable city of Germany, and I suspect surpassed as a place of residency by none in Europe except Paris. The Austrians remind me most forcibly of our Southern people. [...] They are open and hospitable, forming in this respect quite the reverse of the North Germans and particularly the Berliners, who are proverbially rather deficient in this respect and are much more like the Yankees.<sup>25</sup>

It is hardly surprising, considering this spontaneous preference for peoples living in southern regions of the Old World that Pettigrew felt even closer to Europe's Romance countries, Italy, France and especially Spain.<sup>26</sup>

As far as the field of science and scholarship was concerned, the future elite of both the American South *and* the North continued to adopt Central European models after the Civil War. Thus, for example, it imported the educational and organizational ideals of Humboldt's university. Beginning with Daniel Coit Gilman's leadership of Johns Hopkins, university presidents in the US would follow the example of the German seminar model, which became obligatory in the ensuing decades. The pioneer role of German academia was acknowledged also in the individual careers of future scholars, as thousands of American graduates were sent to the

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<sup>25</sup> James Johnston Pettigrew, Correspondence (1850).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Clyde Norman Wilson, *Carolina Cavalier* (1990), who, among other things, refers to Pettigrew's positive depiction of Spain in *Notes on Spain and the Spaniards in the Summer of 1859*.

universities of Göttingen, Berlin, Heidelberg and Vienna to expand and finesse their academic work.<sup>27</sup>

The economic expansion after the Civil War, in the third phase that I would like to outline here, established the preconditions for a lively period of exchange between the two continents. While millions of Europeans emigrated to the US (increasingly from the eastern and southern parts of Europe, leading to the formation of ethnic ghettos in the rapidly growing American cities) a rising number of US Americans chose Europe as the destination of their Grand Tour. In the early years of modern tourism, during which approximately 30,000 Americans crossed the Atlantic per year, they also visited the Rhineland and neighboring regions in addition to more common destinations like Great Britain, France, and Italy.<sup>28</sup> Coming from a New World that was in the process of radical transformation, intellectuals and artists settled in Europe, becoming the first generation of American expatriates. They openly accepted the shortcomings of American society and discussed them in their writings,<sup>29</sup> whereby they also reevaluated moral and ethnic qualities. The enthusiasm of American pilgrims in Europe who were art lovers (cf. the fiction of Henry James, himself an expatriate) mirrors this collective experience. A modified version of the contemporary realist novel, the international novel, dramatizes the dichotomy between European and American conventions, traditions and morals in several ambiguous variations.<sup>30</sup> Henry James repeatedly juxtaposes the

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<sup>27</sup> Cf., Thomas Neville-Bonner, *American Doctors and German Universities* (1963), and Zacharasiewicz, *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur* (1998), especially concerning William James and his respect for German academic culture, 111-116. Cf. also my *Images of Germany in American Literature* (2007), 43-45.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. William Stowe, *Going Abroad* (1994).

<sup>29</sup> James Fenimore Cooper collected a whole list of “absences”. Nathaniel Hawthorne would later judge the lack of inspirational historical monuments and hierarchical social structures, as found in Europe, as a disadvantage for American authors, and Henry James emphasized the significance of this list of deficits in his Hawthorne book by adding even more details. For a resume of this tradition, cf. Christof Wegelin, *The Image of Europe in Henry James* (1958), 5-8, 15-19.

<sup>30</sup> Henry James and his friend William Dean Howells both participated in the genesis of this prose form that developed towards the end of the nineteenth century. It underscores the contrast between European and American traditions and values. Howells’ *Foregone Conclusion* (1875) and *The Lady of the Aroostook*, as well as short stories and novels by James, such as *The American* (1877), *The Europeans* (1878), *Daisy Miller* (1879), and *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) belong to the earliest examples of this highly productive subgenre of the novel of manners.



spontaneous natural emotions of the mostly young(er) representatives of American society (e.g. Daisy Miller, Christopher Newman, Isabel Archer) with convention-bound representatives of Old Europe, who try to attain victory through diplomatic intrigues within rigid social restrictions (e.g. the Bellegardes in *The American*). Yet, those Americans that have become quasi “infected” by “Old Europe” also play a negative role within the clash of cultures (e.g. Gilbert Osmond, Isabel Archer’s husband in Henry James’ *The Portrait of a Lady*). James frequently used variations on this central theme in several of his works throughout his career; in his mature novels<sup>31</sup> he carves out stereotypical character traits and habits in greater detail; at the same time, he does not *a priori* privilege the lifestyle and virtues of his American protagonists, and thus creates a well-balanced picture.

In this third phase of the complex transatlantic relationship, the broad spectrum of possible reactions triggered by transatlantic differences observed during trips to Europe is furthermore indicated by the disrespectful comments which Samuel Clemens / Mark Twain voices either through his persona or his partially complacent American fellow travelers in *The Innocents Abroad* (1869).<sup>32</sup> Twain’s inverted utopia in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* (1889) takes the reader into the Old World; possibly disconcertingly topical for a readership in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this book, a representative American makes fun of the feudal despotism and backwardness of medieval Europe and tries to convert King Arthur’s British kingdom into an enlightened democracy based on the American exemplar. Hank Morgan’s reform project gradually but unexpectedly evolves into an overbearing fantasy of power, at the end of which stands the technologically superior Yankee (the US had by that time developed into one of the leading industrial nations) who finishes off the feudal country’s knights clad in their old-fashioned armor (through electrocution).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. his masterpieces, *The Wings of a Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), *The Golden Bowl* (1904).

<sup>32</sup> Mark Twain often formulates harsh judgments against European conventions and also against “cultural objects”; however, he also exposes through irony the excessive self-assuredness of his American travelers as well as their patriotic prejudices against the backward Europeans. Cf. Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, ed. Jonathan Raban (1988).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*, ed. Bernard L. Stein (1984).

This “accident” in a larger-than-life project, fictionally elaborated by Twain, presumably also referred to the moral crisis in the values of American society at the time. Through the great economic boom of the Gilded Era, the land of freedom, praised by Europeans unceasingly before 1800, had developed into an almost close to dystopic society characterized by disastrously miserable living conditions in the immigrant ghettos and by powerful robber barons.<sup>34</sup> Suddenly European social critics radically altered their perception of the USA, which they now regarded as the paradigmatic capitalist nation whose practices of racial discrimination remained highly problematic after the Reconstruction Era.

Foreign affairs, too, had undergone major shifts. It was hard to ignore the reality that the US was beginning to pursue imperial ambitions, which due to overlapping interests (as for example Samoa) provoked disputes with European forces and lastingly burdened relations between the Hohenzollern empire and the US. The fact that German educational establishments were gradually losing their monopoly to the University of Oxford, where American graduates were generously supported by the newly established Rhodes scholarships, also advanced the alienation between parts of Europe (especially Germany) and America. In this time of dramatic changes, Hugo Münsterberg, the German experimental psychologist teaching at Harvard, whom William James had brought to Cambridge, attempted to stem this process of increasing alienation. He regarded it as his task to trace the mutual misunderstandings and prejudices to their roots. In *American Traits: From the Point of View of a German* (1901)<sup>35</sup> he describes the mechanisms that encourage the spread of clichés, by analyzing both more general (and timeless) ones and specific differences that were common in a particular period. With reference to popular media Münsterberg summarizes the traits of Germans stereotypically reproduced in US American caricatures, yet he also describes the complementary German clichés of Americans. Thus he reports that the German regards the typical American as a vulgar whiskey drinker, who lacks (good) manners, is greedy, and tends to rely on mob law while feigning noble motives:

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Paul S. Boyer et al., eds., *The Enduring Vision* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1996), esp. chap. 18-21, 568-697.

<sup>35</sup> Hugo Münsterberg, *American Traits* (1901; rpt. 1971).

The American man is, of course, very well known. He is a haggard creature with vulgar tastes and brutal manners who drinks whiskey and chews tobacco, spits, fights, puts his feet on the table, and habitually rushes along in wild haste, absorbed by a greedy desire of the dollars of his neighbors (9).

Münsterberg anticipates later scientific studies on prejudice, which have shown that visits to a foreign country, do not necessarily lead to any reduction in pre-judged perceptions: “We are inclined by psychological laws to perceive merely that which we expect to perceive; we do not voluntarily suppress the remainder, but it does not exist for us at all” (11-12). Münsterberg also illustrates the inherent tendency of humans to confirm existing opinions with amusing anecdotes, especially concerning a cliché of the German that was widespread in the US, which he sums up in the following passage:

The habits of this Prussian sauerkraut-eater are well-known. He goes shabbily dressed, never takes a bath, drinks beer at his breakfast, plays skat, smokes a long pipe, wears spectacles, reads books from dirty loan libraries, is rude to the lower classes and slavishly servile to the higher, is innocent of the slightest attempt at good form in society, considering as his object in life to obey a policeman, to fill blanks with bureaucratic red tape, and to get a title in front of his name. Most of this genus fill their time with training parade step in the barrack courts; the others either make bad lyrical poems or live immoral lives, or sit in prison on account of daring to say a free word in politics (7-8).

The professor from Berlin had himself experienced the pervasiveness of several elements of this cliché during his own time at Harvard, when, for example, he was given German cuisine as a special treat by his hosts and was served generous portions of Sauerkraut. His confession that he was barely acquainted with this dish was met with disbelief and surprise; he was even confronted with the comment that he, Münsterberg, could hardly be a great connoisseur of German traditions since Prussians simply were Sauerkraut-eaters.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> “An American who has never been abroad invited me ... to a German luncheon. I had to work my way through a series of so-called German dishes, which I had never tasted or smelled before; and when finally imported sauerkraut appeared, and I had to confess that I had never tried it in my life and had never seen anyone else eating it, my host assured me that I did not know anything about Germany: It was the favorite dish of every Prussian” 7.

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a sense of threat for the American collective identity had developed in the USA due to the arrival of millions of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe, and nativist movements were becoming more predominant.<sup>37</sup> They were to become even stronger in the fourth phase, in the time of World War I when the flood of propaganda disseminated by the Committee of Public Information led by George Creel would find form in jingoistic excesses in cartoons and films against the Huns.<sup>38</sup> Here the binary logic that political scientists and historians have referred to as the “Manichean trap” of American politics<sup>39</sup> would for some time come into its own: a binary dominated by a black-and-white rhetoric based on utopian moral ideals combined with a tendency to divide the world and its inhabitants into good and bad,<sup>40</sup> or, later, into allies and an “axis of evil”.

The latent missionary consciousness of the American empire was to be manifested in Woodrow Wilson’s dictum: “We must make the world safe for democracy!” Of course, isolationist tendencies were then gaining influence in relation to Europe that had drastically been bled to death by the war, American cultural critics of the 1920s self-reflectively expressed harsh criticism on the propaganda machinery which had come to full effect during World War I. H. L. Mencken, among others, represented this US American self-criticism, but also the future first winner of the Nobel Prize for literature, Sinclair Lewis,

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. John Higham, *Strangers in the Land* (1994).

<sup>38</sup> For an overview on this flood of propaganda, see Zacharasiewicz, *Deutschlandbild*, 149-165 (includes illustrations of the polemical caricatures depicted e.g. in *Life*, as well as an analysis of the extensive use of film as a new medium for political propaganda, in films such as *The Kaiser*, *The Beast of Berlin*, *To Hell with the Kaiser*, *Escaping the Hun*, etc.). An in-depth discussion is also found in Peter Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words* (1987). On the transatlantic polemics, see recent contributions in Frank Trommler and Elliott Shore, eds., *The German-American Encounter* (2001).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Detlef Junker, *The Manichean Trap: American Perceptions of the German Empire, 1871-1945* (1995), and *Von der Weltmacht zur Supermacht: Amerikanische Außenpolitik im 20. Jahrhundert* (1995).

<sup>40</sup> Conversely, Diner displays a similar problem in *Verkehrte Welten: Antiamerikanismus in Deutschland*, as he diagnoses such a Manichean logic in the German image of America, which he detects not only with intellectuals in the DDR after the National-Socialist era, but also in the BRD as well as in Germany after its reunification (Cf. 130-136, 166, etc.).

supported this approach, for example in his essay “An American Views the Huns” (1925).<sup>41</sup>

In the fourth phase of relations, the new medium of film, along with several other technical innovations (especially the car), began to revolutionize the world from America. The wide range of products mainly intended for export, such as several other phenomena of American popular culture as well as the course of action adopted by the capitalist economic power, provoked vehement criticism of cultural imperialism especially in France, where it was articulated as early as the 1920s.<sup>42</sup> The ambivalent and partially even completely negative assessment of the US in Europe mirrors actual conflicts of interest, but it also reveals a willingness to make use of polarized subjective constructs and negative hetero-stereotypes as symbols. Since the early twentieth century the term ‘Americanization’ had acquired a negative connotation<sup>43</sup> and numerous European intellectuals regarded the US in their historical-philosophical examinations as a modern symptom of a general crisis. They explicitly referred to the nation as a menace, and without reservation considered it a symbol of a technological society, in which human values were in jeopardy.<sup>44</sup> On the Continent, Georges Duhamel in *Scènes de la vie future* (1927), Oswald Spengler in *Der Mensch und die Technik* (1931) or Adolf Halfeld in *Amerika und der Amerikanismus* (1927) formulated pessimistic evaluations of the modern trends (in various

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<sup>41</sup> The pugnacious publicist Mencken, whose germanophile comments caused an uproar in the early years of World War I and were consequently suppressed, vehemently criticized the earlier campaign against German professors, for example in *The National Letters*, rpt. in *Prejudices* (1920). In a biting satire “An American Views the Huns”, printed in the anniversary issue of *The Nation* (July 1, 1925), Lewis exposed the circulation of clichés related to the German military and police state, and the sweeping labeling of Germans as “brutal violent Teutons” who had committed violent war crimes in Belgium. Thus, he sarcastically reports on his friendly reception in Munich and afterwards at a party in Vienna: “They were all Germans. Therefore, they were all grim and fond of baby killing. But they disguised it in the most dismaying manner.” (20)

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Richard Pells, *Not Like Us* (1997) 11-19, and Vann Woodward, *Old World's*, 30-39.

<sup>43</sup> While William Thomas Stead, an English journalist, uses the term in a positive sense in 1901, it later increasingly acquired negative connotations and now stands for the negative aspects of the modernization process in Europe. Cf. Alf Lütcke et al., eds., *Amerikanisierung* (1996).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. James W. Ceaser, *Reconstructing America* (1997), esp. chapter 10.

degrees),<sup>45</sup> while in the English-speaking world, Christopher Hollis in *The American Heresy* (1927)<sup>46</sup> presented a negative assessment of the dynamic economic and cultural developments in the New World.

It is significant and also indicative of the reciprocal influences in the Atlantic space that a minority of intellectuals in the US itself adopted these critical perspectives during the years of economic prosperity until the Great Crash and, like pessimistic European thinkers and cultural critics, stressed the dangers of Fordism. On the one hand, these were American writers of the ilk of Lewis, who systematically analyzed his country in a number of satirical novels. In *Babbitt* (1922), for example, he exposes the whole banality of life in the parochial milieu of the middle class, a fictional text that surely shaped the picture which European critics had of the new imperial power. On the other hand, critical voices emerged from representatives of the culturally distressed and economically dilapidated American South; worried about the decline of traditions and their obsolescent, inherited lifestyle, they opposed industrial expansion and the domination of market forces. It is no coincidence that intellectuals such as John Crowe Ransom or Allen Tate, who, among others, would publish the Agrarian manifesto *I'll Take My Stand* in 1930, repeatedly turned to the cultural ideals of Old Europe (be they of rural Britain or of France during the Enlightenment)<sup>47</sup> in their essays and correspondence. In moments of frustration caused by the overbearing economic power of the Yankees, which even European countries could hardly ignore, they noted: "We are the last Europeans, there being no Europeans left at present."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> For more information on these critical intellectuals, see Pells, *Not Like Us*, 19-20; a more detailed account on German Anti-Americanism, which increased due to the disappointment in President Wilson's role in the First World War, can be found in Diner, 63-86.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Michael O'Brien, *The Idea of the American South 1920-1941* (1979), 141-144.

<sup>47</sup> The orientation of intellectuals from the American South towards the traditions of the Old World is also discussed, e.g., in Zacharasiewicz, "Zur Erfindung regionaler Literatur(en)" (2001). For a recent, more general overview of the ideas put forward by the Agrarians, cf. Mark G. Malvasi, *The Unregenerate South* (1997).

<sup>48</sup> The quote is taken from a letter that Allen Tate addressed to his like-minded comrade, the poet and essayist Donald Davidson, on August 10, 1929. Cf. John Tyree Fain and Thomas Daniel Young, eds., *The Literary Correspondence of Donald Davidson and Allen Tate* (1974), 230. In August 1931, John Peale Bishop formulated in his correspondence with Tate a similarly pessimistic outlook on Atlantic culture:

Only a few years after the observations made by these conservative and ecologically alert American thinkers, who were increasingly concerned about traditional values (Allen Tate), the US would become the most important country of refuge for the dislocated intelligentsia (brain drain) of Central Europe,<sup>49</sup> an asylum, as Crèvecoeur had referred to it in relation to other social groups of the Old World in the eighteenth century. The promise of the American Founding Fathers would become true at least for some of those who had to flee their home countries, while in Europe, dominated as it was by the National Socialists, denunciation of America was widely practiced and propagated.<sup>50</sup>

The fifth and final phase of relationships between the US and Europe was experienced by many who were witnesses of the significance of American intervention in Europe during the Second World War and of the subsequent complete turn towards the Old World. This generation knows from its own experience the true significance of phrases such as Marshall Plan and Fulbright programs and came into contact with some of the activities of the “Congress for Cultural Freedom” that defended the Western world against the expansion of the communist bloc,<sup>51</sup> or received valuable suggestions from American professors visiting under the aegis of the Fulbright program. The academic field of American Studies that was initially strongly supported by the Americans undoubtedly inspired many of them;<sup>52</sup> some were themselves receivers of Fulbright grants and in the US came to know what Joseph Nye refers to as soft power.<sup>53</sup> In their youth, several experienced the Coca-colonization through American mass culture<sup>54</sup> that was strongly determined by economic interests and

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“We are the end of all that is European. With us Western civilization ends.” Thomas Daniel Young and J. J. Hindle, eds., *The Republic of Letters in America* (1981), 48.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Bernard Bailyn, *The Intellectual Migration* (1969).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Diner, *Verkehrte Welten*, 89-116, who summarizes a number of relevant studies by Manfred Durzak, G. Moltmann, A. Ritter, among others.

<sup>51</sup> For a detailed account on the development of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, which was supported by the CIA, cf. Pells, *Not Like Us*, 66-76.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Pells, 188-133, on the establishment of American Studies in Europe.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Joseph Nye Jr., *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (2002).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War* (1994).

met with fierce though not very successful opposition in Europe.<sup>55</sup> Literary texts, travel books and novels, repeatedly mirrored these various contrasted facts and phenomena.

Within American society, a significant number of critical thinkers have continued to point towards the impending cleavage between the ideals and the socio-economic and political realities in the US. The controversies of the Cold War, McCarthyism, the bitter disputes that emerged during the long crisis of the Vietnam War, accompanied by wide-spread anti-American sentiments in the whole Western world, and the debate over the controversial NATO Double Resolutions in the conflict-ridden Eighties, all these were reflected in numerous continental-European books of non-fiction<sup>56</sup> and literary explorations, often mediating negative, even distorted images of American society.<sup>57</sup> Despite changing circumstances, right up to the moment of the unexpected collapse of the other Superpower in 1989 and the development of a unipolar vision that would open up the opportunities for political unilateralism, critics within the US always looked back to the ideals of the Founding Fathers and followed the principles of humanitarian pathos that emerged during the European Enlightenment. More recently, various American intellectuals such as Senator Robert Byrd from West Virginia, the former Deputy Secretary of Defense Joseph S. Nye and the editor of *Harper's Monthly* Lewis H. Lapham<sup>58</sup> have to various degrees, in some cases most vehemently, distanced themselves from the US's hegemonic politics.

That during the Bush presidency US political culture came to differ strongly from Europe became all too evident. Many readers will recall President Bush's unfortunate State of the Union address broadcast across the world. The ritualized character of the collective

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. the broad spectrum of partially critical essays on the perception of the US, especially in Europe, in Franz M. Joseph, ed., *As Others See Us: The United States Through Foreign Eyes* (1959).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Pells, 236-258.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Rolf Winter, *Ami, Go Home* (1989), among many other examples of America-bashing, in which violence or economic exploitation of others are regarded as the global power's primary characteristics. Diner explores this phenomenon in its German context (BRD and DDR) through impressionistic descriptions and psychological readings, 117-167.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. the leading articles by Lapham on the subjects of "American hegemonic politics" and the Iraq War in *Harper's Magazine* in February 2003 ("Regime Change"), 7-9, May 2003 ("Shock and Awe"), 7-9, and April 2003 ("Cause for Dissent"), 35-40.



demonstration of agreement with the Senators and Congressmen standing up repeatedly gave rise to some surprise. The importance of national symbols in the American media, especially in reports on war, is more than obvious; attentive observers can hardly miss their completely different roles on the opposite sides of the Atlantic.<sup>59</sup> It becomes even more apparent in how far these national symbols play a central role for the formation of identity in a relatively inhomogeneous society when we look at American everyday life. Ever since American society abandoned the concept of the melting pot (of the nation of immigrants) and moved towards a multicultural nation (the US has thus been referred to as a “salad bowl” of races and ethnicities),<sup>60</sup> rituals of collective self-assurance appear to have become even more important.

The question remains whether the basis for fruitful collaboration between the Atlantic partners can be maintained after this phase of estrangement in which, once again, the long history of mutual misunderstandings came to the fore.

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<sup>59</sup> The collective trauma of 9/11 intensified this tendency to refer to national symbols; European observers, however, some of whom might in fact even have personal memories of the terrors of the Second World War and the downfall of questionable national symbols, are less inclined to be emotionally swept away by such collective expressions of belonging, which have become less important in Europe in the course of a transformation process that has involved the gradual demise of formerly essential elements of sovereignty.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Hans Bak, ed., *Multiculturalism and the Canon of American Culture* (1993).

## Chapter 7: Sketches of a Traveler: Observations on a Dominant Theme in Washington Irving's Work

When Washington Irving, who in 1819-20 had gained a large readership first in England, and then on the Continent, approached the Austrian border on his way from Munich in October 1822, he was attracted to Salzburg, not as a metropolis of music but as a city in a region wrapped in legends. He must have looked spellbound towards the mountains in the south, where Emperor Charles the Great was said to reside. Irving noted down in his *Notebooks* a reference to the legend that Charles moved once a year in a solemn, nocturnal procession from the Watzmann peak to Salzburg.<sup>1</sup> This note from Riesbeck's *Travels to Germany* probably was a contributing factor in the genesis of Irving's best-known tale in the *Sketch Book* "Rip van Winkle" which he had drafted quickly in June 1818.

His continuing sensitivity and responsiveness to legends and folklore traditions becomes evident in the eagerness with which he listened to such narratives and recorded other legends about the sleeping emperor and mysterious beings resident in the Untersberg.<sup>2</sup>

In his diary and his letters to his siblings and friends, Irving also praises the city of Salzburg and its environs, which resonate with legends. He is moved to speak enthusiastically about the autumnal mountain scenery and the "splendid effects" of the "heavy mists". Irving, an eager practitioner of the art of sketching, was delighted by the picturesqueness of the landscape and the venerable buildings on

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Reichart, *Washington Irving and Germany*, 23, quotes from an unpublished notebook: "Watzmann ... the Emperor Charles the Great and all his army are confined until Doomsday, .... On a certain day of the year about midnight the Emperor is to be seen with his whole train of ministers and generals going in procession to the cathedral of Saltzburg."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 3, 49-51: "A man travelling with his wagon along one of the roads by the Untersberg suddenly saw a great many soldiers behind him .... There are little men & women that live in the interior of the mountain ...."

the hills surrounding the city.<sup>3</sup> During the several days spent in Salzburg, he also registered various acoustic impressions, the distant tolling of church bells and the sounds of the little bells of cattle grazing on the meadows; he also observed very clearly the outward appearance of the inhabitants.<sup>4</sup> But his attention was not only focused on the costumes but also on the physiognomies of the people. Soon after his departure from Salzburg, and before he collected systematically impressions of the paintings he saw in the Vienna museums (a stay of several weeks, which was not truly satisfactory and may justly be regarded as a period of missed opportunities),<sup>5</sup> Irving made the following entry in his journal:

The Austrians do not appear to me to have that decided national character of countenance which I had expected. I do not remark the thick upper lip &c. the mixture of Hungarians ... have crossed the breed. (*Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 3, 52)

This remark is revealing of Irving's intellectual habits and hints at a central concern of the author. The seeming absence of a facial feature in the Austrians (here the thick Habsburg lip is transferred to the upper mouth) engages Irving's attention and prompts his search for explanations for the divergence between reality and his expectations. Similar remarks with reflections on national features and comparisons between the outward appearance and the inner talents and behavior of different nations are frequently to be found in the diary of his first journey to Europe (1804-06), but they also play a significant role in his later essays and fictional work. The description of national types or, at least, the emphasis on typical features in the representatives of individual nations, gains such importance in the travel sketches and his essays that one may justly regard them as the crystallizing kernels for many of his narratives. There is a very close connection between

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<sup>3</sup> In his *Notebooks* Irving clearly pays tribute to the cult of the picturesque to which he responded. Cf. William L. Hedges, *Washington Irving*, 39-43.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. "high crowned hats of peasants with gold bands – or black bands with gold tassels –," *Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 3, 49.

<sup>5</sup> Irving described Vienna as "extensive, irregular, crowded, dusty, dissipated, magnificent, and to me disagreeable" (355). During his stay in Vienna an excursion to Stift Göttweig and a visit to Dürnstein were more rewarding. Cf. Reichart, *Washington Irving and Germany*, 54-57. While Irving had access to circles of *literati* in Dresden, he did not meet any writers in Vienna and had no opportunity to get to know the opera culture in Vienna.

the achievement of a desired atmosphere and the intended effect of local color, on the one hand, and the introduction of national clichés, on the other.

It therefore seems desirable to attempt a provisional survey of Irving's use of such stereotypes, especially before 1825, and to draw some provisional conclusions on the function of national types in his fiction.<sup>6</sup>

Irving's diary contains sketches of typical figures in their simplest and most traditional forms. The adventure-hungry young New Yorker, whom his anxious elder brothers had sent on a Grand Tour to Europe to recuperate (and learn about the Old World), recorded his impressions and experiences in his diaries with some care. During this journey lasting from July 1804 until January 1806 the twenty-year-old Irving, who had eagerly absorbed travel accounts while still at school, used older travel guides as the basis for his entries in his diaries, and also for his letters home. In the course of his tour, which took him from Bordeaux via Genoa to Sicily and back via Rome and Milan, and through Switzerland and Paris to London, the author's contacts with the French, Italians, the Swiss and Dutch were at first hindered by his modest command of languages. The diary entries of the young American about the presumptive nature of these nations simply reflect his reading of the guide books of Patrick Brydone (*A Tour through Sicily and Malta*), of Thomas Martyn (*The Gentleman's Guide in his Tour through Italy*), and two books of the English physician John Moore (*A View of Society and Manners in Italy*, and *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland and Germany*). They also mirror the assessment and experience of Irving's various hosts and of his urbane older travel companions such as the vivacious Dr. Henry, who was always ready for practical jokes. In his pertinent entries one also senses the pattern of various stereotypes

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<sup>6</sup> This survey is to go beyond the remarks offered in Hedges' analysis of Irving's fiction before 1832, where the significance of national stereotypes for his narratives is adumbrated. Since the publication of the original version of this essay studies on the use of stereotypes have multiplied and the importance of imagology has been widely recognized. Cf. the collection of essays initiated by Stanzel, *Europäischer Völkerspigel: Imagologisch-ethnographische Studien zu den Völkertafeln des frühen 18. Jahrhunderts* (1998) and the comprehensive studies on images of nations contained in Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen, *Imagology: The Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A Critical Survey* (2007).

contained in the works of Oliver Goldsmith and Tobias Smollett,<sup>7</sup> with which he had been familiar since his childhood.<sup>8</sup> Irving adheres to the conventions and much-tested patterns of the descriptions of nations occurring in travel guides and conduct books. His book learning seemed to be confirmed by the impressions and conversations with fellow travelers garnered during his travels. This can be seen, for instance, when at a stop-over in Lucerne he clearly distinguishes the mentality and nature of the Swiss from that of the other European national characters. Irving fairly emphatically defines their temperament and their attitude towards strangers in comparison with that of Italians, Germans, Frenchmen, Dutchmen, and Englishmen. He acknowledges the sobriety and composure of the Swiss, whose qualities achieve a golden mean between dullness and reserve, on the one hand, and passion, on the other:

There is a great equanimity in the disposition of the Swiss and a tranquility in their manners both when engaged in affairs of business & pleasure. They do not appear to have the extravagant vivacity and gay flow of the spirits of the french, nor the warm passions and sentimental gravity of the italians <Their seriousness> neither <have they the> is their seriousness the effect of sluggishness of idea or mercenary calculations as with the dutch – or of the proud reserve of the german or Englishman. It is the result of calm reflection, of a mind naturally strong and accustomed to think for itself. (*Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 1, 388)<sup>9</sup>

Irving explicitly stresses the experiential basis, which leaves us, however, in no doubt about the long genealogy of this pattern.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Irving had apparently put Smollett's *Travels through France and Italy* into his suitcase on his first journey to Europe.

<sup>8</sup> Goldsmith was an author "whose writings were the delight of my childhood and have been a source of enjoyment to me throughout life"; quoted after Henry A. Pochmann, ed., *Washington Irving, Representative Selections* (1934), 330.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. also 388-389: "To a stranger they are easy of access open in their manners remarkably frank and candid in their conversation and independent in their observations. A frenchman is apt to turn everything into a jest or *bon mot* – An italian always agrees to the truth of what you say resigning his real opinion out of politeness – An Englishman hears you with impatience when you contradict him, and opposes you with positiveness and obstinacy – The Swiss on the contrary listens to you with attention – weighs the justice of your remarks and the truth of your arguments and makes his reply accordingly with manly politeness and freedom."

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the longstanding sympathy of the English for the Swiss expressed, for instance, in James Thomson's *Seasons* (1726-44), or in *Liberty* (1735), and surveyed in a

During his first journey to Europe, a time of dramatic political upheavals in many parts of the continent, the political map of the Continent was fundamentally changed by Napoleon's military successes. Irving registers many shifts in national character. In this diagnosis he is, however, dependent on his own reading and the instruction of more experienced fellow travelers and hosts. After a mere two weeks in France he feels able to mention the effect of the French Revolution on the originally lively and gay national character of the French.<sup>11</sup>

In Italy, in particular, he stresses the influence of the French occupying force on the Italians, who are, in his opinion, normally more prudent and show more gravity than the French, and with whom Irving repeatedly contrasts them. There were opportunities for such comparisons when describing the inhabitants of Bologna and of Milan, where Irving quickly came to love the attractions of Italian opera, an art form he, like many of his puritanical fellow-Americans he had originally looked down upon.

While the commerce and close contacts between the two neighboring nations seemed to blur the differences between them,<sup>12</sup> the young traveler thought that he could observe a sharp distinction in another border region as he reported in the last destination of his Grand Tour (1804-06) in a survey of his impressions in a letter to his brother Peter:

I was much interested by the change that I continually observed as I proceeded from the carelessly cultivated plains of France to those of the Netherlands, where the hand of labor appears to be never idle in the improvement of the soil, from the dirty comfortless habitations of the French peasantry to those of Holland, where cleanliness is almost a Vice – in fine, from the light skip and gay thoughtless air of the Frenchman, to the heavy tread and phlegmatic leaden features of the Dutchman. How astonishing is it that a trifling space – a mere ideal

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monograph by Gustav Schirmer, *Die Schweiz im Spiegel der englischen und amerikanischen Literatur bis 1848* (1929).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. the entry of August 15, 1804 in Montpellier, "This is a specimen of the liveliness & gaiety of heart that characterized this people before the revolution, but which I am told <is much> has disappeared considerably since" (*Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 1, 68).

<sup>12</sup> "There is a bustle and vivacity in the looks and motions of the inhabitants of Milan that is not often found among the Italians. They have assumed considerable of the French character from their frequent intercourse with that nation" (*Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 1, 342; cf. also 328).

line should occasion such a vast difference between two nations that neither the people – houses, manners language – tastes should resemble each other. The Italian and the turk are more similar than the parisien and the Hollander. (*Letters*, vol. 1 (1802-23) 206)

This passage offers a pointed contrast between Dutch characteristics in their various manifestations and those of the French, especially the Parisians. The latter are slightly deprecated as a tribute to the American ideas of propriety and morality observed in his family, and this practice was, no doubt, fostered by older clichés, especially those in guide books. Irving's assessment of the French is thus not to be taken as an expression of his own critical stance and of his autoptic examination. Since his first indignation at the lascivious exhibition and of the "depraved morals" of French ballet dancers, which he had twice found highly embarrassing,<sup>13</sup> he had become accustomed to the naked flesh on display, and did not apparently forego the theatrical and other pleasures during the four months of his sojourn in Paris.

The attempt he made to provide witty information for his siblings and friends, no doubt, shapes the epistolary passage quoted and colors the sometimes comical descriptions of the inconveniences of the journey through Holland and the selection of details when relating his impressions. During his visit to Flanders and Holland, for about ten days, he mentions a habit occasionally annoying to the stranger, the deplorable custom of the locals to smoke incessantly. Soon after having first noticed this bad custom he relates the misery caused by an old Dutchman in their carriage as he first offends the noses of his fellow-travelers with malodorous cheese and then covers them in clouds of tobacco smoke.<sup>14</sup> This practice repeatedly reported by Irving, seems not to have similarly caught the attention of earlier travelers to Holland;<sup>15</sup> in Irving's texts this habit is used to round off the image of the stout Dutchman who lives on dairy products with the addition of this constantly smoking attribute.

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Journals and Notebooks* vol. 1, 79 and 82.

<sup>14</sup> *Journals and Notebooks* vol. 1, 445 and 448: "The cheese had a most powerful odour and if we might judge from the smell & blackness the pipe had descended to him from his ancestors. According to Dutch fashion he made no hesitation of smoaking in the carriage and soon enveloped us in a most villainous fog."

<sup>15</sup> There is no reference to such a practice in Thomas Nugent's *Grand Tour*, a standard guide book popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

It seems as if the absence of picturesque objects in the flat landscape had prompted the young American on the lookout for droll material, and it appears that it is for that reason that he added to the physiognomy of the stout and phlegmatic Dutchman a striking implement.

Here Mynheer smoaks his pipe in the afternoon and dozes over his favourite canal whose muddy sluggish waters resemble his own stagnant ideas. (*Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 1, 448)

That the cliché of a man dully dozing on the banks of slow-moving canals was incompatible with the notion of passionate emotions is ironically reflected in Irving's regret that he was unable to attend the Dutch theatre and was thus deprived of the sight of Mynheer as a lover, "dissolving in the tender excess of sentiment, or expiring in all the bathos of Tragedy." (*Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 1, 449)

Since the early 17<sup>th</sup> century English authors had questioned the ability of the Dutchman to experience deep emotion, and after James Howell's *Familiar Letters* William Temple's *Observations* had become a frequently quoted locus classicus of this hypothesis, which was still familiar to readers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>16</sup> Irving's portraits of Dutchmen in his journals were without doubt drawn with a view to exploiting a literary type and these were the result of his tendency to present a caricature. One cannot fail to notice that this cartoon-like figure became a productive image in the presentation of the Dutch inhabitants of the 'worthies' of New Amsterdam in *Diedrich Knickerbocker's 'A History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty'*. In this humorous, freely invented early history of his native city, which Irving had partly drawn from old folios studied with the enthusiasm of an antiquary and which he had partly recreated out of a spirit of fabulation (though with a touch of personal melancholy), Irving makes the Dutch patricians, now transplanted into the New World, constantly use their pipes. This stretches from the unhurried commencement of a project in Rotterdam by Knickerbocker's ancestor Hermanus van Clattercop, to the reaction of the inhabitants of the small community of Communipaw who, in their agitation, puff to produce a saving smokescreen for their place,

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. C. C. Barfoot, "A Patriot's Boast: Akenside and Goldsmith in Leiden" (1974), 197-230.



to the last gasp of Governer Walter Van Twiller. The pipe fulfils a central role in Irving's history, a fact borne out by the illustrations inspired by the text.<sup>17</sup> The author has Knickerbocker measure distances and time in terms of the length of pipes smoked, thus showing his inclination for the bizarre as well as report on the use of pipes in war and in advertising. He bestows mock heroic dignity on this implement in his historical narrative (highly rated by Scott and Dickens), when depicting the troubles under William Kieft, a caricature of Thomas Jefferson, and whose unsuccessful edict against smoking provoked the counterstroke of the "pipe plot". Thus some of Irving's impressions collected on his journey and, no doubt, included in his journals later activated his imagination in conceiving and executing humorous portraits of the life style of the colonial Dutch in the New World. Irving's journey furnished important material for the idiosyncratic chronicle offered by the comical narrator Knickerbocker, as well as permitting the display of his *vis comica* when events of the history otherwise lacking true grandeur are inflated to heroic dimensions.

Irving's impressions no doubt colored the many explicit and implicit comparisons between the customs of nations and groups of people, which run like a thread through his history of New York. Significant evidence of Irving's inclination, no doubt shaped by his reading, to contrast the customs and the nature of various peoples, can be found in his masterpiece, the *Sketch Book* of 1819. The most pointed and extensive juxtaposition of national characteristics is contained in the concluding part of Letter 7 in *Salmagundi*, the journal co-edited by Irving with his brother William and his brother-in-law, James Kirke Paulding. In this satire in the fashion of Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes*, or Oliver Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, Irving concluded his strictures on the defects and weaknesses of American democracy, which under Jefferson had deteriorated into a 'logocracy', where there is too much debate and talk, by contrasting the typical behavior of five European nations and of the Americans as perceived by a foreigner:

The infidel nations have each a separate characteristic trait by which they may be distinguished from each other: – the spaniard, for instance, may be said to *sleep* upon every affair of importance – the

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<sup>17</sup> C. Stanley Williams, *The Life of Washington Irving* (1935), vol. 1, 116-117.

Italians to *fiddle* upon everything the french to *dance* upon every thing the germans to *smoke* upon everything; - the british islanders to *eat* upon every thing – and the windy subjects of the american logocracy to *talk* upon every thing. (147)

He ascribes this assessment to the captive Mustapha writing to Asem Hacchem, “principal slave driver to his highness the Bashaw of Tripoli.”<sup>18</sup>

Since his departure for England in 1815 Irving had warmed to the country of his ancestors during his repeatedly extended visit. In a number of sketches he gave expression to his Anglophile attitude, providing his readers with a hitherto unsurpassed portrait of the English character. The composition, begun in London in 1817 and continued in the home of his brother-in-law, Henry van Wart, in Edgbaston and during his tours of England, Wales, and Scotland offered a multi-faceted picture of urban and rural England, albeit a very selective one (it excluded references to social unrest),<sup>19</sup> and focused on the depiction of Merry Old England, and on sentimental episodes and scenes exemplifying mutability as the human lot.

Irving, who was eager to fulfill the expectations of his reading public,<sup>20</sup> also offered two extremely successful tales illustrating the early history of the Hudson Valley, namely “Rip van Winkle” and “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”. In doing so he enriched a region, ostensibly lacking myths and historical incidents of note, with another dimension, thereby ensuring the success of his book among Anglophone readers. In his two American tales, especially, the author does not forego the opportunities furnished by stereotypes in the depiction of his characters. Critical readers cannot fail to observe that Irving drew on traditional clichés and that the contrast between certain stereotypes is a significant theme. This is primarily apparent in the intrusion into the peaceful and idyllic, almost Cockayne-like world of portly Dutch colonial farmers, of an avaricious and lanky stranger, Ichabod Crane, who is always hungry, a true Yankee from

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<sup>18</sup> That Washington Irving rather than his co-editors was the author of this piece is stated by Williams, vol. 2, 263-264.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. the Peterloo Massacre of 1819 to which there is no direct reference.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Irving’s request in a letter to H. Brevoort to monitor the response to the first installments of the *Sketch Book*, which appeared in the United States from June 1819 onwards, so that the author could adjust his combination of humor and pathos accordingly. Cf. Williams, vol. 1, 174.

Connecticut, seen against the backdrop of their rich landscape. Crane is explicitly drawn as the representative of a restless type of human being constantly eager to improve his lot. Before Crane hastily flees from the scene after a mock apparition arranged by Brom Bones, the efficient country yokel and Crane's successful rival, who drives the newcomer away from the proximity of Katrina, the nubile daughter of the affluent Balt Van Tassel, Irving has ample opportunity to sketch a community exemplifying the Dutch colonial character. It is a place in which the pipe is prominently displayed. Behind the characters in this environment one can easily distinguish the outlines of stereotypes, though individual details take them beyond the basic two-dimensional cliché.<sup>21</sup>

The bulk of the *Sketch Book* is made up of depictions of the English milieu. Irving's persona Geoffrey Crayon, functioning as an essayistic self, sets down on paper the impressions registered by his sensitive mind. Crayon describes his experiences and his often elegiac moods when strolling through lanes in London on the lookout for certain objects and impressions, an experience which he captured very successfully in the humorous essay "The Boar's Head Tavern, Eastcheap". In other, seemingly more static pieces, for instance, in "Little Britain", Irving's essayistic self, here in the guise of "an odd-looking old gentleman in a small brown wig and a snuff-coloured coat" (*Sketch Book*, 237), attempts an inventory of lively London types. He repeatedly stresses the typical Englishness of these cockneys, and at least twice underlines the presence of the distinct features of John Bull in this social space.

The ideal manifestation of the English national character is, however, located in a rural environment, which is depicted in 19 essays, vignettes and sketches in a more or less romanticizing fashion. Especially in the shorter pieces, which resemble the patterns and traditions of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to which Irving had been indebted since his "Letters of Jonathan Old-Style, Gentleman", the reader frequently encounters explicit allusions to the national characteristics of the English. These appear, as is put in "Rural Life in England," to be directly in harmony with the pleasant landscape which has a formative

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<sup>21</sup> Since the original publication of this essay the doctoral thesis by Maren Dingfelder Stone has surveyed the portrayal of Dutch Americans in US literature, *Boer, Burgher, Businessman* (2006); on Washington Irving 144-151, on his brother-in-law James Kirke Paulding 152-160.

influence.<sup>22</sup> Several of these essays are shaped by Irving's mood in a period of melancholy and hypochondria, which leads him to choose elegiac English poems and impressions of customs and to represent them as revealing manifestations of national features.<sup>23</sup> Yet it is the stereotype of the Englishman as John Bull that dominates other parts of the book. A separate essay is dedicated to the representation of this cliché which had originated in Arbuthnot's satire *John Bull* (1712). When first visiting England in 1805 shortly after Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, Irving described the triumph of the British population with the help of this traditional political figure.<sup>24</sup> Coincidentally, Irving again set foot on British soil, when another decisive victory, Wellington's defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, was being celebrated in England. In his correspondence and in his essay in the *Sketch Book* Irving, no doubt, drew not only on Arbuthnot's satire but also on *The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan* of his friend James Kirke Paulding, who definitely sent him this text in 1812.<sup>25</sup> Irving did not try to write a political allegory, but rather develops the type of the fundamentally kind but blunt and irascible John Bull gradually into the portrait of an arch-conservative squire, thus a social type denoting rank. As he describes the tribulations he has to bear as a

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. "Rural Life in England": "The stranger who would form a correct opinion of the English character, must not confine his observations to the metropolis. He must go forth into the country, he must sojourn in villages and hamlets; he must visit castles, villas, farmhouses, cottages; he must wander through parks and gardens; along hedges and green lanes; he must loiter about country churches; attend wakes and fairs, and other rural festivals; and cope with the people in all their conditions, and all their habits and humours" (*Sketch Book*, 50).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. "The rich vein of melancholy which runs through the English character, and gives it some of its most touching and ennobling graces, is finally evidenced in these pathetic customs, and in the solicitude shown by the common people for a honored and a peaceful grave." (*Sketch Book*, 53) The death of Irving's mother and the awakened memory of the early death of his beloved Mathilde together with the anxieties caused by the financial troubles of family business in Liverpool must have fostered Irving's meditation on transience and his preference for elegiac mood.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. his letter to Peter Irving (7 November 1805), in *Letters*, vol. 1, 214-215: "... it could not have happened more opportunely, for the disastrous accounts from the Continent had made poor John Bull quite heart-sick ... Poor John, however, was so completely down-hearted and humble, that I began really to pity him, when suddenly the news of Nelson's triumph arrived, and the old fellow reared his broad rosy countenance higher than ever."

<sup>25</sup> Cf. George E. Hastings, "John Bull and His American Descendants", *American Literature* 1 (1929/30), 40-68.

wayward son and other parasites lead a life of leisure on his estate, he wins the reader's sympathy in a way the originally purely allegorical figure did not command.

This portrait of a social type begins to rival the genial and amiable figure of Squire Bracebridge in the artistically more satisfactory "Christmas Essays". The convergence of the two figures is manifest in the less appealing, structurally flawed sequel of the "Christmas Essays," *Bracebridge Hall*, which had been suggested by a remark by Thomas Moore. The book, published in 1822, falls between being a novel with a flimsy, static plot and a nostalgic celebration and a mild satire of a patriarchal and anachronistic world. Many of the oddities of the squire who attempts a resurrection of "merry old England" are prefigured in little details in "John Bull". They can, however, be traced back to the portrait of Sir Roger de Coverley in Addison's *Spectator*, a text which, no doubt, influenced Irving's use of the stereotype of the country squire though his contemporaries may have failed to realize this as they often regarded the novel as a social document. Thus an Irish reviewer, who praised the veracity and verisimilitude of this book, could assume that Irving was offering a true picture of the social conditions in England.<sup>26</sup> The squire, who is rooted in the world of fiction, truly rides his hobbyhorse with all the dedication of a member of the Shandy family though he is only one of the types whose portraits recall the patterns of the popular 'books of character' of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. He is surrounded by other 'humorists,' primarily drawn from older literary or social types ("The Widow", "An Old Soldier", "The Lovers", as is indicated in the titles of many pieces). Yet there are other characters, no doubt similarly patterned on literary models, who, through their place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, appear as eccentric or true originals, for instance, the Antiquary, the pastor, Master Simon, possibly Christy, and "Ready-Money Jack". These individuals, assembled in the rural world of the squire with their idiosyncratic and anachronistic designs, may have suggested to the foreign reader that England was, indeed, ideal soil for such originals evolving in a free democratic society.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Dublin University Magazine* (May 1835): "In it [*Bracebridge Hall*] is the only account we have, which gives anything like a true picture of the life of an English country gentleman of our own day" (quoted after Williams, vol. 1, 440, note 159).

<sup>27</sup> Robert S. Osborne regards *Bracebridge Hall* as a kind of blown-up sketch of the English national character, a kind of expanded *John Bull*, in his unpublished doctoral

This overall picture was probably partly responsible for the favorable reception of the book in Germany, for the categorization of English society into many individuals of distinctive taste and inclination with a high percentage of whimsical figures conformed to the dominant notion of the English.<sup>28</sup> Irving's own concept of the national character was crucially important for the aesthetic harmonization of those impressions and those aspects of England with which he had fallen in love in the *Sketch Book* and, especially, in *Bracebridge Hall*. That he portrays a world largely free of glaring injustice is another matter. On the advice of his friend, the painter Leslie, he abandoned the project of including sketches from Grub Street in *Bracebridge Hall*, which he had already partly composed, as he would have risked destroying the unity of the setting and of the carefree mood. This gain was, however, paid for by a certain monotony, which is not relieved by the insertion of four partially successful narratives, for instance, that of the "Stout Gentleman". This sequence of vignettes taken from the lives of London writers was slightly revised and given the title "Buckthorne and His Friends", and made into the second part of the later *Tales of a Traveller*.

It is a commonplace of Irving scholarship that the latter book, which appeared in August 1825 and on which the writer had been engaged since 1823 after his stay in Dresden (several months filled with visits to the opera and theatres, and a whirl of lively literary contacts), did not fulfill the high expectations of Irving's readers, neither at home nor abroad. Several studies on the genesis of this book, which readers hoped would repeat the success of the *Sketch Book*, reveal it to have been painful and frustrating.<sup>29</sup> The work of the author, who was naturally a restless traveler and congenitally eager to add new, superficial impressions, shows a serious lack of originality and spontaneity, as he hastily combined gleanings from his reading and anecdotes heard in Paris with some older impressions, for instance, those garnered during his Italian journey.<sup>30</sup> Only in the first

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thesis "A Study of Washington Irving's Development as a Man of Letters to 1825" (1947). Cf. Breinig, 182-183.

<sup>28</sup> See Zacharasiewicz, "Charme à l'Anglaise – On the Image of the Restless Worldly-Wise from England" in this volume.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Reichart, *Washington Irving in Germany*, 140, and especially Hedges, 199.

<sup>30</sup> It seems necessary to qualify Nathalia Wright's claim that in *Tales of a Traveller* Irving exploited his own impressions of Italy. He remembered, for instance, the execution of the notorious "dragon of Genova", Musso. Several parallels between this

part of this book, which pulls together disparate material in the “Tales of a Nervous Gentleman”, can the effect of German legends and ghost stories, here with a light ironic touch, be sensed. Irving does not ignore the presentation of national character, but he does not really take advantage of the extensive folkloristic details and sketches taken down with a keen sense of literary effect, which had stood him in good stead earlier. He capitalizes on national stereotypes, especially in parts one and three (“The Italian Banditti”), and thus employs the contrast between northern, mostly English, and Mediterranean settings and the nature of their peoples. Yet in contrast to his earlier texts he is satisfied with merely using literary clichés in the drawing of his characters, and his narratives lack the personal touch derived from subjective impressions during his journeys. As a result, the contrast provided in part one between the conversational tone used in an English hunting party, which betrays their contented and phlegmatic nature(s), and the passionate emotions of the young painter Ottavio from Naples, whose biography is offered in “The Story of the Young Italian” in a double frame,<sup>31</sup> appears somewhat too straightforward and crude.

The schematic division of the material inside the book also appears fairly traditional and lacking in artistic depth. As a result the third part of the book merely supplies the framework for a series of adventures with highwaymen and incidents in which, to the irritation of Irving’s readers, who had different expectations, sex and crime seem to dominate. These adventures, which are related in another circle of story-tellers before reality suddenly seems to confirm the proximity of the fictional world, are mediated by a narrator also bearing the name of Crayon. But he lacks the intimate individual tone

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journal and his narratives may be observed. The choice and representation of the settings in *Tales of a Traveller*, however, appear to owe a great deal to literary models. The Italian settings seem to be indebted to Mrs. Radcliffe’s romances. Irving is known to have had Radcliffe’s *The Italian* in his luggage during his first journey through Italy. That Radcliffe had composed the landscapes of the Apennine peninsula without having seen them is a curious, though remarkable detail.

<sup>31</sup> While the portrait of the Italian painter may be related to a stereotype, the susceptibility to music and its orphic effect may be indebted to sensibilities of characters in Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder’s *Herzensergießungen* or the painter in Ludwig Tieck’s novel *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen*. Irving may have come to know these texts when he stayed in Dresden where he made the acquaintance of Tieck.

and the specific sensitivity of his predecessor, whose qualities had contributed significantly to the appeal of the *Sketch Book*. From the outset Irving provides general clichés, for instance, that of the seemingly lazy inhabitants of this Mediterranean region, who are, at the same time, capable of perpetrating horrible deeds. He also typifies his figures excessively. Thus, a beautiful Venetian lady is not only “young, tender, and timid” but also very susceptible to erotic appeal and subconsciously lecherous. She is confronted with the coldness of an Englishman, which irritates her a great deal. That in the melodramatic climax of the story entitled “Italian Banditti” in an ambush the northerner finally appears as the savior counts among those features of this book which move it in the direction of trivial popular literature.

As the conduct of the characters corresponds totally to the (stereotype) expectations, with the ironic touches insufficiently strong to produce the comical effect as they had in Irving’s early *History of New York*, and as the imagination of the author seems not to have sufficiently transformed the material based on clichés, *Tales of a Traveller* do not rise above the level of the mundane. Local color, which Irving was otherwise able to use selectively and suggestively, is only applied with a crude brush. An important source of his literary talent and *oeuvre*, the notes he had taken of his impressions on his journeys, had not been satisfactorily drawn upon in this book. Thus an illusion of the authentic representation of a cultural space is not achieved, something Irving, however, seems not to have really attempted in this book.<sup>32</sup> Through the hasty jotting down of the frame narratives and of the tales the space presented seems largely made up of props; neither the setting nor the characters achieve verisimilitude. As Irving does not attain a true balance between typicality and individualization in his figures, he loses an important potential effect, one for which his genius, particularly suited to the comprehension of superficial differences between people and of picturesque effects, had predestined him.

The inclination and ability of the author to grasp various aspects of national character can, no doubt, be related to concrete literary models but may also be put in a larger intellectual and cultural

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<sup>32</sup> Irving was criticized in the *United States Literary Gazette* (November 15, 1824) for having offered an incorrect picture of Italy. But Irving did not even try to compose a variant of his *Sketch Book* using different material. Cf. Williams, vol. 2, 292.



context. The roots of Irving's literary habit and practice can be found both in the thinkers of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and in Romantic and pre-Romantic writers and critics. Yet they go back even further. The author, no doubt, shared with the thinkers of the Enlightenment the pleasure of dividing groups into various categories and, like the Classicists, he seems to have regarded the depiction of the type as an important task of the writer. But, in his case (and in this respect he belongs rather to the moderns), he needed personal confrontation and individual experience to capture and depict national characteristics graphically. Since the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the idea of the intimate connection between a nation and its *Lebensraum* had gradually developed, as had the notion of the close union of the various cultural manifestations of a national character truly approaching a distinct identity. This linked Irving to the disciples of Herder and to the German Romantics.<sup>33</sup> In this context it would be interesting to find out to whom Irving owed a pertinent reflection which he noted down soon after his entries on Salzburg:

Nations are fast losing their nationality. The great & increasing intercourses – the exchange of fashion – the uniformity of opinions by the diffusion of Literature are fast [breaking] destroying these peculiarities that formerly prevaild – We shall [se] in time grow to be very much one people – unless a return of barbarism throws us again into clans. (*Journals and Notebooks*, vol. 3, 53-54)

Irving's own stance towards this seemingly inevitable uniformity cannot be really inferred from this entry in his notebook.

It is possible that his observations in the metropolis of Vienna prompted his developing this train of thought from the impression of the blurring of the borders between nations, which he had gained during his first European tour. Though he ascribes to literature an important part in this process, the question remains open of how he regarded his own position in this process. That he likes to describe fixed and unadulterated old customs would put him into the camp of the preservers of historical conditions. His strong awareness of mutability, the transience of human achievements and human

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<sup>33</sup> It is highly probable that Irving's preoccupation with national character was also stimulated by his knowledge of Mme de Staël's work. He had met her during his first Italian journey and "De la littérature considérée dans ses rapports avec les institutions sociales" had been reviewed in his *Analectic Magazine* in 1812.

existence may also have caused his paying particular attention to national characteristics, which he observed with special pleasure and steadfastness, and to the various manifestations of particularity in all aspects of life.

There was to be no *German Sketch Book* as Irving failed to leave to posterity the impressions of his second European tour (which took him through Salzburg) together with the fables and the folkloristic impressions collected at that time. This omission, and its substitution by the rather cliché-ridden stories in the *Tales of a Traveller*, will be regarded (and regretted) by the modern reader as an indication of at least a temporary diminution of Irving's imaginative powers. His earlier strength had not consisted in capturing the reality of nations or offering an authentic picture as contemporary foreign readers believed. Rather, Irving's impressions, when put in fictional form retained much of the cliché, though the combination of modified clichés and subjective impressions in his sketches produced aesthetically appealing facets of an autonomous fictional world. In his hands the way of life and landscape of Salzburg might have been transformed into a graphically captured poetic vision. In Irving's best sketches and tales national stereotypes and autoptic insights fed the presentation of aesthetically appealing situations and moods.

It was only a few years later that Irving again managed to achieve such a fusion when, after a longer sojourn in the south of Spain, he depicted the alleged essence of Spanish and Moorish experience and history, when immersing himself in the historical and heroic past in *The Alhambra*. There he found a congenial field of activity and inspiring subject, which he was then able to compose perfectly freed from any pressure.

## Chapter 8: Remarks on the Tradition and Function of Heterostereotypes in North American Fiction between 1900 and 1940

... Zerkow was a Polish Jew ... He was a dry, shrivelled old man of sixty odd. He had the thin, eager, cat-like lips of the covetous; eyes that had grown keen as those of a lynx from long searching amidst muck and debris; and clawlike, prehensile fingers – the fingers of a man who accumulates, but never disburses. It was impossible to look at Zerkow and not know instantly that greed – inordinate, insatiable greed – was the dominant passion of the man.

Zerkow is a ragman, who is consumed by greed for the mythical gold dishes the Mexican cleaning woman Maria Miranda Macapa has fantasized about, and whom he urges to repeat her story until he finally commits murder and dies himself.<sup>1</sup> In introducing this subsidiary character in his novel *McTeague* (1899) Frank Norris draws on a cliché which had been revived and used effectively in 19<sup>th</sup>-century theater. It fitted well into the world picture conveyed by the radical naturalists, who emphasized the depiction of ugliness, crime, abnormality and pathology over the banality of everyday life, and for whom the marginalized of ethnic groups in the congested ghettos of New York, Chicago, or San Francisco offered abundant material. The incomparably more frequent encounters of American fiction writers and their readers with these foreigners, compared with the experiences of their English counterparts in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, fostered the introduction of their representatives in fiction. While a number of American authors, such as Henry James and William Dean Howells, utilized their European impressions for a fictional analysis of the contrast between the manners and values in the Old and the New Worlds in the form of the international novel (for reasons of space this tradition, in which stereotypes figure prominently, cannot be considered here), the fictional treatment of the masses of immigrants

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Norris, *McTeague*, rpt. 1995, 36.

seemed only feasible if traditional and fairly crude methods were employed. The growth of large ethnic slums, and of the ghettos inhabited by hundreds of thousands of recently arrived Jews and following in the footsteps of previous newcomers such as the Irish, as well as immigrants from Italy and Eastern and Southeastern Europe, contributed not insignificantly to the waxing of anxieties among writers.<sup>2</sup> The fundamental change to which the erstwhile homogeneous population and culture of New England was subjected prompted the fears expressed by James as well as Howells as a young writer, and led Frederick Jackson Turner to lament this reality, which also agitated Henry Adams.<sup>3</sup> The local color tradition had paid close attention to the specific customs, habits and linguistic patterns in the various regions of America. The rise of social realism which consistently developed tendencies only implied in the local color tradition, now placed representatives of ethnic minorities in the center. The portrait of the old German social revolutionary Lindau in Howells' 1890 novel *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, whose foreign accent is fairly exactly transcribed, is a landmark in this development. Various writers of this new movement, such as Norris in the passage cited above, readily accepted many of the assumptions and heterostereotypes of the advocates of environmental determinism and of racial theory. He thus indirectly furthered the use of recurring clichés such as the Jew as a Shylock figure; the virulence of Zerkow's characterization is not tempered even by the fact that avarice, greed and miserliness also shape other characters in the novel, such as Trina Siette-McTeague.

Admittedly, in Abraham Cahan's long story "Yekl", a fictional text had been published, in spite of the skepticism of Harper's about the interest of American readers in the ethnic experience. It graphically depicted the ghetto on the Lower East Side and the idiom of East European immigrants, and mediated the problems of this ethnic group from their own angle; similar narratives from the ghetto indirectly indebted to the local color tradition appealed for understanding for a culture which seemed so alien and exotic to the

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (rev. ed. 1969), 94-105.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dobkowski, *The Tarnished Dream: The Basis of American Anti-Semitism* (1979), esp. 85-88, and 117-125 (on F. J. Turner), and E. N. Saveth, *American Historians and European Immigrants, 1875-1925* (1948), 128-136.

old established citizens of America.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the new arrivals from Eastern Europe, alien in their clothing and traditions, were soon the objects of observation and suspicion among a growing number of Nativists.<sup>5</sup> Their outward appearance alone did not conform to the American autostereotype developed since the beginnings of Emerson's Declaration of Cultural Independence (1837). The amply documented studies of the history of anti-Semitism in the US, which have appeared in the last few decades, have assembled numerous expressions in private correspondence and public utterances by diverse US American writers which in turn reflect their fixed assumptions of the inability of that ethnic group to assimilate.

In the first autobiographies of Jewish American authors, which were published from about 1910 onwards, the refutation of this cliché comes to the fore again and again. The dramatically increasing number of immigrants from Eastern and Southeastern Europe, more than half a million per year, had also strengthened the intensity of Nativist agitation, in which clichéd images regularly served political propaganda. The problems with the integration of the waves of immigrants entering the country via Ellis Island (after 1892) provided a soundboard for clichés, which, on the one hand, pervaded fiction such as that of Norris and, on the other, bore fruit in racist analyses and studies which took the guise of genuine scientific work.<sup>6</sup>

The appeal to fiction writers of the stereotype of the Jew as an unscrupulous huckster who succeeds through his very adaptability is evident in *The Foreigner*, a novel published in 1909 by the popular Canadian fiction writer Ralph Connor, who had sold more than five million romances in those years. In *The Foreigner*, Connor who had become a Presbyterian minister in Winnipeg, uses the figure of Rosenblatt to exploit the clichés of Semitic avarice and treachery, here labeled "Bukovinian". He puts this cliché to use together with the stereotype of Slavic revenge to create a melodramatic plot.<sup>7</sup> In his preface to the romance Connor assesses the seemingly fascinating process of the amalgamation of a new nation. The numerous sweeping

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Kurt Dittmar, *Assimilation und Dissimilation* (1978), 61-64, 106-109, etc.

<sup>5</sup> Their anxieties found graphic expression in cartoons exemplifying virulent stereotypes. See Dorman (1985).

<sup>6</sup> On the pertinent publications by Lothrop Stoddard, Charles B. Gould, Carl C. Brigham and others, cf. esp. Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 149-157, and 270-277.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *The Foreigner. A Tale of Saskatchewan*, 347: "The fierce lust for vengeance which had for centuries run mad in his Slavic blood ...".

authorial comments scattered throughout the book demonstrate that Connor understands this process as the gradual raising of the semi-barbarous immigrants to the moral level of the Anglo-Saxon majority.

... Out of breeds diverse in traditions, in ideals, in speech, and in manner of life, Saxon and Slav, Teuton, Celt and Gaul, one people is being made. The blood strains of great races will mingle in the blood of a race greater than the greatest of them all. (*The Foreigner*, Preface)

Despite similar phrasing, a very different spirit pervades the play *The Melting Pot* by the British dramatist Israel Zangwill, which was staged in Washington in 1908 and quickly became very popular. Zangwill has the material of this process of amalgamation manifested on the stage in characters who are culturally almost equals, and he entrusts an optimistic message to David Quixano, a young Jewish composer endowed with great talent, who has escaped a pogrom in Kishineff. This message Quixano pronounces to his orthodox, conservative uncle Mendel and to his beloved Vera, a Russian aristocrat, while the author arranges the interaction of various other representatives of ethnic groups, drawing on familiar national characters.<sup>8</sup>

The image of the integration and fusion of various ethnic characteristics in the new nation eulogized by Zangwill's mouthpiece was to provoke protest in various quarters due to the ambiguity of the phrasing. The Zionist Horace M. Kallen quietly advocated the concept of cultural pluralism over the idea of the melting pot, while the opposition of Nativists fearing foreignization took various forms. The Canadian political scientist Stephen Leacock, for instance, who from about 1910 had a reputation as a humorist, was prompted to couch in sarcasm his dissent to this development, which in his country seemed even more disconcerting due to the less favorable ratio between citizens resident in the country and immigrants. By deliberately lowering the tone into an absurd pun, he comments thus on the predictions of the advocates of free immigration to Canada about the importation of qualities and virtues of various nations:

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<sup>8</sup> The pattern of national characters used in the play comprises, apart from old Mrs. Quixano, who speaks Yiddish, an Irish maid, a high ranking Tsarist officer, and a German conductor, whose broad accents are intended to underline the typicality of their natures.

Out of all these we are to make a kind of mixed race in which is to be the political wisdom of the British, the chivalry of the French, the gall of the Galician, the hungriness of the Hungarians and the dirtiness of the Doukobor.<sup>9</sup>

In doing so Leacock drew on one of the satirical methods which had proved its worth in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, for instance, in polemics against the Grand Tour because of its corrupting influence on young English travelers: the listing of all the vices which were in this way imported from the Continent.

In John Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* Uncle Jefferson Merivale dispenses with any such irony when he bluntly curses the toleration which is delivering New York up to foreigners:

It is overrun with Kikes and low Irish ... In ten years a Christian won't be able to make a living ... these dirty Kikes and shanty Irish that we make voters before they can even talk English ....<sup>10</sup>

Dos Passos' city novel is a text which, with its exceptionally large number of characters, had of necessity to refer to features typical of groups, and which is therefore particularly promising for our analysis. At the same time as Dos Passos was composing the first drafts of this novel, another American writer who was to set himself similarly ambitious literary goals, was giving expression to the antipathy of citizens confronted with the socio-economic mobility of Jewish immigrants: Thomas Wolfe.<sup>11</sup> If we compare Wolfe's fiction with that of Dos Passos with respect to their use of national stereotypes, we are immediately aware of the differences between these two key figures in American fiction deriving from their origins and world views.<sup>12</sup> Dos Passos' paternal heritage in the Mediterranean, the European

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<sup>9</sup> Leacock, "The Political Achievement of Robert Baldwin", *Addresses Delivered Before the Canadian Club of Ottawa, 1903-1909* (1910), 164; see also Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (rpt. 1976), 151.

<sup>10</sup> Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer* (1925, rpt. 1953), 101-102.

<sup>11</sup> Wolfe attributed the popularity of the trivial "success plays" to the taste of the "Semitic audience in New York". He opined that American culture "fits the Jew like a glove, far better, indeed, than it fits the members of our own race." (*Notebooks*, vol. 1, 22-23).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. the distinctive heritages and careers of Dos Passos (see Melvin Landsberg, *Dos Passos' Path to USA: A Political Biography, 1912-1936* (1972)) and Wolfe (see David Herbert Donald's *Look Homeward. A Life of Thomas Wolfe* (1987)).

impressions in his childhood and youth, his experiences in the Great War and his advocacy of radical social reforms created fundamentally different preconditions for his attitude towards stereotypes than was the case with Wolfe. The editors of Wolfe's *Notebooks* were correct in their assessment of him as a representative WASP who used common clichés and embraced ethnocentrism. His heritage and childhood in Asheville, a town in North Carolina with a relatively homogenous population, predestined him for the adoption of such heterostereotypes. Apart from the childhood experiences reflected in his thinly veiled autobiographical novel *Look Homeward, Angel*,<sup>13</sup> his attitude to (American) Jews was shaped by his unhappy encounter with this group when transplanted into the urban space for which he was not fully prepared. The confrontation of the young instructor at New York University, unsure of himself and diffident in his teaching, with Jewish students is evidently reflected in the cliché-ridden images of this group in his *Notebooks*.

In *Of Time and the River*, his negative impressions in New York are mirrored in caricature-like portraits of those students who are marked by their "huge beaked noses" and to whose distasteful perspiration the young annoyed instructor was exposed.<sup>14</sup> The repeatedly stressed earthy sensual aura of young Jewish women with the vibrato of their voices, their "yolky cries", turn out to be at least partly a later projection of Wolfe's passionate relationship lasting several years with Aline Bernstein, whom he addresses again and again as "my dear Jew", and to whose words of encouragement, devotion, financial support and culinary skills he owed so much. The stormy relationship with the much older stage designer,<sup>15</sup> with its repeated conflicts and eventual rupture, helps to explain the contradictions and ambivalence of the image of Jews in Wolfe's fiction.

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. the crusades of teenagers in Altamont (Asheville) against the sons of Jewish citizens.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the ambivalent portrait of Abraham Jones which originally drew on anti-Semitic prejudices. Wolfe offered the picture of a studious, somewhat recalcitrant, undergraduate, who was later, however, to become Eugene's friend and introduced him to Jewish family life in New York. See *Of Time and the River* (1935), 419-428 and 440-447.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Suzanne Stutman's edition of their correspondence, *My Other Loneliness: Letters of Thomas Wolfe and Aline Bernstein* (1983), which reflects their passionate relationship from 1925 to the final rupture in 1932.



In his depiction of affluent Jewish businessmen in his later novels and in his portrayal of literary rivals and partners Wolfe only rarely does without any reference to stereotypes. This practice so characteristic of his work, had not only private causes (psychoanalytic studies have explored the deeper roots of Wolfe's inclination to verbal aggression and xenophobia)<sup>16</sup> but is also a consequence of his specific approach to literature and the art of composition. With his exceptionally retentive memory he portrayed the figures of his immediate milieu in their full individuality when fictionalizing the autobiographical impressions of his childhood and youth in Asheville. And in the precision he attained he never denied his debt to James Joyce's narrative art. When he continued his colossal achievement in the hypertrophic later works, he permitted generalizations about ethnic groups to enter the excessive, irrepressible rhetoric he employed whenever sketching a character appearing in an episode. It seems as if he was otherwise incapable of controlling and grasping the otherwise elusive actors and agents of the anonymous urban milieu which he desired to communicate to his readers.

Quite a few of the minor figures in Wolfe's fiction seem to have much in common with stage characters. The transcription of their broken English and the emphasis on their outward appearance remind the reader of an established theatrical practice. In spite of his almost compulsive inclination to strive for epic scope, Wolfe's later texts seem to relate back to the literary genre in which he had first been eager to score success: drama. Although he was subsequently to describe his early efforts in this genre as a wrong turning, his readiness to render in long dialogue exchanges exactly the idiom of his figures phonetically often almost approaches caricature, whilst his frequent use of characterizing phrases and gestures suggests his continuing debt to this art form.<sup>17</sup> The cultivation of the habit of presenting foreigners satirically seems to have a counterpart in *Of Time and the River*, for instance, in the limited abilities of Uncle

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. the studies by William Snyder, *Thomas Wolfe: Ulysses and Narcissus* (1971), and Richard Steele, *Thomas Wolfe: A Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism* (1976).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Wolfe's attempts in this genre in Chapel Hill and in George Pierce Baker's 47 workshop at Harvard, which have in the meantime been partly edited. The professional experience of Aline Bernstein continued to ensure Wolfe's reluctant but continuing preoccupation with the theater. For his admission that his efforts in the genre were mistaken, see his Purdue speech (ed. by W. Braswell and L. A. Field, 1964).

Bascom's customers to express themselves and articulate their wishes and in the stereotyped depiction of Greek and Italian immigrants. This also appears in *The Web and the Rock* in the sarcastic portrait of the Jewish publisher, Mr. Hyman Rawng, a shark and smart businessman who pretends to be selfless.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, it is precisely the portraits of Jewish characters that reveal that Wolfe was quite willing to correct established clichés. Thus, the authorial narrator of *The Web and the Rock* in his presentation of Mr. Rosen, the successful owner of a textile factory, explicitly defends him and other members of his group against the odium of miserliness: "There is, of course, no greater fallacy than the one about the stinginess of the Jews. They are the most lavish and opulent race on earth" (*Web and the Rock*, 438), he emphasizes, and again chooses a sweeping generalization which accords all too well with his inclination rashly "to generalize the individual into the universal" (*Web and the Rock*, 438).<sup>19</sup>

While private motives in conjunction with habitual forms of characterization thus shaped the development of Wolfe's attitude towards the Jewish American minority, in the case of Willa Cather a similar motivation can only be found for the composition of her novel *The Professor's House* (1925). It is widely assumed that Cather's dislike of Jan Hambourg, the Jewish husband of her close friend Isabel McClung, provided the background for the negative character sketch of the all too generous Jewish son-in-law of the eponymous professor Godfrey St. Peter.<sup>20</sup> Earlier stories, in which the stereotypes of the unscrupulous Jewish businessman or of the profit-oriented "organiser" in the world of the arts appear, are simply rooted in traditional anti-Semitic lore. This is probably true of the impresario Miletus Poppas, who is referred to as "a vulture of the vulture race" in "The Diamond

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<sup>18</sup> In the transcription of the idiom of foreigners Wolfe drew on many stereotypes. This is evident in his rendition of Bascom's conversation with the Greek Makropoulos in *Of Time and the River*, and applies also to the speaking style of Mr. Rawng in *The Web and the Rock*.

<sup>19</sup> A comprehensive survey of Wolfe's foible in his portraits of ethnic figures is provided in the exhaustive analysis of Pascal Reeves, *Thomas Wolfe's Albatross: Race and Nationality in America* (1968).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. James Schroeter's comments in *Willa Cather and Her Critics* (1967), 363-381. L. Wassermann's attempt to save the honor of Louis Marcellus in *American Literature* 57 (1985), 226-239, is not completely persuasive.

Mine”, and of the social climber among immigrants represented by the parvenu Siegmund Stein in “Scandal”.<sup>21</sup>

That Cather apparently denied the Jewish ethnic group any sympathy is the more striking as, in contrast to Thomas Wolfe, she was otherwise generally willing to show special empathy when relating the fortunes of newcomers to the country. Her narrative art also displays a general willingness to draw ethnic characters in conformity with stereotypes, a practice possibly linked to authors of historical novels since Walter Scott, in order to achieve a verification and certification of imagined events by recourse to allegedly stable national or racial characteristics.<sup>22</sup> Cather’s inclination to refer to national character may also be traced back to her early preoccupation with the theater and the opera. As a young journalist in Lincoln in her early reviews in the *Nebraska State Journal* she drew heavily on a rich fund of clichéd statements on the nature of individual nations and their characteristic artist(ic) forms.<sup>23</sup>

The continuing importance of the storehouse of heterostereotypes for modern fiction is not least illustrated by William Faulkner’s early fictional work in which the type of the Jewish businessman or lawyer is marked by an evocation of the traditional negative associations (*Mosquitoes*, *Sanctuary*, “There Was a Queen,” “Death Drag”). More recent investigations have clarified that Faulkner’s personal experience and his literary representation differ considerably in this respect.<sup>24</sup> His relationship with the Friedmans, a respected Jewish family in Oxford, MS, served from the outset as a potential corrective to the anti-Semitic tendencies prevalent in the heartland of the Ku-Klux-Klan. But it was only Faulkner’s artistic maturation, which led to a critical presentation of ethnocentrism dominant in Jefferson as a typical town in the Deep South, and inspired character sketches which appear as belated attempts at

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<sup>21</sup> Both stories are contained in Willa Cather, *Youth and the Bright Medusa* (1920, rpt. 1975). The quote from “The Diamond Mine” is from 75.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. the author’s observation on the practice of writers of historical novels in his review of “National Stereotypes in Literature,” in the opening chapter of this book.

<sup>23</sup> See her various reviews rpt. in Bernice Slotte, ed., *The Kingdom of Art* (1966).

<sup>24</sup> See Ilse Duso Lind, “Faulkner’s Relationship to Jews”, in *New Directions in Faulkner Studies*, eds. D. Fowler and A. J. Abadie (1984), an essay which corrected the simplified image provided by A. J. Kutzik in “Faulkner and the Jews,” *Yiwo* 13 (1965), 213-226.

reparation with respect to this ethnic and cultural group initially depicted in clichés.<sup>25</sup>

In comparison with Thomas Wolfe, John Dos Passos' greater openness to the affairs of ethnic minorities manifested itself not only in Jimmy Herf's sarcastic reference to the deportation of undesirable aliens in *Manhattan Transfer* and then in the author's passionate advocacy of Sacco and Vanzetti. That Passos distanced himself from the nativist convictions expressed by Jeff Merivale in an episode in *Manhattan Transfer* and which anticipated the political decisions in favor of restricting immigration (1921) and of fixing quotas (1924), is already apparent in his short novel *The Streets of Night* (1923), drafted while Dos Passos was still at Harvard. In sharp contrast to the practice of Robert Grant, the political and literary mouthpiece of the Anglo-Saxon majority in New England,<sup>26</sup> Dos Passos adumbrated here the tensions between, on the one hand, the anemic aestheticism of both Harvard students and members of old, established families, with their inability to come to a decision and lack of fitness for the practical life, and, on the other, the vitality of healthy, earthy Italian immigrants in Boston.

Dos Passos' understanding and sympathy for the dilemma of Jewish immigrants in their process of acculturation, and his management of ethnic material in general are elucidated by a short scene almost at the beginning of *Manhattan Transfer*: a short man, who significantly remains anonymous, on the Lower East Side succumbs to the temptations posed by an advertisement of razor blades ("King Gillette", which suggests prosperity), and cuts his beard and side locks. This act confuses and even stupefies his wife and family, who can neither approve of nor comprehend the motives for this break with the sanctified tradition of Orthodox Judaism in favor of an assimilation promising economic success (*Manhattan Transfer*, 10-11).

This situation rendered as all too typical in the milieu of dumbbell apartments depicts, however, only one variant of the

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Faulkner's portrait of Barton Kohl, the idealist, in *The Mansion* and of Gerald David Levine in *A Fable*.

<sup>26</sup> Frank Bergman's introduction to *Robert Grant* (1982) refers to the negative heterostereotypes of Italian and Irish immigrants employed in Grant's essays and stories, whose perspective was also important for the final rejection of the plea for clemency for Sacco and Vanzetti.

fortunes of Jews included in the synoptic urban novel. When Dos Passos provides Jewish names for a considerable number of minor characters and gives them appropriate outward features, he furnishes various facets of the prevalent image of Jewish characteristics and can, at the same time, integrate empirical material. In his depiction of the fortunes of the Jewish figures included among the roughly 120 named characters in *Manhattan Transfer*, Dos Passos exhibits a broad spectrum of human possibilities. Like other ethnic groups they struggle to succeed or fail, in the merciless metropolis. The successful impresario Harry Goldweiser complacently looks back at his impoverished childhood in the ghetto, while Anna Cohen, who yearns for life, toils as a seamstress in a sweatshop, and eventually loses in a fire her only capital, her good looks (cf. *Manhattan Transfer*, 202-203; 379-98). Through the inclusion of these and other portraits Dos Passos grasps and mediates a cross-section of this ethnic and cultural group and, in spite of incidental and local borrowings from the reservoir of stereotypes, presents a relatively balanced panorama in his rendition of the physiognomy, gestures and idiom of his characters. The function of the facets of the heterostereotype of the Jew is thus limited to facilitating the composition of a representative picture of the metropolis, a project of the author determined both by his intention of offering social criticism and his own avant-garde literary goals.

A close analysis of the genesis of *Manhattan Transfer*, possible since 1970 when the John Dos Passos Papers were deposited in Charlottesville and made accessible to scholars, reveals, however, that, in revising his manuscript, the author drew increasingly on stereotype traits in his depiction of characters. In this process Dos Passos broke the originally fairly traditional plot involving a number of figures into segments and interpolated other episodes in various strands of action,<sup>27</sup> which results in a kaleidoscopic picture made up of a discontinuous narrative. And if Dos Passos basically employs the avant-garde cinematic techniques being developed at that time, the fairly elusive question of the concrete stimulus for these changes remains. In addition to the cinema, it was probably the theater with its inherent tendency towards schematized characterization which offered

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<sup>27</sup> The insight into the genesis of the book gained from studying the manuscripts in the Estate of John Dos Passos at the University of Virginia in 1979 was anticipated by Lois Hughson, "Narrative in the Making of *Manhattan Transfer*" (1976).

such an impulse as can be inferred from Dos Passos' own plays composed in this period.<sup>28</sup>

How the author applies ever shriller colors in the revision of his novel can be demonstrated in a comparison with one of the early scenes in the narrative, which also illustrates his use of another stereotype, that of the German. This episode conveys Ed Thatcher's disappointment with another father after the birth of his own baby daughter. This man has suggested that they drink a glass of Kulmbacher beer to celebrate the births of their children but then leaves Thatcher to foot the bill for both of them. In the course of the draft revision it is made abundantly clear that this man, first called Silverman, then Zilch, and eventually Markus Antonius Zucher, had invited Thatcher, apparently implying that he would treat him to a drink.<sup>29</sup> In the printed version the author underlines Zucher's origin in Germany (he comes from Frankfurt) by stressing his foreign accent and his hybrid diction, as well as his strange syntax. That Thatcher, who confesses to the stranger his hopes of economic success, appears weaker and more passive in the printed version as he tolerates this deception defaultistically than in the drafts where he thinks impulsively of revenging himself on the German who had skipped paying his round, also fulfills an artistic function. His passivity foreshadows his later inability to control his irrepressible daughter Ellie/Ellen/Elaine. Yet an additional reason for the revision of the scene in which the short printer from Frankfurt acts bossily and obtrusively may be the fact that the more critical image of the Germans as bullies had dramatically worsened as a result of the anti-German campaign in the Great War, which had developed its own momentum. Dos Passos may not have been able to free himself of this trend<sup>30</sup> and may thus have paid tribute to this heterostereotype in the mid-1920s. Though in his war novels he had distanced himself from the cliché-ridden image of

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. the expressionistic traits of the play *The Garbage Man*, which is thematically related to *Manhattan Transfer*.

<sup>29</sup> The textual basis for this observation is provided by the three versions contained in the John Dos Passos Papers, the "proto chapters", and the version which was written down in New Orleans. In the published version Zucher's proposal is straightforward: "Vill yous allow me sir to invite you to drink a congradulation drink mit me?" (*Manhattan Transfer*, 8).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Landsberg's *John Dos Passos' Path to USA*, esp. 41-43.

the enemy which he had encountered in Harvard,<sup>31</sup> he now seems to have temporarily regressed into the use of clichés. It is no coincidence that he permits the complacent, stout Mr. Zucher to announce proudly the name of his newborn son, “Ah, his name shall be Vilhelm after the mighty Kaiser” (*Manhattan Transfer*, 10). Thus, a fairly redundant detail is added to the characterization of this insolent adversary of Thatcher, one which, however, signals to the American readership the implied typicality of this behavior.

Considering the attention Thomas Wolfe received in German-speaking countries from the 1930s onwards, it seems superfluous to stress the fact that figures of German background are given preferential treatment in his work. Both his descent on his father’s side from settlers of German origin, which he also attributes to his autobiographical characters, and his repeatedly expressed affinity to German culture are responsible for his favorable portraits of representatives of this ethnic group. His congenital inclination to associate certain fixed qualities with groups of people informs his ascription of a special sense of order, of modesty and technical skills, but occasionally also a certain ponderousness in intellectual matters to individuals of German ancestry. His bias in favor of Germans, which he was slow to modify during and after the distressing impressions he gained during his travels in 1935 and 1936,<sup>32</sup> is reflected not only in his *Notebooks*, but also in his fiction in general authorial statements and favorable assessments of various figures regarded as typical. This is true, for instance, of his evaluation of Mr. Hauser, a reader of manuscripts for a publishing house. While Hauser appears in the printed version of *You Can’t Go Home Again* as immensely reliable, intelligent, a man who loves order and integrity, whose response is always low key, and who is independent in his judgment (*You Can’t Go Home Again*, 22), the original manuscript contained a much stronger tribute, almost approaching a eulogy, and he was there praised as a true representative of his nation:

[George Hauser] came from German stock who had been in this country for a hundred years, and who were the first stock on earth – with all the fine intelligence, the sense of order and balance, the

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. Dos Passos’ exposure of the shocking brutality directed against wounded German prisoners of war in *One Man’s Initiation* (1920) and in *Three Soldiers* (1921).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Leslie Field, “*You Can’t Go Home Again*: Wolfe’s Germany and Social Consciousness.” H. G. Jones, ed. *Thomas Wolfe and North Carolina* (1982), 5-20.

warmth, the humanity, the tenderness, the exquisite sensitivity of the finest German stock, and with none of its brutality.<sup>33</sup>

Is it a coincidence that Edward Aswell, who was severely criticized because of his editorial practices by John Halberstadt, eliminated this passage when he prepared the posthumous edition of *You Can't Go Home Again*? The political events of the years 1939 and 1940 must have convinced both editor and publisher that such abundant praise for the German nation was both untimely and inappropriate.

The editorial intervention apparent in this instance is, however, not an isolated phenomenon in Wolfe's *oeuvre*. His questionable inclination to include sweeping generalizations in his narrative prose gave birth to many editorial scruples which prompted, for instance, Max Perkins, to tone down or cut violent attacks against the Boston Irish before *Of Time and the River* was published. The cut material was, however, used again by the author in a longer manuscript with the working title "The Old Red Irish" (Reeves, 94). In its hibernophobia, it dwarfs the passage published in *Of Time and the River*, though here a seemingly endless sequence of negative attributes mirrors the intense dislike Eugene feels for his landlords, the Murphys. Significantly, the voice of the narrator omits any concrete evidence for the accusations directed against these people and fails to explain how their corruption manifests itself in the political sphere. The vituperation has its foil in the more favorable image of Irish spontaneity and passion:

... he loathed them because they were dull, dirty, and dishonest, because their lives were stupid, barren, and ugly, for their deliberate and insolent unfriendliness and for the conspirational secrecy and closure of their petty and vicious lives, entrenched solidly behind a wall of violent and corrupt politics and religious fanaticism ... (*Of Time and the River*, 163).<sup>34</sup>

That the animosity of the attack against the Boston Irish, who are explicitly contrasted with the Irish acquaintances of Eugene's

<sup>33</sup> Ms. Harvard College Library, \*46 AM-7 (66) Box 1. Quoted from Reeves, *Thomas Wolfe's Albatross*, 100.

<sup>34</sup> The almost inarticulate Murphys have a foil in the concept of the Irish Celtic imagination, cf. *Of Time and the River*, 161: "... it seemed that everything that is wild, sudden, capricious, whimsical, passionate, and mysterious in the spirit of race had been dried and hardened out of them ..."



childhood, reflects the enmity of an isolated provincial against sophisticated urbanites preoccupied with themselves, is evident. At the same time the passage demonstrates more clearly than other texts in Wolfe's work the radical limitation of his ability to emulate Walt Whitman, one of his models. His own stated goal was to create his fictional world "out of the billion forms of America, out of the savage violence and the dense complexity of all its swarming life".<sup>35</sup> His ambition to grasp the full complexity and contradictions of his own country and to bring himself to an impartial recognition of the various ethnic groups is, until his late phase, precluded by his insufficient preparation for the "alien" urban environment. He thus relies far too readily on schemes and stereotypes.

In his presentation of the panorama of *Manhattan Transfer* Dos Passos did not dispense with typical Irish characters either. He could not simply proceed like erstwhile Hugh Henry Brackenridge, who introduced his irrepressible and indestructible bogtrotter Teague O'Regan in *Modern Chivalry* (1792) with the sentence, "I shall say nothing of the character of the man as the very name imports what he was" (6), as the familiar stage Irishman was readily available as a model. But Dos Passos drew on real or presumptive characteristics of the group as well when he accorded Gus McNeil an important part in one of the three main strands of action in *Manhattan Transfer*. In the early drafts of the novel the reader encounters a fairly plodding and drowsy young man, "the milkman", whose idiom, which is more clearly marked as dialectal in the revisions,<sup>36</sup> betrays his origin and whose simple desires are articulated in his daydreams and in his conversations with his Irish friends and his customers. Gus' transformation from the simple milkman, which follows an accident which literally pitches him out of his seat and trade, into a self-confident political activist results less from his own character traits than from the wish of the author to exemplify in his fictional chronicle of New York the workings of Irish power in the city and its environs. Gus, who later skillfully employs veterans of Irish descent for his political ambitions,<sup>37</sup> is given a representative role in the political

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<sup>35</sup> Wolfe, *The Story of a Novel* (1936), 92-93.

<sup>36</sup> The basis for this observation is a comparison of drafts of "The Book of the Milkman" in the "New Orleans version" found in the Estate of the author, John Dos Passos Papers, Charlottesville, with the published book, 45-48.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Manhattan Transfer*, 314-316.

machinery of Tammany Hall. The enormous increase in energy in the initially awkward young man, who originally dreamed of retreating to a farm of his own in the Midwest with his wife Nellie but who later reveals himself to be a public figure and successful manager, is an immediate consequence of the author's intention.

The appeal of the Irish stereotype identified in Dos Passos for American fiction writers in general is confirmed in several stories by Katherine Anne Porter. When her eagerly awaited bestseller *Ship of Fools*, which was showered with praise and awards, finally appeared in 1962, only a minority of critics at first regretted the stereotype features of passengers from various nations crowding the *Vera* on its voyage from Veracruz to Bremerhaven.<sup>38</sup> The comparison of the schematized and, at times, angry sketches of characters with the sophisticated style of character delineation in the author's earlier fiction, was believed to register an artistic lapse. It seems therefore appropriate to underline the fact that Porter had already much earlier made extensive use of stereotypes, most obviously in stories set in New York and vicinity, and involving Irish characters. The familiar facets of stereotypes of an Irish lifestyle occur, for instance, in the stories "The Cracked Looking-Glass" or, especially, in "A Day's Work", where the drawing of characters conforming with the stereotypes is supported by the very concrete depiction of the milieu.<sup>39</sup> The story, which first appeared early in 1940, permits the reader to recognize variants of familiar Irish types in the unemployed loafer Mr. Halloran, in his energetic wife, and in Gerald McCorkery, a successful cog in the wheel of the Tammany Machine. The "Irish neighborhood", which is evident not only in the names and in the discreetly marked idiom of the neighbors but also through significant objects such as a sack of potatoes, provides an adequate setting for the action. In its course Halloran, who is no enemy to the bottle, finally finds a political post through the intercession of his old friend McCorkery, which fits well into the image of political machinations prevalent in Irish-American circles recurrent in fiction of the period. The conduct of the

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. the *dramatis personae* who are neatly listed according to nationalities. On the subsequent controversial response to the book, see H. J. Lang, "Katherine Anne Porters Einladung auf *Das Narrenschiff*" (1982), 458-475, and since the completion of this essay this author's discussion in *Images of Germany in American Literature* (2007), 132-136.

<sup>39</sup> Porter, *The Collected Stories* (1965), 432-442.

characters, especially of Mr. Halloran (he returns home in an intoxicated state and hits his enraged wife so hard that he believes that he has killed her, a deed he brags about to a policeman on the street; and upon returning home his resolute but uninjured wife lashes out at him with a wet towel), cannot deny its close relationship with and debt to popular theater. This impression is fully compatible with the documents concerning Porter's life which Joan Givner studied in preparing her biography of the author. Among them is Porter's specific admission that her job as a theater critic, begun after her life-threatening illness, left deep and lasting impressions on her.<sup>40</sup> The question may finally be posed whether the sudden evolution in Porter's literary work after his illness was not only based on existential factors but related to her specific theatrical experiences and impressions. In her successful sketches of very diverse characters in the 1920s and 1930s, rooted in cultures very different in space and lifestyles, the storehouse of latent stereotypes plays a not insignificant role.

Apart from the specific personal experiences and premises of the individual authors of the period considered in this chapter, and their different positions in the debate between nativists and the advocates of a liberal immigration policy, phenomena and factors intrinsic to literature influenced in American fictional prose of the first four decades of the twentieth century the depiction of ethnic figures more or less in conformity with the commonly found stereotypes. It has only been possible here to adumbrate the multifold functions of these images within the specific *oeuvre* of individual authors. What remains to be more closely analyzed is the function of heterostereotypes in the processes of production and reception as model and pattern, or as explicit or implicit counterpoints in the various phases of the genesis or reception of fictional characters.

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<sup>40</sup> See Joan Givner, *Katherine Anne Porter: A Life* (1982), 106-107, and "Katherine Anne Porter. Journalist," *South-West Review* 64 (1979), 309-322. Among these impressions were performances of J. M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*.

## Chapter 9: A Separate Identity Asserted: Agrarian Affinities with European Culture

Students of American culture and history have been aware of the long-standing claims of spokesmen of the American South concerning the distinctive collective identity of their region. One also recalls Thomas Jefferson's extensive tabulation, in which he, drawing on the ancient theory of climate, furnished a pseudo-scientific base for the juxtaposition of New England Yankees and Southerners.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the growing gap between the two sections of the nation in the Antebellum gave rise to numerous assertions of distinct identities<sup>2</sup> until the costly internecine war settled the question and put an end to the feasibility of a separate 'Confederate' identity. It is true that the late 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a reversal of the trend towards reconstructing a homogeneous nation as promulgated in the idealistic claims of the 'Declaration of Independence' by rendering the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution adopted in the 1860s ineffective, thereby petrifying the inequalities in the population of a significant part of the country.<sup>3</sup>

The increased efforts of the promoters of industrialization and advocates of the New South meanwhile continued unabated and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century caused much unease in the South. The lambasting

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. his letter of 1785 to Marquis de Chastellux in Julian P. Boyd, ed., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 8 (1953), 468: "In the North they are cool / sober/ laborious / [...] In the South they are fiery / Voluptuary [sic] / indolent / [...]". Cf. the discussion in the chapter "The Theory of Climate in North American Texts since 1776."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. William R. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character* (1957).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. legislative measures taken first in the Deep South and the notorious decisions by the Supreme Court, for instance, in the case Plessy vs. Ferguson in 1896 (Cf. David Roller and Robert W. Twyman, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Southern History* (1979), s. v. "Plessy vs. Ferguson") and various initiatives leading to the disfranchisement of African American voters. Cf. Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris, eds., *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (1989), s. v. "Desegregation."

the whole region received at the hands of H. L. Mencken<sup>4</sup> provoked the ire of some of the Southern intellectuals who had continued to meet in Nashville since the years of the Great War. The scorn expressed by Northern journalists for the backwardness and religious fundamentalism apparent in the notorious Scopes Trial in Tennessee<sup>5</sup> prompted a good deal of soul-searching and led to the Vanderbilt intellectuals, who felt that their regional culture was widely misunderstood and misrepresented, taking up defensive positions. Their reaction to the increasing marginalization of the culture in which they were rooted was the composition of various essays in which a separate identity of the South was asserted,<sup>6</sup> and eventually the publication of the Agrarian manifesto *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition by 12 Southerners*.<sup>7</sup> This emphatic profession of faith in a regional culture and tradition was, of course, not an isolated event but part and parcel of a trend that gave rise to the positive reassessment of various regional cultures, as Robert L. Dorman has shown in *Revolt of the Provinces*.<sup>8</sup> But while cultural critics all over the United States expressed wide-spread dissatisfaction with urban living and rapid industrialization,<sup>9</sup> the Vanderbilt intellectuals had a more specific agenda and made greater efforts towards claiming a separate identity for their part of the country.

But to assume that they were all arch-conservative, parochial thinkers bent on defending a backward culture would be an unjustified simplification. The diversity of views expressed by the members of the Vanderbilt group as described by Richard Gray in *Southern Aberrations*<sup>10</sup> refutes any such assumption. The intellectual ferment in Nashville which accompanied the debates of the Fugitives and which was later manifest in the very intensive correspondence between these

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Mencken, "The Sahara of the Bozart," 1917, revised 1920.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, s. v. "Scopes Trial."

<sup>6</sup> Cf. some essays by John Crowe Ransom, for instance, "The South: Old or New?" in *Sewanee Review* (1928) and by Allen Tate; see below.

<sup>7</sup> *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition, by Twelve Southerners* (1930, rpt. 1962), Introduction by Louis D. Rubin, Jr.

<sup>8</sup> Dorman, *Revolt of the Provinces: The Regionalist Movement in America, 1920-1945* (1993).

<sup>9</sup> Cf., for instance, Lewis Mumford, *The Golden Day* (1926), *The Culture of Cities* (1938), and *Values for Survival: Essays, Addresses, and Letters on Politics and Education* (1946).

<sup>10</sup> Gray, *Southern Aberrations: Writers of the American South and the Problems of Regionalism* (2000), 96-154.

young intellectuals and their like-minded associates who came to form the Agrarian group fostered a degree of cosmopolitanism. Robert Brinkmeyer in *Remapping Southern Literature* has recently directed attention to the special significance of the transatlantic links for the spokesmen of the Fugitives and Agrarians and the importance of their preoccupation with pre-modern Europe.<sup>11</sup> Brinkmeyer's reminder was anticipated by Michael O'Brien's demonstration of the great significance of European ties for the nineteenth century elite in the South and the importance attributed to the European example by the Vanderbilt group.<sup>12</sup> Even a superficial glance at the history of Vanderbilt University, with which the Fugitives were associated, shows the long cosmopolitan tradition which marks this university more than many homes of academia. Under its Chancellor James H. Kirkland the institution, which had received a generous endowment from the Vanderbilt family in 1873, had taken pride in hiring academic teachers with extensive transatlantic experience, especially with a thorough philological education (scholars like Charles Forster Smith in Classical Studies and W. M. Baskervill in English).<sup>13</sup> The presence of these highly respected professors at the university, which under Kirkland's long presidency had successfully defended its autonomy and warded off the attempts of the Methodist Church to interfere in the regulation of the sphere of scholarship,<sup>14</sup> favored a mindset that fostered transatlantic links and the articulation of strong affinities with European institutions observing high standards and cultures with high ideals. Kirkland himself exemplified a cosmopolitan attitude in his youth: he studied in Leipzig (and Berlin) from 1883 to 1886 and captured very vivid impressions of the student life there in his regular correspondence, especially with his mother. He

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<sup>11</sup> Robert H. Brinkmeyer, *Remapping Southern Literature: Contemporary Southern Writers and the West* (2000), 6-8.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. O'Brien, *Rethinking the South: Essays in Intellectual History* (1988), esp. 'Italy and the Southern Romantics,' 84-111, and *The Idea of the American South 1920-1941* (1979), esp. 128-135 (on Ransom) and 141-144 (on Tate).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. the ms. of Edwin Mims' autobiographical notes in Vanderbilt Special Collections, 'Edwin Mims Papers,' his published tribute to the long-term chancellor *Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt* (1940), and his *History of Vanderbilt University* (1946), 236ff.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Mims' account of James Kirkland's successful defense of academic freedom against the authority of a Methodist bishop.

had originally taken German universities as models to be emulated as he professed in a number of essays and speeches.<sup>15</sup>

The future coordinator of the Agrarian manifesto, the prominent poet and essayist John Crowe Ransom, had shown a similar openness during his Rhodes scholarship in Oxford between 1910 and 1913, when he used his vacations for extensive travel on the Continent and exhibited a keen interest in music and various national cultures, that of Germany included.<sup>16</sup> It is true, by the time Ransom returned to his *alma mater* to take up a teaching position, Kirkland, who had managed to make Vanderbilt one of the leading private schools in the American South, was able to laud the progress US colleges had made, pointing to the many professional schools that had been created, and stressing the specific achievement and distinct character of American universities.<sup>17</sup> But the sense of an elective affinity and relationship to continental European universities, no doubt, persisted not only among indefatigable eulogists of German universities like Professor Herbert Sanborn.<sup>18</sup> The years immediately following Ransom's return to his *alma mater*, of course, saw the catastrophe of the demolition of the erstwhile recognized model of German intellectual culture in the USA. The propaganda campaign of the 'Committee on Public Information' masterminded by George Creel and the pressures towards homogenization in the nation led to the silencing of voices persistently claiming an affinity with that part of Central Europe<sup>19</sup> where so many of the Vanderbilt faculty had studied, and temporarily ended the opposition to the American mainstream supported by transatlantic models. Chancellor Kirkland made sure that in his faculty even very articulate Germanophile professors like Sanborn toed the official line

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. various lectures and essays on the German model, cf. "German vs. American Universities" published in *The Monteaglean* in August 1887; and his essay "The Influence of German Universities on the Thought of the World," in *The Quarterly Review of the Methodist Church* in July 1890.

<sup>16</sup> He was in Oxford from the fall of 1910 until the summer of 1913. Cf. his letters to various family members, in Thomas D. Young and George Core, eds., *Selected Letters of John Crowe Ransom* (1985). There are also numerous unpublished letters in the Tennessee State Library and Archives which reflect his favorable impressions of the Continent, for instance in Freiburg and the Black Forest.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. his confident assertions in "Higher Education in the United States of America," *Vanderbilt University Quarterly* 1913.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. his emphatic confession in *The Faith of a Hyphen* (1916).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. my survey in *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur* (1998), 157-162, and *Images of Germany in American Literature* (2007), 80-87.

after the declaration of war.<sup>20</sup> With the end to these political pressures and the disclosure of the machinations and strategic misrepresentations of the 'Committee on Public Information' a recovery of former ties with Continental European culture might have been possible. A complete reversal, however, did not take place, though several of the Fugitives and of the future Agrarians responded creatively to modernist trends originating in the Old World. That they came to search for cultural models different from those of the American mainstream which could assist them in their desire to assert the separate identity of their region is arguably related to the mindset prevalent at their *alma mater* in the preceding decades.

The various factors which prompted the expatriation of thousands of Americans to Continental Europe in the 1920s also led the poet and essayist John Peale Bishop (1892-1944) to take up residence in France. Bishop, whom Allen Tate later won for the Agrarian cause, spent many years in the vicinity of Paris, where he kept in touch with several of the young American writers and artists who had flocked there. Yet he dissociated himself from the New England strain in his family and embraced only one part of his divided American heritage: that of his Virginian rather than of his New England ancestors. Several of his essays reflect his conviction that the pioneer tradition rooted in New England had deteriorated when taken beyond the Alleghenies and had shaped Mid-America and the unbridled self-reliance manifest in the modern and contemporary political mainstream.<sup>21</sup> He, for his part, valued the customs and courteous manners which had prevailed in an Atlantic culture, especially in 18<sup>th</sup>-century France and in the Old South in Colonial times.<sup>22</sup> While looking backwards to the culture of the Enlightenment Bishop gave expression to an uneasy awareness that everything valuable was in jeopardy. He also feared that Europe itself would submit to the American worship of expansionism, which would lead to impoverished lives. In a 1931 letter to his friend Allen Tate he

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<sup>20</sup> For Kirkland's intervention see his notes for wartime speeches at Vanderbilt, and Mims' biography of Kirkland, 333.

<sup>21</sup> Cf., for instance, "The Missing All" and "The Poetry of Mark van Doren" in *The Collected Essays of John Peale Bishop*, ed. Edmund Wilson (1948), which includes also aphorisms and stories, 66-77, 296-300. Cf. also Robert L. White, *John Peale Bishop* (1966).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. "The South and Tradition," 3-13, and "The Myth and Modern Literature," 122-128 in *Collected Essays*.



offered a nostalgic assessment of contemporary trends and claimed that “with us Western civilization ends”.<sup>23</sup>

The assertion of the function of Southern intellectuals as the last torchbearers of a humanistic heritage embattled in an industrialized world threatened by “Fordism” was in tune with the position Bishop’s correspondents and associates had meanwhile taken up. It was expressed by several other intellectuals in the diverse group of men of letters, poets, critics and social scientists who contributed to the Agrarian manifesto of 1930, and in embracing a conservative position rallied to the support of the traditional way of life in the South. They shared the fear that their collective identity was endangered by the progressivist ideology of the advocates of the New South and the American mainstream. But as Richard Gray has recently underlined, the roster of contributors to this manifesto included exponents of diverse positions.<sup>24</sup> Among them were eulogizers of the aristocratic virtues of the Old South long gone but nostalgically evoked, such as Stark Young.<sup>25</sup> Their ranks also included advocates of the concrete experience of living ‘by the soil’, and spokesmen of yeomen farmers and their distinct contribution to the separate identity of Southern Culture (cf. Andrew Lytle).<sup>26</sup> Yet, their divergent views came together in their rejection of submission to the gospel of progress held sacred in America, and prompted an assertion of a separate identity of their region. Aligning the South with historical phases of societies and national cultures in ‘Old’ Europe the poets and critics John Crowe Ransom and Allen Tate among the Agrarians evoked a sense of elective affinities to European cultures – to Britain in the case of Ransom, to France in that of Tate.<sup>27</sup> Their conviction gradually took

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<sup>23</sup> *The Republic of Letters in America: The Correspondence of John Peale Bishop and Allen Tate*, ed. Thomas Daniel Young and J. J. Hindle (1981), 47-48. Richard Gray in *Southern Aberrations* (99) regards this statement as a paradigmatic articulation of the “Southern imagination of disaster.”

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Southern Aberrations*, chap. 3, 109-154.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. his ‘Not in Memoriam But in Defense.’ On Stark Young’s aristocratic attitude and message in his romantic stories, like *So Red the Rose*, cf. Gray, *Southern Aberrations*, 110-127.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. his essay in the manifesto, ‘The Hind Tit,’ and his advocacy of agrarian simplicity in his family chronicle, cf. Gray, *Southern Aberrations*, 127-151.

<sup>27</sup> Among the voices heard in the Agrarian manifesto were also those of skeptics who had little use for and no sense of affinity with Continental Europe. His experience in the Great War had alienated Donald Davidson so that he did not expect anything for a defense from the Old World of a Southern identity.

shape before they articulated this view in their essays in the Agrarian manifesto and in their extensive correspondence. Their notions, though in more indirect and more implicit form, are also reflected in some poems mirroring their transatlantic experiences and their ruminations on cross-Atlantic ties.

Considering the three fruitful and stimulating years he had spent as a Rhodes scholar in Oxford it comes as no surprise that John Crowe Ransom was to refer in his keynote essays to the Agrarian manifesto, “The Statement of Principles” and “Reconstructed, but Unregenerate” to the virtues of the old British model and to suggest close ties between Southern ecological and conservative attitudes and the lifestyle practiced in the English provinces long ago.<sup>28</sup> Earlier, long before he fully embraced regionalism, for instance, in “The South – Old or New” (1928) and in “The South Defends Its Heritage” (1929), Ransom had contributed an intriguing poem to *The Fugitive* of 1923, entitled “Philomela,” which he himself regarded highly. In this poem of eight stanzas he wittily sketches the progress of lyrical poetry (its *translation*) by expanding the mythological tale of the flight of Philomela from her Thracian pursuer to Oxford.

The poem evokes a European panorama including Rome, France, Germany and England, and addresses wider problems of cultural transatlantic transfer. The emblematic bird of Romantic poetry, whose presence or absence in parts of Europe or in the United States had been commented upon by Thomas Jefferson or Nikolaus Lenau, the Austrian Romantic poet, often in connection with negative assessments of the potential for high art in the countries visited,<sup>29</sup> is employed in an ostensibly self-critical analysis of the limited capacity of the American speaker (and his fellow-countrymen) for sophisticated, mellifluous poetry. Ransom’s lyrical I straightforwardly (yet, perhaps, slightly ironically)<sup>30</sup> concedes on behalf of his country of origin that his ears are “too imperfect” for the “bird’s delicate

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. *I'll Take My Stand*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Thomas Jefferson’s “Letter from Languedoc,” in which he responds to the beautiful song of the nightingales along the Garonne, and (unnecessarily) claims that nightingales are absent in the country north of the Alps, which, through a dubious syllogism, establishes the absence of poetic voices in the same region. On this prejudice and the similarly abstruse claim which Nikolaus Lenau included in his biased view of the USA, see the chapter “Transatlantic Differences” in this volume.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Louis D. Rubin’s reading in *The Wary Fugitives: Four Poets and the South* (1978), 27-29.

dirge" (stanza 4). He grants that the democratic society he comes from, with its "cloudless boundless public place," precludes "a fair hearing" of the nightingale's song by the "inordinate race" inhabiting it. The ambiguity implied in our assessment of this statement is the result of the witty phrasing of the stages of the bird's flight and of the underlying juxtaposition of cultures. In the preceding stanzas Ransom uses some national stereotypes<sup>31</sup> mirroring his Anglophile orientation and his dislike of the Germans as a result of impressions, derived less during several extended visits to Germany from Oxford, but rather from his experiences in the Great War.<sup>32</sup> Despite his seemingly straightforward statement in a letter to Robert Graves, who appreciated the poem ("my fellow-countrymen seem to be without a faculty of song),"<sup>33</sup> the phrasing of the verse does not remove the potential for double-edged irony, which the humorous allusions to the speaker's nocturnal activities in Oxford foster.<sup>34</sup>

Several years later Ransom returned to the topic in another poem in which his own regional background is definitely given more prominence. "Crocodile," originally entitled "Amphibious Crocodile," and published first in December 1925 and (with many revisions placed next to "Philomela" in a later edition of his *Selected Poems*),<sup>35</sup> deals

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. stanza 2, line 3: "She [the nightingale] has even appeared to the Teutons, the swilled and gravid." The phrase suggests the bibulous character and the corpulence of the Germans with the negative connotations of 'swill.'

<sup>32</sup> Ransom's earlier desire to show fairness to the Germans in spite of his predisposition in favor of his host country Britain is reflected in his contribution on the contrasted claims of the German Empire and the United Kingdom in the Great War in "The Question of Justice," *Yale Review* IV, July 1915, 684-698. Cf. his *Selected Letters* and his unpublished correspondence in the Tennessee State Library and Archives, which reflect Ransom's enjoyment of music and philosophy in Germany; cf. his very positive impressions during visits to and longer vacations in Germany and his encounters with German-Americans evincing good sense and kindness, for instance, in Pension Kircher in August 1912. On his European experiences generally cf. also Thomas Daniel Young, *Gentleman in a Dustcoat: A Biography of John Crowe Ransom* (1976), 40-61. There are, however, some errors concerning some dates of trips, which are corrected in the edition of *Selected Letters of John Crowe Ransom*.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *Selected Letters*, 111.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. also Robert Buffington, *The Equilibrist: A Study of John Crowe Ransom's Poems, 1916-1963* (1967), 88-90, where it is argued that in the concluding lines the 'tone of regret' is pure.

<sup>35</sup> Ransom's indefatigable inclination to revise his poems after their publication has made him a natural subject for a doctoral thesis. Cf. Cecilia Lampp Linton, "A

with his international experience in a whimsical tone. In the eighteen stanzas of the poem, which fuses sophisticated diction and colloquial vigor, Ransom facetiously describes the adventures of a country hick temporarily impersonating a cosmopolitan. Quite literally an amphibious being, the crocodile, later called "Old Robert Crocodile," not only dresses up before venturing forth on the Grand Tour to admire the sights of Paris, London and Oxford, but also continuously feels the pull of his true nature. Before establishing the proper connections and getting fully involved in the social life in Oxford, the true being of the visitor asserts itself when he is confronted with the trenches of World War I in France.

And suddenly he cries, I want to see a trench!  
Up in the North eventually he sees one

Which is all green slime and water; whereupon lewd  
Nostalgic tremors assail him; with strangled oaths  
He flees; he would be kicking off his clothes  
And reverting to his pre-Christian mother's nude.

The trench filled with water reminds him of his natural element and prompts atavistic urges of reverting to his natural state of being and of returning to his native habitat, the swamps. Eventually the 'macrocephalus' animal, whose large teeth and large toes reveal his true nature,<sup>36</sup> vanishes from the scene of his social successes and returns home. There he sheds his pretty clothes and, in what is a witty allusion to a Miltonic simile about the sea monster Leviathan, immerses himself in its native waters: "Floating he lies extended nearly a rood, / And quite invisible but for the end of his nose."<sup>37</sup>

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Textual Variorum of John Crowe Ransom's *Selected Poems* (1969)," submitted at the Catholic University of America in 1991. That the poet was never satisfied with his corrections is apparent in his own copy of the *Selected Poems* of 1969, with its various corrections in ink, cf. Vanderbilt University Special Collections, 'John Crowe Ransom Papers,' box 4.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. stanza 2.1, "And if he had had not water on his brain, . . .," and stanza 7, line 3, "Who is the gentleman having teeth so large?" and stanza 9, "He is too miserably conscious of his bunion / And toes too large for the aesthetic regimen."

<sup>37</sup> Cf. the original version in *The Fugitive* 4 (December 1925). It was even closer to the Miltonic simile in book 1, lines 195-196 of *Paradise Lost*: Cf. "Amphibious Crocodile" line 71: "Floating he lies extended many a rood" and Milton: "Prone on the flood, extended long and large / Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge."

While the reader is entertained by the satirical touches in the poem, which seems to make fun of American tourists but also of expatriates who appear as social dandies, the retreat to the native habitat seems also to satirize cosmopolitan pretensions and, at least obliquely, to embrace a comforting regional position.<sup>38</sup>

Ransom's remarks in his keynote essay in the manifesto show that in his defense of the collective identity and specificity of Southern culture the traditional values of Western Europe are called upon. But the model of Germany is no longer applicable as Fordism, the Yankee ideology of progress and the vast industrial machine are also associated with and likened to a "Prussianized State."<sup>39</sup> In the following years Ransom was engaged in ambitious critical projects which permitted him to arrive at a more balanced conception of his native region and his relationship vis-à-vis European culture and heritage. He planned to compose a comprehensive defense of Agrarianism during the (thoroughly enjoyable) Guggenheim year 1931-32 with his family in the south of England, near Exeter, which enhanced his feelings for his host country.<sup>40</sup> Yet several of his essays from those years signal his gradual withdrawal from political controversy and from Agrarianism generally, and the development of the stance of the future 'New Critic.'

Ransom's sympathy for the culture of rural Britain mirrored in his earlier Agrarian essays contrasts with the appeal of the lifestyle and culture of rural France to Allen Tate, Ransom's most distinguished pupil and later colleague. Originally Tate was inclined to adopt a kind of cosmopolitanism and to embrace T. S. Eliot's brand of modernism. It was only later, after his two years in New York following his graduation, that he came to share Ransom's respect for his regional culture, which he had originally described as "defective in its literary tradition."<sup>41</sup> Tate's early ambivalence and uncertainty vis-à-vis the heritage of his own region finds expression in the tortuous reflections of the 'modern Southerner' hesitating at the entrance to the

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. Rubin, *The Wary Fugitives*, 60-63.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *I'll Take My Stand*, 8. (Cf. his essays xxxvii-xlvi, and 1-27)

<sup>40</sup> Cf. e.g. his unpublished letter to Donald Davidson from a cottage on the Devon coast December 13, 1931 in Special Collections, Vanderbilt University, and his correspondence with Allen Tate in *Selected Letters*, 204-207.

<sup>41</sup> In "Last Days of the Charming Lady", published in *The Nation* in October 1925, Tate conceded the shortcomings of the 'Old South' and its tradition. (cf. Rubin, *The Wary Fugitives*, 102).

confederate cemetery in his "Ode to the Confederate Dead." Throughout the complex history of its revisions until its inclusion in *The Swimmers and Other Poems* (1936, rpt. 1970), the voice of the poem mirrors the inevitable distance of the speaker to the ideas and ideals of the past. It was in connection with his two biographical projects, the books commissioned on Stonewall Jackson (1928) and on Jefferson Davis (1929), that Tate's intellectual perspective was sharpened and began to align the South and Europe.<sup>42</sup> The two Guggenheim Fellowships Tate and his wife Caroline Gordon received in 1928-29 and 1932-33 respectively helped him to focus on the European literary tradition and its heritage.<sup>43</sup> Many letters, several essays and a number of complex poems reflect this gradually deepened awareness, which also shaped his contribution to the manifesto of 1930. Poems like "Message from Abroad" or "The Mediterranean" reflected in different ways Tate's rumination on transatlantic differences and his inclination to compare the significant heritage in the Old World with life in his own region.

In various essays on Southern culture Tate made his region appear more as a manifestation of European culture and less as related to the rest of the New World. While Tate's poem "Message from Abroad," inspired in 1929, obliquely reflects a sense of the shortcomings and the absences of glamor in the American sphere,<sup>44</sup> his negative view of mainstream American culture at that time seems to have been affected by cultural critics active in Europe who had begun turning America into a 'loaded' symbol of the problematical modern age. Tate seems to have responded to an anti-Americanism increasingly popular among European philosophers and religious writers in the first third of the twentieth century. The British Catholic polemicist, Christopher Hollis, the author of *The American Heresy*, and philosophers like Oswald Spengler, two of whose books Allen

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<sup>42</sup> On the intellectual career of Tate cf. especially O'Brien, *The Idea of the American South*, 136-161 and Gray, *Southern Aberrations*, 96-99.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Tate's extensive correspondence and recently the first biography by Thomas A. Underwood, which explores the impact of his psychological complexes and troubles until 1939. Cf. *Allen Tate: Orphan of the South* (2000).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. also Joseph C. Schöpp, *Allen Tate: Tradition als Bauprinzip dualistischen Dichtens* (1975), 150.

Tate was to review, confirmed his wariness towards American mainstream culture.<sup>45</sup>

Thus transatlantic voices helped to focus the reservations of Southern intellectuals vis-à-vis a materialist America and confirmed their conception of having natural allies in European national cultures. In a remarkably extensive correspondence the Agrarians formulated a sense of continuity and interconnection between Europe and the South. In the epilogue to his biography of the President of the Confederacy, Tate explicitly called the South “the last stronghold of European civilization in the western hemisphere, a conservative check upon the restless expansiveness of the industrial North.”<sup>46</sup> Anticipating elements of the Agrarian creed Tate saw in the Old South a contentment “to live upon a modest conquest of nature” and not a desire for its complete domination. In his correspondence with Donald Davidson, the most conservative and consistent defender of the South against the Yankee challenge,<sup>47</sup> Tate was willing to acknowledge the timeless values of European culture and spoke specifically about his conviction that Southerners were, in fact, the last torchbearers of European culture. While Davidson retained his skepticism towards Europe and, on the basis of his experience of World War I, showed suspicion of the Old World, Tate left no doubt about his sense of sharing an Atlantic culture with the Europeans. In fact, he even went so far as to say that, due to the influence of the industrial progressive model transferred from the United States, the European heritage was slipping and in danger of being lost, so that he and his associates and allies appeared “[to be] the last Europeans, there being no Europeans in Europe at present.”<sup>48</sup> In his contribution to the manifesto Tate, however, showed his orientation towards a formation long since lost

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<sup>45</sup> On Tate’s interest concerning Christopher Hollis’ book, cf. O’Brien, *The Idea of the American South*, 141-143. Cf. also Tate, “Spengler’s Tract Against Liberalism”, *American Review* 3 (1934), 41-47. Generally, on the impact of European philosophers who turned America into a dubious symbol of modernity cf. James Ceaser, *Reconstructing America* (1997). On anti-Americanism in Europe after World War I cf. also C. Vann Woodward, *The Old World’s New World* (1991), esp. 31-38, 46-49.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Tate, *Jefferson Davis: His Rise and Fall, A Biographical Narrative* (1929, pb. rpt. 1998), 287. Cf. Brinkmeyer, *Remapping Southern Literature*, 7.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Mark G. Malvasi in *The Unregenerate South* (1997), 153-219.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. letter of August 10, 1929, *The Literary Correspondence of Donald Davidson and Allen Tate*, J. T. Fein and T. D. Young, eds. (1974), 230. O’Brien in *The Idea of the American South* was the first to draw attention to this key passage.

and not realized in traditional Southern culture. When he wrote on Southern religion and speculated on the failure of the South to develop a universal religion such as the one that had given unity to Europe before the Renaissance, it also becomes obvious in retrospect that he had set out on the path eventually leading to his conversion to Catholicism.<sup>49</sup>

At the beginning of his Guggenheim Fellowship, Tate did not refrain from expressing his dissatisfaction with English people (and offered very ungallant comments on English women),<sup>50</sup> though he enjoyed his encounters with several British *literati* in Oxford. A few years later, during his wife's Guggenheim grant, when they returned to France (where they had spent most of 1929 during which Tate displayed some impatience with the members of the 'lost generation' in Paris), Tate came to express great sympathy for rural France and its affinity with his own region. On a tour through the country in the company of fellow-Agrarian Frank Owsley (and the latter's wife), Tate believed he had found in the rural environment of his host country "a confirmation of his Southern Agrarian ideals."<sup>51</sup> In his letters to Andrew Lytle, Tate, while conceding a personal dislike of the French, feels compelled to admit that "they seem the most wonderful people in the world, especially here in the South, where life is at its best as with our people."<sup>52</sup> Responding to a most congenial setting and enjoyable gregarious experience on the Mediterranean coast at Cassis, Tate postulates an elective affinity between the rural folk in the south of France and the people in the southern United States. A heightened awareness of a felicitous encounter also shapes a letter (not included in his published correspondence with Donald Davidson) in which he praises the Provence as a purely agrarian region, offering a potential model for the contemporary South.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. his explicit comments in his private correspondence, for instance, February 18, 1929, a letter to Donald Davidson, and the commentary by Malvasi, *The Unregenerate South*, especially 93-95. Tate's "Remarks on the Southern Religion" are in *I'll Take My Stand*, 155-175.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *The Literary Correspondence of Donald Davidson and Allen Tate*, 217.

<sup>51</sup> O'Brien, *The Idea of the American South*, 154.

<sup>52</sup> Thomas D. Young and Elizabeth Sarcone, eds., *The Lytle-Tate Letters* (1987), 63. Cf. "I think you saw some of rural France, but we have really seen it. It is the most impressive experience of that kind I have ever had. It is perfect Agrarianess."

<sup>53</sup> "Have you ever been in Provence? If I were not all resentment at being abroad at all, I should think it the most wonderful foreign country I have seen. This is real, pure



Not surprisingly, the congenial atmosphere of the picnic at Cassis, a fishing village between Toulon and Marseille, in the company of Ford Maddox Ford and various Parisian friends, also inspired Tate to compose one of his best poems, "The Mediterranean." In it the classical model from the *Aeneid* is invoked in the presentation of a contemporary experience, and classical antiquity and modernity seem to be temporarily fused. The feast they celebrate reenacts the experience of Aeneas, and in a complex process of imaginative Atlantic crossings Tate seems to gain certainty about his own place, which may be regarded as standing in the long western tradition, though its location is in the Western hemisphere.<sup>54</sup>

Where we went in the small ship the seaweed  
 Parted and gave to us the murmuring shore,  
 And we made feast and in our secret need  
 Devoured the very plates Aeneas bore:  
 [...]  
 Where we feasted and caroused on the sandless  
 Pebbles, affecting our day of piracy,  
 What prophecy of eaten plates could landless  
 Wanderers fulfil by the ancient sea?  
 [...]  
 Let us lie down once more by the breathing side  
 Of Ocean, where our live forefathers sleep  
 As if the Known Sea still were a month wide –  
 Atlantis howls but is no longer steep!  
 [...]  
 Now, from the Gates of Hercules we flood  
  
 Westward, westward till the barbarous brine  
 Whelms us to the tired land where tasseling corn,  
 Fat beans, grape sweeter than muscadine  
 Rot on the vine: in that land were we born.<sup>55</sup>

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agrarianism, and it will outlast all the upheavals of Europe, as it outlasted the Roman Empire." (Davidson Papers, Special Collections, Vanderbilt University, letter of October 9, 1932, from Toulon). This unpublished letter is also referred to in Malvasi, *The Unregenerate South*, 130.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Rubin, *The Wary Fugitives*, 306, cf., however, Schöpp's more skeptical view of the resolution of this poem, 168-169. The importance of this text in Tate's *oeuvre* is apparent in his comments on its genesis and composition in "Speculations," *Southern Review N. S.* 14 (1977), 226-232.

<sup>55</sup> "The Mediterranean," cf. *The Swimmer and Other Poems* (rpt. 1970), 3-4.

Tate thus does not attempt to restore a defunct Southern culture but wants to create something new, the collective identity of a unified culture shaped by rituals and manners related to the original European pattern.<sup>56</sup>

An awareness of the close ties with Western Europe still pervades the essay "The Profession of Letters in the South" (1935), which signaled Tate's gradual withdrawal from involvement in the agrarian project. He continued to support it in a number of essays which appeared in the *American Review* or were later collected in a second symposium, *Who Owns America?*, edited by Herbert Agar and Tate himself in 1936.<sup>57</sup> In "The Profession of Letters in the South" Tate admits the failure of the planter society of the Old South, in spite of excellent conditions, to leave a "cultural landmark" and establish a "tradition in the arts." Again he sees parallels with France, whose traditional respect for intellectuals is lauded at the outset. It is also claimed that "forms of European feeling and conduct" reminiscent of the situation in France prior to the Revolution and "eighteenth-century amiability and consideration of manners" are still retained in the South.<sup>58</sup> In view of the absence of publishing houses and an economic base for the arts Tate, however, grants the possibility of expatriation. In contrast to more insistent and narrow-minded defenders of the unique nature of Southern culture like Donald Davidson, Tate once again advocates a kind of cosmopolitanism, as the arts in his view have their origin in "a mysterious union of indigenous materials and foreign influences."<sup>59</sup>

Tate's openness to cosmopolitanism had a less stable counterpart in the ideas disseminated by the poet and critic John Gould Fletcher, who, in the course of his life, assumed many identities and fluctuated between many intellectual positions. As Ben F. Johnson's study of his life has made clear,<sup>60</sup> Fletcher felt the appeal of internationalism more than most other creative writers and critics from the South but he seems to have been an expatriate on both sides of the Atlantic. As a member of the Imagists, who had lived partly in Italy and partly in England, he seemed at first cut off from his Southern

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. Malvasi on Tate's 'Agrarian faith' in *The Unregenerate South*, 114-120.

<sup>57</sup> *Who Owns America? A New Declaration of Independence* (1936).

<sup>58</sup> Rpt. in Tate, *Essays of Four Decades* (1968), 517-534, esp. 521.

<sup>59</sup> *Essays of Four Decades*, 531.

<sup>60</sup> Ben F. Johnson, *Fierce Solitude: The Life of John Gould Fletcher* (1994).

background<sup>61</sup> but then aligned himself with the Fugitives and Agrarians, with several of whom he exchanged many letters.<sup>62</sup> A prolific writer of essays,<sup>63</sup> he was ready to provide intellectual and historical maps and to speculate on the roles and functions of the various countries of Europe, especially of Germany, to whose philosophers and thinkers he responded with great enthusiasm.<sup>64</sup> Fletcher, who had read widely in European philosophers of history and had come to regard himself as a true mediator between the two hemispheres whose role was to make major Europeans unknown in America familiar to a wider public, was to give vehement support to the anti-industrial stance of the Agrarians. Having joined the Agrarian group, Fletcher contributed an essay on Southern education to their manifesto in which he, somewhat anachronistically, praised Antebellum Academies and tried to disparage the increasing importance of John Dewey in American education.<sup>65</sup> Quite ready to apply the then popular psychology of nations, which was attracting ever more dubious supporters in those years, Fletcher paradoxically also expressed reservations vis-à-vis the increasingly belligerent nationalism in Europe, and temporarily embraced the cosmopolitan views associated with the group advocating a “New Europe.” In contrast to Ransom and Tate he thus exhibited a restlessness of spirit while his mind proved hospitable to many theories and speculations disseminated at that time. Temporarily showing an inclination towards

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. his early prose poetry “The Old South,” or “The Passing of the South,” in *Selected Poems of J. G. Fletcher*, selected and introduced by L. Carpenter and Leighton Rudolph (1988), 163-164, 165-168. For his own perspective on his restless life, cf. his autobiography, *Life Is My Song: the Autobiography of John Gould Fletcher* (1937).

<sup>62</sup> Cf. John Crowe Ransom’s letter to Allen Tate in *Selected Letters*, 166. Fletcher’s connection with the Fugitives was revived in 1926, and his correspondence especially with Tate but also with Donald Davidson, was fairly intense during his London exile between 1927 and 1933.

<sup>63</sup> Some of his many essays, especially on other poets and writers and on art and philosophy, are accessible in *Selected Essays of John Gould Fletcher*, ed. Lucas Carpenter (1988).

<sup>64</sup> His partiality for Germany and its crucial role in world politics was probably also due to his heritage, as his grandmother on his maternal side had her roots in north Central Germany. (Cf. *Life Is My Song*, 5). In “Germany and the Future of Europe,” published in various issues of *The New Age*, Fletcher developed his peculiar theories of global trends which he was to explicate in more detail in his book *The Two Frontiers* (publ. in 1930).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. “Education, Past and Present”, in *I’ll Take My Stand*, 92-121.

Marxist views but also intermittently responding to Fascist concepts of society, Fletcher shifted his positions fairly frequently.<sup>66</sup> Despite all his inconsistencies Fletcher steadfastly defended Southern mores like more unwavering supporters of a collective Southern identity, such as Donald Davidson. The latter, who advocated political sectionalism in his essays in *The American Review* and other journals, and in books from the 1930s onwards,<sup>67</sup> had, however, little use for Europe in his championship of an authentic and specific Southern culture.

The very problematical stance Fletcher adopted on the basis of ideologies he had encountered in the Old World once again reveals the fact that Europe remained a central phenomenon for many Southerners in the first half of the twentieth century. As has been shown, it often functioned as a catalyst in their attempts to maintain distinct traditions or establish a new collective identity. Paradoxically, the existing ties with Europe at the same time also inspired various spokesmen of African Americans<sup>68</sup> to take up a position against the reactionary racial politics of the advocates of white hegemony in their 'section' and in the USA as a whole. The temporary residence in Europe of spokesmen, artists and writers of the Harlem Renaissance such as Alain Locke, Langston Hughes, or Countée Cullen, just as that of their predecessors W. E. B. Du Bois or Mary Church Terrell, shows that the notion of an Atlantic culture was also suitable to undermine the bastion of traditional Southern values put forward by the defenders of an agrarian South. In fact, in the eyes of many African American observers various countries of Europe appeared as positive counter-images in their attempt to reshape the institutions and regulations in their own country. Their practice, indeed, highlights the paradox that blatantly incompatible views were supported by reference to various aspects of European culture. While African Americans were inclined to use Europe, taken as a 'real place or a commodious signifier,'<sup>69</sup> as an irritant for those 'conservative' minds who, in defending Southern mores and traditions, also inevitably sought to justify the

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. Johnson, *Fierce Solitude*, 203-211.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. "Where Regionalism and Sectionalism Meet" (1936) and *Regionalism and Nationalism in the United States: The Attack on Leviathan* (1938, rpt. 1992). Cf. *The Unregenerate South*, 153-219.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Michel Fabre, *From Harlem to Paris: Black American Writers in France, 1840-1980* (1991) 1993.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. William Stowe, *Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (1994), ix.

(indefensible) politics of segregation, which appeared to them as part of the Southern way of life,<sup>70</sup> many white intellectuals looked to the Old World as a stable prop in their own struggle with the homogenizing economic and political forces of mainstream America.

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<sup>70</sup> Cf., for instance, Robert Penn Warren's questionable attempt to deal with this issue in the Agrarian manifesto, in "The Briar Patch," in *I'll Take My Stand*, 246-264.

## **Imagology of Germany in American Culture**

- Atlantic Double-Cross – Reciprocity of Influence: Germany as an Alternative Model in the Search for an American National Identity, 1830 to 1930
  - Southern Alumni of German Universities. Fashioning a Tradition of Excellence
- German Ethnicity in the American South and the Permeability of Ethnic Borders
  - The Rise and the Demise of German and Hybrid German-English in American (Popular) Culture
    - Stereotypes in Walker Percy's Fiction

## Chapter 10: Atlantic Double-Cross – Reciprocity of Influence: Germany as an Alternative Model in the Search for an American National Identity, 1830 to 1930<sup>1</sup>

In one of the many reviews of Robert Weisbuch's ambitious study, *Atlantic Double-Cross: American Literature and British Influence in the Age of Emerson* (1986), George Hendrick refers rather deprecatingly to what he calls "the rather sophomoric play on 'double-cross' in the title" (1402). Of course, the concern in Weisbuch's study – as the subtitle suggests – was not with "cheating" or "treachery," but, in fact, with cross-cultural influences, or, as other reviewers have variously put it, with "rivalry," "postcolonial opposition," or, in more neutral fashion, with "influence in its widest implications and complications," or, put more positively, a "dynamic interchange," and even "cross-fertilization" between the USA and Great Britain.<sup>2</sup> Weisbuch's book thus focuses on the mutual and reciprocal influence prompted by the facilitated crossing of the Atlantic by printed materials and by their authors, who, surely, did not always have as

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter mostly corresponds to an essay (published in 2000) based on material collected for my book on *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur* where more extensive documentation is provided. For the results of my research I gratefully acknowledge the support of University libraries in the United States (Stanford, Minneapolis and St. Paul, and College Park) and in Germany (J. F. Kennedy Institute, Berlin).

<sup>2</sup> While some of the reviewers expressed reservations about the terminology and the style of Weisbuch's study, most of them shared Hendrick's view that its author was perceptive in providing readings of major American authors in the 'Age of Emerson' (what has otherwise been called the American Renaissance). With the exception of Jonathan Arac in *The New England Quarterly*, who regarded a study of the impact of forces along the North-South axis inside the western hemisphere as more relevant to a comparative study of "American" literary nationalism and urgently required, they also considered the book an important and timely analysis of a very significant problem. Cf. the reviews by Lawrence Willson in *Modern Language Quarterly*; Francesca Orestano Vanni in *Journal of American Studies*; Lawrence Buell in *American Literature*; Harry Levin in *Comparative Literature*; Richard Gray in *The Modern Language Review*.

rough a journey across as Charles Dickens in the winter of 1842. Following the lead given by this book, the present discussion takes into account commentaries offered by transatlantic observers from the other hemisphere and the reception of these comments by cisatlantic readers and vice versa. The topic also provides for a consideration of fiction related to and informed by this trans- or cross-atlantic tension and the debates and frictions ensuing from it.

The regular observation and exploration, both physical and imaginative, of the “old country,” where the settlers had come from and from where they had carried across the Atlantic many assumptions as their cultural baggage, helped to shape both their view of the world left behind (by themselves or their ancestors) and of themselves and their new home. Thus a study of the expository and fictional texts dealing with Germany and/or German figures over the century between about 1830 to 1930 can also confirm the notion of the relational structure of all relevant stereotypes and imagological representations, also those of one’s own group.

Malcolm Bradbury, in *Dangerous Pilgrimages: Trans-Atlantic Mythologies and the Novel* (1995), drew attention to this complex phenomenon and explored the reciprocity of influences resulting from the numerous actual crossings and the flourishing traffic especially since 1800. He studied the wide range of images the awareness of and (limited) familiarity with the other hemisphere gave rise to in fiction (largely, though not exclusively, in Anglophone countries, that is in the British Isles and in Anglophone America). Arguably, it is “in fictions that many of our truly essential stories are told, many of our essential desires and dreams expressed” (11).

It is also apparent that the various reports, travelogues and fictional renditions of the other side of the Atlantic did not go unnoticed by the people depicted. The exposure of *literati* in the early republic to (unfavorable) European accounts of the new nation prompted some acrimonious debates.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In spite of the intense anti-British sentiment in the War of Independence and the emergence of an ideology which fostered the American “revolution against patriarchal authority” (cf. Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American revolution against patriarchal authority, 1750-1800* on the culture-specific reception of literary texts like *Clarissa* as an exposure of the pernicious effects of paternal tyranny) the Declaration and the War of Independence did not mark an immediate break with the prevalent literary and cultural models. It is true, an increasing number of references to autochthonous American material occurred and Benjamin T. Spencer’s analysis a



The alleged misrepresentation of the Western hemisphere by travelers from England after their return occasioned a number of literary quarrels. We cannot deal *in extenso* with the recurrent anger of American intellectuals at the treatment they received at the hands of several early 19<sup>th</sup>-century British travelers and the latter's unjustified superciliousness in books published before and around 1830. The peevish reports by Captain Basil Hall or Frances Trollope annoyed an American readership who were still regular consumers of British publications, which the ever increasing transatlantic commerce quickly brought to their notice. American readers had similarly resented controversial articles in British quarterlies like the *Edinburgh Review*, which had alienated the American public two decades earlier by the arrogant tone of reviews of American books. This provided the occasion of one of the literary battles which preceded and then coincided with the war of 1812.<sup>4</sup>

It was, very aptly, in the form of a political allegory, which crossed the Atlantic, that a projection of an initial self-image of the rebellious colonies and the early republic took shape. The author of this allegory, which harked back to an early 18<sup>th</sup>-century fiction associated with John Arbuthnot, Queen Anne's physician and a member of Pope's circle, was James Kirke Paulding. His *Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan* (1812) expressed his vigorous, anti-British sentiment in the guise of the tale of a family quarrel and the reluctance of farmer Bull to recognize the independent status of his transatlantic junior relative. The allegory and its factual counterpart, *The United States and England* (1815), was a source of embarrassment to Anglophile Washington Irving, Paulding's brother-in-law and close associate. Irving's mild repartee to the many British writers who had criticized the young country, and his plea for more

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generation ago in *The Quest for Nationality* documented how differences in the fauna and flora in American settings vis-à-vis traditional European environments were more frequently taken into account. Yet progress towards the "declaration of cultural independence," as Emerson's famous oration "The American Scholar" (1837) has been called, and towards full emancipation in actual poetic and literary practice was slow. It received an impetus through the provocative negative accounts provided by British travelers.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Jane Mesick, *The English Traveller in America* (1922), (esp. 274-279) on the unfavorable reviews in Britain following the publication of Charles J. Ingersoll's *Inchiquin's, the Jesuit's Letters* and the offence American readers of the British quarterlies took at the scorn expressed for their country.

consideration in “English Writers on America” in *The Sketch Book* (1819-20) for the young country, where “the national character [was] yet in a state of fermentation” (57), tried to play down the frictions which had developed, but which also proved to be fruitful in terms of the construction of a distinct American identity.

The establishment of a separate cultural and national identity was intricately linked to the presence of theoretical support for and the availability of alternative models, which could serve as catalysts, releasing new energies and inspiring a nascent self-confidence. The events of the War of 1812 and the supercilious reports by British travelers in America, alluded to earlier, had impressed upon American observers the anachronistic fact that “nine tenths of our American ideals and prejudices [were still] English” (quoted from Riese, *Das englische Erbe*, 13), as Benjamin Latrobe noted in his journal. There was an increasing, even compulsive need to liberate the culture of the young country from British domination and literary influence. The eagerness associated with this effort, of course, did not go unnoticed by European visitors, and the debate of the relative merits and weaknesses of the new country became a regular feature in the increasingly varied European literature on the matter. This is well explored territory, though work in progress suggests that in the area of apodemic literature some treasures still remain to be found.

In the following we shall select some cisatlantic impressions from the vast field of texts which on either side of the Atlantic mirror the ongoing attempt to identify and name the shifting reality on the other side, and map the territory in various ways. As the other hemisphere was “not so much a real place as a very commodious signifier” (Stowe, *Going Abroad*, ix), these impressions may illustrate the processes through which travelers and fiction writers constructed an identity to make sense of the diverse phenomena they encountered and used it for specific purposes (cf. Dulles, *Americans Abroad*). Their expository texts, travel chronicles and essays, apart from satisfying certain needs of the individual, became functional in the ongoing attempts of Americans eager to emerge from under the shadow of the mother country and to find alternative models for their own culture. Their schematized impressions also furnished a backdrop against which an American identity could be defined more precisely.

As Cushing Strout has put it with reference to England and the continent of Europe generally: the latter was a “perpetual stimulus

[and a] perpetual irritant” (*The American Image of the Old World*, x). The individual and collective self-images of Americans were (in various phases) related to and intimately connected with their knowledge of and attitude towards European countries and peoples. From the late colonial phase and through the early republic, a note of warning had been sounded against an imitation of Europe, against submitting to its allegedly corruptive influence. Among the Founding Fathers Thomas Jefferson, for example, had tried to dissuade those seeking his advice against a sojourn in Europe. The negative impact of such an undertaking was demonstrated *ad oculos*, for instance, in the transformation of Van Dumpling into Dimple, Chesterfield’s cynical disciple, in Royall Tyler’s *The Contrast*. For the later project of establishing a cultural identity separate from the mother country, however, visits to European territory off the beaten track became of paramount importance.

In delimiting the territory investigated to the interaction of Americans with Germany, the country and its culture, we admittedly exclude the inspiration which France, the ally in the War of Independence, provided. We also refrain from treating the impact of the innumerable documents of the appeal of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Italy on American artists and novelists, though there are also numerous reflections of the distaste for the alien culture of Catholic Mediterranean countries (cf. Wright, *American Novelists in Italy*). A lecture by Jeffrey L. Sammons is apt to support this definitely limited focus. In his Harold Jantz Memorial Lecture on “The German Image of America” he claims that “[F]or the evolution of American culture Germany is second in importance only to Great Britain” (1). Sammons briefly inspects a territory thoroughly surveyed by Henry Pochmann in his comprehensive account of *German Culture in America: Philosophical and Literary Influences, 1600-1900* (1957). Its findings provide the necessary guidance for anybody eager to further explore the ramifications of the passageways for individual visitors, the traffic in concepts and ideas in the transatlantic exchange between the US and Central Europe.

Few intellectual historians today will contest the fact that about 1815 a new phase in the aspiration towards a new national culture was embarked upon with the transatlantic journeys of an increasing number of young New Englanders, whose pilgrimages to the centers of learning in Göttingen and Berlin, and later Heidelberg, deeply

affected them and were to have far-reaching consequences for American scholarship and culture.<sup>5</sup> The young graduates from New England and their fellow-pilgrims from the middle states and the South were receptive to new ideas and novel foreign cultural paradigms,<sup>6</sup> which seemed suitable to help them establish their cultural autonomy. In the decades before, few would have felt it worth their while to extend their route beyond the well-trodden path of the Grand Tour to include the cities and towns of a region deemed culturally unproductive and affected by the characteristic vice of the German nation, dipsomania. The lack of cultural sophistication among German settlers in the New World ruefully admitted by German travelers, who, like Dietrich von Bülow, felt embarrassed by the neglect of culture and literature by German-speaking settlers in Pennsylvania, and pointed out by American essayist Joseph Dennie,<sup>7</sup> did little to dispel this notion.

It would be rash to claim that it was only the encounter with Germany and the awareness of its relatively newly developed, yet already very accomplished literature there which gave a new dynamic to the creative potential of American authors. Yet the intimate familiarity with academic and literary life there which the young Americans gained during periods of long residence in (northern) Germany, where they perceived the contrast between British pragmatism and empiricism, on the one hand, and German idealism, on the other, encouraged them to strive for an indigenous literature mirroring the distinctive nature of life on their continent. Already in 1815 Walter Channing praised Germany for having avoided

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. O. W. Long, *Literary Pioneers* (1935), and Stanley Vogel, *German Literary Influences on the American Transcendentalists* (1955).

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed analysis of the migration of US graduates, especially from the American South, to German reformed universities, see the chapter on "Southern Alumni of German Universities" in this volume.

<sup>7</sup> While treating Bülow's account, a translation of which was printed in installments in *The Port Folio* 2 (August 1802), as a caricature, Dennie was inclined to acknowledge unpleasant truths contained in the travelogue. Though one of the articulate critics of certain fashions associated with Germany, like the popular sentimental plays by A. v. Kotzebue, which Dennie was eager to ban from the American stage, his conservative Anglophile views did not prevent him from including the travel letters by the then American ambassador in Berlin, John Quincy Adams (*Journal of a Tour of Silesia*). The material contained in the *Port Folio* thus illustrates the growing interest in Germany in spite of the continuing prejudices and clichés concerning the allegedly phlegmatic and generally dull Germans.

surrendering to “the foppery of France and the language of England,” neither copying “the government of the one [nor] the mode of religion of the other” (Channing, 117).<sup>8</sup> He felt that the Germans had managed to create a paradigmatic literature and had developed dazzling metaphysics and enchanting poetry.

There can be little doubt that Walter Channing’s tribute to Germany as a potential model for America was indicative of a fundamental revision of the image of Germany. It had been caused by the appearance of Madame de Staël’s *De l’Allemagne*.<sup>9</sup>

Whether or not one credits an early statement by George Ticknor, one of the first American students in Germany, that prior to Mme de Staël’s publication there had been an absence of teaching of German and an almost total lack of earlier contacts between New England and Germany,<sup>10</sup> very soon Ticknor, Edward Everett, Joseph Cogswell, George Bancroft and John Lothrop Motley were to embrace the idea that far-reaching reforms were called for in colleges and libraries back home. Similar goals were advocated by Henry E. Dwight, whose untimely death terminated a promising career, who, in his pioneer *Travels in the North of Germany* (1829), had produced a document recommending immersion in the superior academic milieu of reformed universities in northern central Europe. Similar convictions about the affinity between the inheritors of Puritan culture and Protestant northern Germany were held by many ministers, academics and dedicated translators, who served as primary mediators. That the transatlantic influences were invigorating and beneficial was felt by a versatile literary pilgrim and academic like

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<sup>8</sup> The rhetoric of his vigorous essay entitled “Essay on American Language and Literature” (in the newly founded *The North American Review*) anticipated the high respect the Transcendentalists were to show for German philosophy and culture generally, and “predated” the appeal and formative influence German academic institutions and authors were soon to exert on a generation of students and future professors, or diplomats from New England. Cf. also Richard Ruland, *The Native Muse. Theories of American Literature*.

<sup>9</sup> The book had been published in London in the fall of 1813 after the destruction of the original edition of 1810 on Napoleon’s personal instigation. An American edition appeared in New York in 1814.

<sup>10</sup> For the debate on the importance of Mme de Staël’s book, see Harold Jantz (1942). Jantz maintained that there was a long tradition of transatlantic intellectual exchange between the New World and Germany and dismissed Ticknor’s statement as an unfounded exaggeration. In contrast, Kurt Mueller-Vollmer (1991) has stressed the salient position of *De l’Allemagne*.

Henry W. Longfellow, by a many-sided writer and translator like George Henry Calvert, or by a globetrotter, accomplished author of travelogues and ambassador between cultures like Bayard Taylor. It was, however, especially due to the enthusiasm and the endeavors of various members of the Transcendentalist circle like Frederic H. Hedge and Margaret Fuller that, as Rev. Theodore Parker put it, ironically within a decade after Dwight's book and two years after Emerson's famous oration, in a review of one of the inspiring multi-volume anthologies

whatever is German, they admire; philosophy, dramas, theology, novels, old ballads, and modern sonnets, histories, and dissertations, and sermons; but above all, the immoral and irreligious writings, which it is supposed the Germans are engaged in writing, with the generous intention of corrupting the youth of the world. [...] This German epidemic extends very wide. [...] (Quoted from Krumpelmann, *Bayard Taylor*, 11)

German refugees like Francis Lieber and Charles Follen contributed to this rapid change, which made German (literary) culture a constant topic in conversations and a paradigm to be emulated.<sup>11</sup> General interest in this novel phenomenon seems to have empowered critics and writers to strive for cultural autonomy and independence. Similarly, American educators like Calvin Stowe and Horace Mann explored and explained the superiority of the German school system to the American or the British models and advocated reforms to bring American schools in line with the successful central European pattern.<sup>12</sup>

Though it cannot be argued that it was through Henry W. Longfellow that American (cultural and literary) emancipation from British and Old World antecedents made much progress, one should concede that he did strike some new chords, for example, in his semi-autobiographical 'travelogue cum romance' *Hyperion* (1839), by

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<sup>11</sup> Barrett Wendell in his *Literary History of America* argues that "[i]n 1842 you could find in Boston few educated people who could not talk with glib delight about German philosophy, German literature, and German music" (296).

<sup>12</sup> Calvin Stowe's *Report on Elementary Public Instruction in Europe* (1837) and Horace Mann's *Report of an Educational Tour* (1844) reflect the ongoing concern with questions of schooling and pedagogy important for the process of identity formation of individuals and the nation as such.

tapping the resources of German romances and poems and by sympathetically evaluating their merits.<sup>13</sup>

His varied impressions during his long sojourn in Europe also prompted his endeavor to achieve a balance between national and cosmopolitan perspectives, a balance which he was later to articulate in debates presented in his fiction. Mr. Churchill in Longfellow's *Kavanaugh* (1849) (chapter 20), correspondingly takes an ironic attitude vis-à-vis excessive nationalism as held by Cornelius Mathews and the Young America Movement with their demand for an "independent, completely native and unique literature." Longfellow's (temporary) mouthpiece reacts ironically to a grandiloquent claim that American literature would and should be commensurate with the size of American rivers and mountains, an application of American exceptionalism in an age of rapid national expansion. Longfellow, through Mr. Churchill, recommends universality, which is explicitly linked to a desirable, constructive borrowing of various qualities or characteristics from what he deems the essence of European nations and cultures and their descendants on American soil:

We shall draw from the Germans, tenderness; from the Spaniards, passion; from the French, vivacity – to mingle more and more with our English solid sense. And this will give us universality, so much to be desired. (Quoted from Ruland 1, 305)

It should be borne in mind that Longfellow, together with other "Fireside Poets," their shortcomings notwithstanding, was appreciated and praised on both sides of the Atlantic, and, ironically, helped to secure not only an audience for American authors on the continent of Europe, but managed to project a seemingly autochthonous American

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<sup>13</sup> Employing a form which was already in great vogue among American writers and readers Longfellow transformed his own experience as a grief-stricken widower into a chronicle of the renewal of hope and inspiration under the impact of the legends and literary culture of Central Europe. As Lawrence Buell in *Literary Transcendentalism: Style and Vision in the American Renaissance* (1974) has argued, the fashion of this literary subgenre was related to the rise of romanticism, to the awareness of the largely unexplored condition of America, to the self-consciousness and provincialism of the new nation, which stimulated intense interest among Americans in European travelers' reports about them and in their compatriots' accounts of Europe, and finally linked to the didactic orientation of the American aesthetic.

“style” and literary identity.<sup>14</sup> The native material chosen by Longfellow aided him and like-minded poets in the evocation of a “voice” sufficiently distinct from contemporary British cadences to ensure “transatlantic appeal.”<sup>15</sup>

Throughout these decades, in which the search for a national literature and culture continued in lively debates, an awareness of the rapid transformation of a formerly culturally backward nation in Europe seemingly dependent on the example of foreign authors (Germany apparently still following French arbiters in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century) into the vanguard in every department of human thought gave encouragement to American writers. The numerous translations of classic and romantic German texts by George Ripley (*Specimens of Foreign Literature*, from 1838 onwards), George Henry Calvert, Frederick Henry Hedge, Margaret Fuller, Bayard Taylor and others rendered the ambitions of American authors for the achievement of a sense of cultural autonomy plausible.<sup>16</sup>

The ongoing internal debate about American national culture was also greatly stimulated by the frequency with which Americans encountered the society in Central Europe in which such a transformation had taken place. The great popularity of the Grand

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<sup>14</sup> Longfellow was to gain a huge readership also in Europe, which terminated the earlier habit of largely ignoring the literary products of the New World (with Washington Irving and James F. Cooper being the first authors more widely recognized in cisatlantic countries). This success, which also gave rise to a serious cisatlantic debate on the cultural achievements in the other hemisphere, was partly due to Longfellow’s adoption of native material and indigenous myths without embracing a narrow nationalism.

<sup>15</sup> The close personal contacts of Longfellow and Bayard Taylor with various German poets and writers like Friedrich Freiligrath were a significant factor in this transatlantic exchange. Cf. the investigations of this phenomenon by Lawrence Marsden Price, *The Reception of US Literature in Germany*, Harvey W. Hewett-Thayer, *American Literature As Viewed in Germany, 1818-1861*, and, obviously, Henry Pochmann in his magisterial *German Culture in America*.

<sup>16</sup> It seems appropriate at this point also to note the fact that an eloquent spokesman for the Canadian Confederation, Thomas d’Arcy McGee, in “The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion” (1867, rpt. in Ballstadt, ed., *The Search for English-Canadian Literature*, 91-98), in his turn, tried to raise the expectations and the optimism of his (Canadian) fellow-countrymen and to boost their morale and the collective self-image by, significantly, explicitly drawing attention to the examples of Germany and of the United States. The former had in the course of a century gained a great reputation, while the United States had made similar progress since Sydney Smith’s notorious quip in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1820.



Tour made easier by the improvement in systems of transportation – e.g. the introduction of the steamship which reduced the duration of the transatlantic journey – and the inclusion of stages far off “the beaten track” allowed the composition of reports and then of fictionalized accounts depicting erstwhile ignored parts of Central Europe, such as German cities and university towns. While places along the Rhine and in various other regions of Germany attracted the attention of a growing number of roving journalists and their accounts would lay the basis for their careers as writers (especially in the case of Bayard Taylor), the juxtaposition and evaluation of different manners and morals on both sides of the Atlantic gradually became an established literary subject, appearing both in travelogues and in fictional texts, which basically anticipated the form of the international novel, later popularized by W. D. Howells and Henry James. The dramatic increase in transatlantic crossings by Americans in the aftermath of the Civil War continued to be closely related to the endeavors of writers to define the distinctive nature of the nation.<sup>17</sup> The fashion of the “international novel” had already been foreshadowed, albeit in aesthetically humble texts, by journalists and future diplomats like Theodore S. Fay, who in *The Countess Ida: A Tale of Berlin* (1840) made use of a Central European setting. Here, the former foreign correspondent of the *New-York Mirror* (in whose columns his “Minute Book” had appeared from 1833 onwards) and at that time secretary to the American embassy in Prussia, abandoned the crude anti-Italian and anti-Catholic sentiment exploited in his popularly successful romance *Norman Leslie* in order to depict a romantic story of “love rewarded” in diplomatic and aristocratic circles in Berlin. The young diplomat’s sympathy for his host country, in which he was to serve for fifteen years, acting as an attentive host to many American visitors, prompted his acquittal of Prussian/German society from the vice of dueling, which he surprisingly blames on American society.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Winfried Fluck, *Inszenierte Wirklichkeit. Der amerikanische Realismus 1865-1900* (114-147) on the close connections between the literary testing of forms of cultural perception in the emerging literature of realism and in travelogues.

<sup>18</sup> After his diplomatic career Fay returned to Saxony and then Prussia, where he spent the rest of his long life (1807-1898). This decision furnishes evidence of the close emotional ties he developed with Germany. – Fay’s romance exposes the evils of dueling, yet does not ascribe this vice to Prussia or Germany generally, at that time

It is true, neither Fay's romance nor John Lothrop Motley's *Morton's Hope* (1839), a semi-autobiographical *roman-à-clef*, set largely in Göttingen and offering a portrait of Motley's close friend Otto von Bismarck as the center of turbulent and entertaining scenes of revelry and student conviviality, provides ample scope for transatlantic comparisons.<sup>19</sup> Such a comparison is, however, implied in various travelogues which, as quasi-autobiographical reports of experiences in Central Europe, hold up conditions and manners at home for scrutiny by comparing them with codes of behavior and quotidian life elsewhere.

The influx of hundreds of thousands of German immigrants around 1850 had already brought foreign patterns of behavior across the Atlantic. While earlier German settlers had not significantly differed in their customs from the majority, many among the new immigrants, who seemed more assertive and radical, had brought their distinctive manners to the host country and seemed eager to retain them.<sup>20</sup> That such an attitude was not welcomed by nativists can be inferred from contemporary responses to individual travelogues. Both Charles Loring Brace's *Home-Life in Germany* (1853) and John Ross Browne's *An American Family in Germany* (1866) project a very favorable image of German home-life and depict scenes of innocent fun and entertainment, an image which appears fit to question the rigorous practices (strict regulations concerning the Sabbath, and the attempts of the reform lobby to banish alcoholic beverages) established especially in New England and supported in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by ardent social reformers. The recognition of healthy

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notorious for the ubiquity of dueling habits, but to America. There is, thus, rather unexpectedly some criticism of the author's home country.

<sup>19</sup> For his part, Motley in his romance, which contains many anachronistic details, in spite of his colorful descriptions of student pranks and duels in Göttingen, in the frame of the narrative clearly pays tribute to the superior qualities of his home country, nubile ladies included. The protagonist's amorous entanglement with captivating Minna is conveniently brought to an end, and he can finally be reunited with his first American love, Mayflower Vane.

<sup>20</sup> According to K. N. Conzen s.v. "Germans" in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom et al., and F. C. Luebke "Three Centuries of Germans in America," in *Germans in the New World*, ed. F. C. Luebke, 157-188, almost three quarters of a million new arrivals from German-speaking countries entered the United States in the six years after 1848. See there also on the contrast between the "church Germans" and the so-called "grays," on the one hand, and the "club Germans," especially the more assertive "greens," on the other.

cheerfulness, sociability, and “geniality” (E. Brace 151) on German Sundays and the hints at the convivial pleasures of beer-drinking offered in Brace’s book provoked indignation and even vicious attacks. Some correspondents advancing the agendas of temperance lobbies, as can be surmised, in “letters to the editor” accused the author, Charles L. Brace, of advocating a state of drunkenness “under the table with his boon companions” (E. Brace 150). Without doubt the vehemence of these responses was due to the fact that the influx of German migrants had excited nativist fears by the importation of different patterns of behavior across the Atlantic. The dissemination of this distinct ethnic influence, particularly in the Midwest, where most of the Germans had settled, seemed to endanger the relative homogeneity by offering an alternative counterculture.

In spite of these anxieties expressed on the occasion of Brace’s book, John R. Browne’s *An American Family in Germany* (1866), an expanded version of earlier reports in *Harper’s Monthly Magazine*, furnished a similarly entertaining germanophile account, an integral part of which was the consideration of “What the Germans think of ‘America’.” In contrast to the ire expressed by Americans vis-à-vis British misconceptions or misrepresentations of America (cf. also the anger roused by Charles Dickens’ disappointed *American Notes*), Browne gives an amusing compendium of naive notions of the United States circulating in Germany.<sup>21</sup> The ethnocentrically distorted views shared by complacent, but basically benevolent Germans, whose vision of where progress in America will lead the young “uncivilized” country, culminate in the assumption that, assisted by German immigrants, American reality will gradually move closer to the pattern established in German society. The ludicrous nature of such claims, no doubt, qualifies the implied respect for “otherness” reflected in the institutions and manners observed in the transatlantic hemisphere.<sup>22</sup> The continuing appeal of the country of “poets and

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<sup>21</sup> Browne uses hyperbole and parody to rub in this point, but the exposure of the myopia of those German commentators (chapter 13) and the good-humored caricature of German habits do not detract from the basically positive picture projected of their society.

<sup>22</sup> That such alternatives were “resisted” is indicated by the caution with which some American travelers, ready to acknowledge foreign behavioral patterns, formulated their thoughts. Catherine M. Sedgwick, the bestselling author, for instance, couched her comparisons in language which could not give offense at home. After praising the simplicity and the contentment apparent in the Rhineland, she tried to avoid any

thinkers” and assumptions concerning the warm humanity and benevolence of representative figures of German extraction, whose value-system arguably contrasted positively with the unbounded materialism of the agents of the “Gilded Age” (cf. the novel of that title written by Charles Dudley Warner and Samuel Clemens), is memorably personified in Dr. Bhaer in Louisa May Alcott’s sequel to *Little Women, Good Wives* (1869), where this incarnation of gentle humanitarian attitudes decisively influences the life and career of the protagonist Jo.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile sufficiently self-confident, American writers no longer felt the need constantly to bolster their case for a distinct culture by referring to empowering alternative models. Still, on the occasion of the Centennial (1876), Thomas M. Anderson opened his essay “Have we a National Character?” in June 1876 with a consideration of critical transatlantic assessments of American society while taking stock of its achievements.<sup>24</sup> Another contemporary account by Jane Grey Swisshelm intriguingly acknowledges the difference between the homogenized nations in Europe, the result of crystallizing processes, and the US, where society is said to be still in a state of flux (cf. 618). These thoughtful utterances also illustrate the increase in self-confidence among American intellectuals, though American writers throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century were keenly aware of

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imputation of “unorthodoxy” by apologizing for her very tentative “recognition” of different manners in Germany (Sedgwick, *Letters from Abroad* 1, 226).

<sup>23</sup> The events of the war of 1870-71 would have at least impeded if not prevented the creation of such a model of humanity. It suggests the continuation of patriarchal assumptions in “Victorian” America and indicates the prevalence of the positive stereotype of the German intellectual untouched by the spirit of acquisitiveness of the “Gilded Age” and not yet affected by the image of a martial and militaristic Germany unified by Bismarck’s single-minded policy.

<sup>24</sup> It is not insignificant that this essay begins with a quote from a recently published late book by the prominent German philosopher and theologian David Friedrich Strauss. In *Old Faith and the New* he had denied the United States a national character, also attributing to Americans an egotism detrimental to “patriotic feeling.” In addition, ignoring developments since Emerson’s oration in 1837, Strauss had claimed the continued dependence of American culture on the mother country, and argued a dearth of cultural genius. This charge T. Anderson – not taking the assessment of this cross-Atlantic arbiter lightly – naturally endeavored to reject on the eve of the Centennial, with evidence collected to defend the national integrity against the recriminations of “our German cousins.”

“absences”<sup>25</sup> and dissatisfaction with the limited possibilities for *litterati* prompted, or at least contributed to the expatriation of prominent individuals. Among them there was all the time a keen awareness of the cross-Atlantic contrast between manners and assumptions and their preoccupation with this reality fostered the emergence and genesis of true “international fiction.”

While this kind of writing reaches its climax in the sophisticated form which Henry James gave to it after his cosmopolitan education and apprenticeship, the inclination to compare American and (Central) European life-styles was even stronger in the mind of his elder brother William, who had shared with him the frequent cross-atlantic movements of the family. Unlike Henry Jr., William came to appreciate and extol the cultural and scientific paradigms apparent in German academic institutions. His extensive correspondence from his first independent residence in Germany from 1867 onwards abounds in intriguing attempts to generalize and to extract the essence of national cultures from constant observation.<sup>26</sup> He had originally been skeptical about the intellectual potential of German scholars, whose achievements he was first inclined to attribute to “their habits of conscientious and plodding work,” (IV, 233-234), but he came gradually to recognize that beneath the dull, expressionless faces there was “great internal vivacity and charmingness.” (IV, 241) Whereas early letters suggest that he felt Germans and Americans “akin in fundamental qualities” (I, 19) and the former not sufficiently different from his fellow countrymen to necessitate a visit,<sup>27</sup> his encounters with German intellectuals offered

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. the catalogues of what was lacking and absent in America in comparison with what Henry James called “the denser, richer, warmer European spectacle” (quoted from Stowe, *Going Abroad*, 5) provided by J. F. Cooper, O. W. Holmes and others, culminating in the list of “negations” in H. James’ book on Hawthorne published in the year after the Centennial (cf. Wegelin, *The Image of Europe*, 46).

<sup>26</sup> The volumes of the edition of William’s correspondence (in the following referred to by Roman numerals, I-IV) document his readiness to acknowledge the advantages and peculiar virtues of different societies, especially of Germany, repeatedly his host country, where he combined professional research and recuperation, which took him to various German spas. His letters suggest the free trade in ideas and scholarly concepts across the Atlantic after he had revised his earlier notions and their rather negative connotations.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. William’s letter to Henry Jr., in which he suggests that his brother Henry would not need to visit Germany and Berlin in particular, “the most American looking city in Europe.” (I, 19)

many a stimulus and prompted his admiration for a type of individual apparently common in Germany, those “men to whom learning has become as natural as breathing.” (IV, 214) On the basis of his increasing acquaintance with Germany William James was later to dismiss both Italy, which by comparison with “the earnest people, and [...] the grand old language” (IV, 486) in Germany had not evoked the sense of being at home, and England, where life had seemed “clogged with every kind of senseless unnecessaryness.” (I, 345) While his brother Henry resented the militarism and the grand imperial gestures of the German Empire, William was willing to acknowledge the benefits of the fundamental transformation of German society as a result of recent trends, thus continuing to grant Germany its status as a significant alternative cultural model.<sup>28</sup>

Unlike William's, Henry's attitude towards Germany was negative, especially after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, thus contrasting strikingly with his favorable response to Italy (cf. Perosa 119-120). His bias is reflected in a number of tales projecting (seemingly) typical figures illustrating German militarism, arrogance and a general readiness to use other individuals as tools. The divisiveness of the political debate, apparent in rifts within families, accounts for Henry James' outspokenness in the expression of his antipathy to the Germans, especially the Prussians, which in “A Bundle of Letters” shapes the portrait of a repulsive and arrogant character like Dr. Rudolph Staub. His remorseless observation and scorn for softer races links Dr. Staub to the type of the German scientist who surfaces in a number of late 19<sup>th</sup>-century American stories and novels, in which the unscrupulousness and reckless exploitation of individuals by such a character to satisfy his desire for unlimited power and control indicate deep-rooted anxieties inside American society. While postgraduate studies at German universities continued to be regarded as a mandatory part of a training for a scientific career, the projection of fears of trends hostile to orthodox and conservative values undermined the traditional readiness to accept Germany as a cultural model for America. Henry James' annoyance at

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. William's letter to Henry on June 12, 1892 during a sabbatical year, which he spent in Central Europe: “Germany is smarter and richer than of yore, but I confess I enjoy seeing again the mass of hearty, honest kindly humanity with which the country abounds, with its natural *schwerfälligkeit* corrected by the upright military bearing and directness of speech.” (II, 219-220)

the imperialist gestures of unified Germany and his irritation at its citizens, apparent in some of his travelogues, letters, and stories,<sup>29</sup> excluded it from being an example for America, of whose less attractive features Henry James and some of his compatriots seem to have been reminded when confronted with modern Germany. Still, Henry James dissociated himself from cruder forms of stereotype representations of foreign manners, as manifest, for example, in *Saxon Studies* (1876) by Nathaniel Hawthorne's son Julian. Julian Hawthorne, apparently annoyed by "the mawkish tendency ... to make Germans of all people in the world, and Saxons with them, objects of sentimental hero worship" ("Preface" n. pag.), had shown no restraint in expressing his peevishness after an extended sojourn in Dresden, where he had attended the "well-known Realschule." In his overreaction to the alleged "idolatry" of germanophile American writers he had not taken the trouble to substantiate his summary condemnation of the Saxons, as Henry James noted in his unfavorable review of this book. In his introduction Julian Hawthorne had also proposed a curious and reductive description of the purpose of foreign travel, namely "to reconcile us to our homes. We study foreign countries and customs, not for their intrinsic sake, but in order to compare them disadvantageously with our own ..." (11-12), a notion which runs absolutely counter to trends in 19<sup>th</sup>-century traveling and is incompatible with the findings of contemporary studies of tourism.<sup>30</sup>

Such a narrow perspective was, of course, alien to the cosmopolitan James family, whose members in various ways responded to the appeal of "alterity," and either chose expatriation or preferred to return home while continuing to look overseas. They did not come to reside in as palatial an ambience as the extraordinarily successful writer Francis Marion Crawford, who exploited exotic settings and local color, which ensured the great popular success of his romances, including fiction set in German university towns (*Dr. Claudius* and *Greifenstein*). Crawford's respect for the code of behavior, the energy and discipline of German fraternity students suggests acceptance of the mentality of society in Bismarck's Germany. In spite of the pride of German-Americans at the political power of their country of origin, manifest in celebrations like the

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. also "Pandora" and "Eugene Pickering."

<sup>30</sup> Cf. e.g., James Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, on the desire of travelers to escape the quotidian reality in their immediate surroundings.

German Day at the Columbian World Exhibition in 1893, fewer and fewer of their compatriots were willing to share their admiration for the country in Central Europe which was undergoing a metamorphosis.

It was due to the efforts of William James that the prominent German psychologist Hugo Münsterberg came to Harvard in 1892. A fundamental shift had meanwhile begun to take place and major frictions between the USA and Germany had erupted in the political and diplomatic spheres.<sup>31</sup> Münsterberg, in his turn, began to dedicate his energies to an attempt to mediate between conflicting cross-Atlantic cultural assumptions and to neutralize “fictional” misrepresentations of the two nations. In two companion volumes (especially *American Traits* and *Die Amerikaner*, translated as *The Americans* in 1904) Münsterberg was to offer very instructive analyses and illustrations of German misconceptions of the US and similar prejudices responsible for heterostereotypes held in the US.<sup>32</sup> Münsterberg’s well-balanced analyses of such notions in his publications briefly after the turn of the century mirror a growing awareness of the gap which had opened between the two countries. His books take note of the intense frictions caused by political and diplomatic conflicts and of the need to address this issue rationally and in a public cross-Atlantic dialogue.

The extent of the rapid estrangement between the two nations and the American shift away from the cultural paradigm temporarily provided by Central Europe is obvious in the drastic revision of past experience in the autobiographical account by the close friend and advisor of leading politicians in Washington, Henry Adams. *The Education of Henry Adams* (1907/1918) reflects his emphatic rejection of any debt to German culture, the denial of any fruitful effect during his extended sojourn in Berlin and Dresden in his youth (1859-60) and the subsequent suppression of later academic contacts with the country to whose eminent historiographers he had owed inspiration at

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. the brief summary of relevant factors in Detlef Junker, *The Manichaean Trap*, 15-19.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. his account of an invitation to a so-called German luncheon in America, where he was treated to imported sauerkraut. When he confessed that he had never tried this dish in his life, he was regarded as “not know[ing] anything about Germany,” as that was “the favorite dish of every Prussian” (*American Traits* 7). This beautifully illustrates the reductive power of homogenizing clichés. For a more detailed discussion, see the chapter on “Transatlantic Differences.”



the beginning of his professional career as a Harvard professor, long before his reorientation towards medieval France. The antipathy of this important member of Washington society, which had been prompted by the indiscretions and imperialist stance of Hohenzollern Germany, tended to obliterate positive facets of the American heterostereotype of Germany and to eliminate Germany as a major influence in the ongoing “negotiation” of America’s national identity.

A similar loss in the (potentially meaningful) interaction with German culture is also evident in the rewriting of “memories” by an American expert on Prussia like Poultney Bigelow. The initially pro-German views of this son of an American diplomat, who had spent formative years in German schools and had become a very close friend of the Hohenzollern princes, were expressed in numerous books of travel, some of which contrasted the young German Empire most favorably with tsarist Russia and had drawn a sharp boundary between Occidental culture and Asiatic barbarism coinciding with the frontier between the German Empire and the tsarist domain. In his *Prussian Memories* (1915/16) he drastically revises the map of the continent and, apparently surrendering to the virulent attacks of Entente propagandists on the ‘Huns,’ places prussianized Germany beyond the sphere of fruitful cultural interaction with America.<sup>33</sup>

One of the intriguing aspects of this revision by P. Bigelow, this early jet-setter, who by 1916 could proudly claim to have crossed the Atlantic ninety times, is the fact that the blame for the alleged deterioration in the moral fiber of the Prussians is squarely put on German professors for turning their pupils into obeisant subjects. The Prussian pedagogues and academics had drawn the fire of Anglophile American journalists by signing a notorious “Appeal to the Civilized World” designed to justify and support the goals of the Central Powers in the war in October 1914, and the more than 1,300 academics, diplomats and senior civil servants who followed suit, risked and lost their reputations in America in the interest of patriotic effort.<sup>34</sup> In questioning and rejecting their influence, American cultural critics eliminated, in the eyes of many observers, one of the foremost

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<sup>33</sup> Contrast Bigelow’s earlier books like *The German Emperor and His Eastern Neighbors* and the revisionist *Prussian Memories, 1864-1914*.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Phyllis Keller, *German-America and the First World War*, 173-174. Cf. also Peter Firchow, “Shakespeare, Goethe and the War of the Professors, 1914-1918,” esp. 472-473.

and exemplary strengths of German society, which was also to be of consequence for their collective self-image.

Still, some Americans who had continued the traditional American custom of exploring German culture in the course of a Grand Tour had in the years preceding the Great War persisted in seeking a paradigm in German culture. They had come to refer to certain novel variants of contemporary German literary, philosophical and theatrical culture as tools for assessing and undermining the continuing domination of “genteel culture” in America.<sup>35</sup> Percival Pollard’s *Masks and Minstrels of New Germany* (1911) and H. L. Mencken’s advocacy of Friedrich Nietzsche’s key concepts in Mencken’s struggle with the “bouboisie” are cases in point. But the military confrontation in World War I with the devastatingly negative image of the brutal German soldiers, the Huns, disseminated by E. F. G. Masterman in Britain and by George Creel and his associates in the propaganda machinery in America, interrupted and temporarily silenced this minority opinion and the important transatlantic exchange, which had had such far-reaching effects on the American self-image.

It was immediately after the end of the Great War that H. L. Mencken ended his enforced silence and in a long polemical essay entitled “The National Letters” (1920) exposed the fabrications which had overshadowed and eclipsed the image of the German professor. He defended this maligned species by insisting that “[n]o German professor [...] [had] put his hand to anything as transparently silly as the Sisson documents” (101) and contrasting “their comparative suavity and decorum [...] their effort to appeal to reason” (100) with the indefensible polemics of Anglo-Saxon academics, especially among Creel’s cohorts. The disillusionment of American intellectuals with the peace treaties and the lack of fairness with which the enemy was treated, is also mirrored in several contributions by Sinclair Lewis, first in a sarcastic essay disclosing the prevalence of negative stereotypes concerning Germans in the 50<sup>th</sup>-anniversary issue of *The*

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Mencken’s role as a mediator of Friedrich Nietzsche in *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*, which after its first publication in 1908 went through further editions, and his provocative essay commissioned by Ellery Sedgwick, the Anglophile editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, which appeared in November 1914 under the title “The Mailed Fist and Its Prophet.”

*Nation* (1925).<sup>36</sup> The account of his surprisingly pleasant experiences in Munich and Vienna, where he met highly civilized, sophisticated people, is intended to refute the allegations of the villainous nature of Germans, summarily discredited by the propaganda of the Creel Committee and in numerous war-time films. Mencken's and Lewis' satirical demolition of sweeping generalizations was to re-open the German-American debate about the different cultural assumptions and values determining the underlying cross-Atlantic contrasts. Lewis' fictional rendition of this debate in *Dodsworth*, published coincidentally exactly 100 years after Henry E. Dwight's pioneer *Travels in the North of Germany* (1829), can furnish the crowning and concluding illustration of this phenomenon.

In the discussion conducted at a Berlin dinner party given by Kurt von Obersdorf, the impoverished but socially accomplished scion of an aristocratic Viennese family, who takes such a personal interest in *Dodsworth*'s wife Fran, Lewis instinctively drew several thematic threads together which had been integral elements of expository and fictional renditions of the transatlantic connection for decades. Considering the dense texture of personal links between the New World and that region in the heart of the Old in the preceding century it seems appropriate that Berlin should serve as the setting for this debate and that a German professor should initiate this discussion. It is soon joined by the eponymous American figure, the awkward, but (professionally) competent former president of a car manufacturing company, who in Braut, a professor of Economics at Berlin University, confronts a social type which had commanded great respect in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century American reflections on German culture, though some negative connotations had already begun to be associated with the word professor. Professor Braut, in spite of his broad accent, which is occasionally phonetically transcribed, does not appear ludicrous at all, but (with the narrator's leave) retains the respect of his listeners, though *Dodsworth* is initially surprised that their host does not at all "condescend to a mere university professor" (248), a notion indirectly reflecting the anti-intellectual bias prevalent in the USA. Braut's diagnosis is offered with a semblance of modesty, but is based on a residence of more than three years in the US. Going beyond more cautious 19<sup>th</sup>-century assessments and comparisons,

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. "An American Views the Huns."

Braut maintains that America has meanwhile fully emancipated herself, shedding the vestiges of her cisatlantic heritage and establishing a modern society, yet one with very serious shortcomings. Inverting the warning sounded by some of the Connecticut Wits more than a century and a half earlier about the corruptive influence of the other hemisphere,<sup>37</sup> Braut postulates the threat to traditional culture coming from the New World. Echoing a tradition of German philosophers and social scientists (including Georg W.F. Hegel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Oswald Spengler and Martin Heidegger) who had come to use America symbolically as a culturally inferior, technological society,<sup>38</sup> Braut concludes his comparison by arguing that Europe is “[t]he last refuge, in this Fordized world, of personal dignity” (250). He makes high claims for the typical member of the European elite, who needs “some understanding of music, painting, literature, so that he will really enjoy a concert or an exhibition of pictures [...] His manners must be so good that he can be careless. He must know the politics of all the great countries [...] must know cooking and wines. [...] And most of all, [...] must understand women” (249-250) while Americans make do with efficiency and material goods.<sup>39</sup>

Against this stereotype notion of a symbolic America as a bleak, though efficiently managed world Sam Dodsworth, after some rumination and tacit reflection, takes up the cudgels and tries to trace such negative notions back to their true sources, not to European transatlantic experience, but to various literary and fictional pre-texts. He defends his compatriots by drawing attention to the genuine educational interest in the arts and in art objects of many American tourists coming over to Europe, but his main strategy is to castigate those transatlantic visitors whose biased accounts and prejudiced inferences were responsible for misrepresentations of the culture of the New World. Among those culprits Lewis does not mention some of the more recent vehement German critics of America, though

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<sup>37</sup> By that time, the Dodsworths have already been shown some of the haunts of ‘degenerates’ in Berlin, notorious at the time for the openness of homosexuals, thus substantiating latent American conceptions of European corruption.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. James W. Ceaser, *Reconstructing America. The Symbol of America in Modern Thought*, esp. 162-213.

<sup>39</sup> Professor Braut excepts a few people born in America from these strictures, including among them “your author Mrs. Edith Wharton [who does] belong to what I call ‘Europeans’...” (251).

Charles Dickens' *Martin Chuzzlewit*, with its alleged exposure of reckless and criminal speculation in the New World and the depiction of the typical American as a "homicidal idiot," comes in for special indictment. Dodsworth does not comment on Dickens' deeply disappointing grand lecture tour in the US in 1842, when the latter was disgusted with seemingly universal signs of greed and confidence tricks, but refers to great individuals from the American Midwest, a region rendered so despicable by Dickens, mentioning Abe Lincoln and William Dean Howells in this connection.

In this effort to invalidate another Englishman's criticism of transatlantic culture, the usually self-conscious Sam waxes eloquent, though he does not receive any support from his wife Fran. It was at her instigation that the Dodsworths left Zenith for an extended European sojourn after Dodsworth's retirement from his position as Vice-President of the newly merged car company. The somewhat dubious nature of European attractions is hinted at in the fact that Fran has already had some affairs in Europe and will soon fall for the sophisticated and "romantic" Central European Kurt von Obersdorf, their attentive host. Fran is, indeed, inclined to join the critics, at least of American males, without seemingly giving Sam credit for his humoring her during the long and not infrequently boring months of expatriation. No doubt, Sam, who had often been belittled and humiliated by his snobbish wife, gains in personality during these cisatlantic travels until he can face and go through with the inevitable divorce. His stance in the debate thus also wins more plausibility.

Still, some critics have averred that Professor Braut also expresses ideas, even convictions not alien to Lewis, whose primary literary mode was, after all, satire.<sup>40</sup> In *Main Street* and in *Babbitt* Lewis had already systematically exposed to ridicule what he deemed certain glaring shortcomings of American life. Thus the reflection of the negative image German thinkers had drawn of a "symbolic" America can be said to express some more deeply held convictions and anxieties of the author. At the same time it cannot be denied that with characteristic ambivalence Lewis, indeed, felt attracted to certain facets of his society. In fact, there was an unresolved tension in the author, a keen awareness of the weaknesses in mainstream American

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. Grebstein, *Sinclair Lewis*, 115-116.

society, a deeply-ingrained loyalty towards it and a need to preserve middle-class standards.<sup>41</sup>

The transatlantic frictions which had existed between different models available to American writers eager to develop a fully-fledged national culture and which had informed a good many 19<sup>th</sup>-century American travelogues and books of fiction, set in the heart of Europe, thus, in a way, became internalized in Lewis' fiction. The negative symbolism attributed to America by Continental critics may have played a role in his attempts to explore and to reconcile the differences between America and Europe he had experienced. Thus the conflicting paradigms, which had intrigued many and empowered some in their search for emancipation from a late colonial mentality, for a sense of a distinct American identity and for a literary voice, aptly found expression in the well-balanced consideration of the relative values of the cultures of the two hemispheres in a work of fiction by the first American to win a Nobel Prize in literature.

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. Mark Schorer's biography of Sinclair Lewis (1963).

## Chapter 11: Southern Alumni of German Universities. Fashioning a Tradition of Excellence

American graduates who would like to pursue certain lines of culture to their latest limits are compelled every year either to go abroad or content themselves with the necessarily imperfect aid which they can get in the post-graduate courses from overworked and half-paid professors who are doing the duty of schoolmasters. (Gilman, quoted in Flexner, 50-51.)

If a visitor in the tradition of Montesquieu's *Lettres Persannes* or Goldsmith's *Chinese Letters* were to visit Germany and hear about the drastic cuts in budgets and the freezing of professorial and other positions, he would have great difficulty in comprehending that in 1874 Daniel Coit Gilman, the future President of Johns Hopkins University, held up the German example as a model for American universities, which, in his eyes, had to be dramatically restructured and reformed. The current discussion in several European countries about the foundation of universities for the élite and of true centers of excellence is shaped by an awareness of the advantages the Ivy League Schools and other academic institutions in the US have over public universities in Europe, in which the ratio between professors and students has worsened, especially over the last decade with the decline in economic vitality as a consequence of political and economic burdens. In fact, everybody seems to be speaking about the superior quality of research centers in the United States and politicians would like academics to emulate the achievements of these institutions and their staff. My task, however, is not to expose the myopia of European politicians or to lament the decline of erstwhile bastions of scholarship and academic achievement, which would be neither fair nor useful. Instead, my intention is to offer a historical sketch of the remarkably close links between American and German

universities, their administration and structures well into the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup>

The contribution of the “Literary Pioneers” is relatively well known. Orië W. Long and Henry Pochmann have demonstrated the impact of German universities on American graduates, primarily from New England. They went over to Germany after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and other graduates followed them, especially after the middle of the nineteenth century, to study at the reformed universities notably in Berlin or Göttingen, but also in Heidelberg, in Leipzig or Jena. They went there to gain experience and to become familiar with the more advanced work of German scholars and scientists, Carl Diehl’s skepticism about the limited immediate professional advantages of such a sojourn for the first generation of academic pilgrims notwithstanding. Apart from John T. Krumpelmann and (recently) Michael O’Brien, few scholars have displayed much interest in the presence of a surprisingly large number of Southerners in these German institutions. Contrary to the comments of William R. Taylor in his classic study *Cavalier and Yankee*<sup>2</sup> (51-60), many Southerners, especially from South Carolina, and also from Maryland and other parts of Dixie, like their Northern compatriots, found it worth their while to invest their time in German universities. It is true, the practitioners of *belles lettres* were sometimes marginalized in the South, where political issues and the defense of the ‘peculiar institution’ preoccupied the members of the gentry. But the study of law was certainly very respectable, and the presence of prominent German refugees like Francis Lieber, who spent no fewer than two decades in Columbia, SC, as a professor of international law, certainly helped to direct the attention of the sons of plantation owners and the landed aristocracy to German universities. It now became common practice to study there for a year or so during a Grand Tour, and even more desirable, to receive a degree. The future Attorney General Hugh Swinton Legaré was one of those who strongly recommended to his

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<sup>1</sup> For a general survey of the interconnections, see the discussion in Thwing, *The American and the German University*, in Diehl, *Americans and German Scholarship* (with a critical assessment and comments on further research material) and Herget, “Overcoming the ‘Mortifying Distance.’”

<sup>2</sup> Taylor claims that the ties between the South and continental Europe had been cut, leading to a narrowing of perspectives and attitudes in the Antebellum South.



younger fellow-countrymen in South Carolina a sojourn in Germany.<sup>3</sup> Thus, figures like Thomas Reynolds and David Ramsay from Charleston, Jesse Burton Harrison from Virginia, followed in the footsteps of George Henry Calvert from Maryland, and received important impressions and insights in German universities, which also came to have an effect on the development of a distinct sense of identity in the South during the Antebellum.<sup>4</sup>

One must, of course, grant that the language barrier was, originally, significant, but the warnings of earlier travelers, such as Henry E. Dwight in his pioneering survey *Travels in the North of Germany* (1829), who had offered advice on the appropriateness of preparing oneself carefully through language tuition, helped to resolve this problem. Dwight's book was the first eulogy to German university culture which stressed the supreme opportunities of this former 'terra incognita' and the reward of an acquaintance with its unique cultural riches.<sup>5</sup> The availability of textbooks like Charles Follen's *German Reader / Deutsches Lesebuch für Anfänger*, 1826, and the rapidly growing number of suitable translations of German classics, which encouraged reading of the originals, facilitated a stay in Germany even before the middle of the century. It was, however, around 1850 that several scions of important Southern families met in Göttingen and Berlin, and participated in the cultural life of these cities and availed themselves of the academic courses provided in a wide range of fields and disciplines.

It is true that James Johnston Pettigrew was to feel much more at home in the south of the German-speaking world, for example, in Vienna, which he calls the 'most agreeable city of Germany' ("Diary," 41), he ever visited<sup>6</sup> – 'a place of enchantment, a warm-hearted city' –

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Krumpelmann, *Southern Scholars*, 8-13, for Legaré's promotion of this idea through his essays and in his letters to several young friends.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. esp. O'Brien in "The Lineaments of Antebellum Southern Romanticism," in *Rethinking*, 38-56.

<sup>5</sup> Dwight praised the "prodigious fertility of the intellectual soil of Germany" as "unexampled in the history of literature." (232) He also diagnosed an elective affinity between the northern Germans and the New Englanders: "[They] resemble us much more than any other nation on the continent. Like us they are Protestants, and they show in their conversation that depth of feeling, which naturally arises from religion addressed equally to the intellect and the heart." (170)

<sup>6</sup> While he found the inhabitants of Vienna to be 'open and hospitable, forming in this respect quite the reverse of the North Germans and particularly the Berliners, who are proverbially rather deficient in this respect and are much more like the Yankees'

not exactly the image projected by the Austrian Nobel laureate, Elfriede Jelinek.

A similar juxtaposition had been employed by H. E. Dwight, but to very different effect, as his affirmation of the German model excluded the South Germans and the Austrians, for whom he had only scorn. He did not expect any excellence there.

The ignorance and the superstition of the Austrians and Bavarians, are despised and ridiculed by the Germans north of the Mayne [...] they have ceased to regard the Austrians as brethren [...] They laugh at their dulness and easy digestion, as much as the Athenians did at their equally physical neighbours, the Boeotians. They speak of them as slaves, and as being unworthy of the name of Germans; as slaves both mentally and physically. [...] The Germans of the north call them *les autres chiens*, or “the other dogs” from the resemblance to *les Autrichiens*, the French word for Austrians. (Dwight, 237)

But such distinctions between the people in the north and in the south of the German-speaking parts of Europe were not yet universal and did not yet apply in those years round the middle of the century, and so a significant number of Southerners spent formative years in various German universities and returned to their country full of praise for the centers of excellence they had attended there. This does not mean, of course, that they were satisfied with all aspects of the academic lives. Like their New England colleagues and predecessors such as young George Bancroft (cf. Long, 123) they noted less appealing phenomena – for example, the alleged vanity of some of their German professors, the unorthodox sentiments of some theologians, and the boorishness of some of their fellow students and their dueling habits. Some visitors also expressed their irritation at the ignorance of German academics about American achievements, also in the fields of scholarship.<sup>7</sup>

That the defeat of the South in the Civil War disrupted this pattern of academic attendance is understandable, though a dozen

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(letter to Anne Pettigrew, Nov. 10, 1850), he enjoyed the musical culture in Berlin. Yet his sense of affinity with Romance cultures developed during his Grand Tour and culminated in his stay in Spain, which also became the topic of a significant book he produced. Cf. *Notes on Spain and the Spaniards*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the exasperation of Charles William Dabney’s father, Dr. Robert L. Dabney, Professor of Theology, at this ignorance, as reflected in his correspondence in *Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney*, 420.

years later quite a few Southern students again visited Central Europe. Encouraged by their teachers, who had themselves been to German universities and had been inspired by the academic culture there, they gained essential insights there needed for their professional careers.

Daniel Coit Gilman's establishment of the seminar system at Johns Hopkins University marks the beginning of a development which within a decade transformed the American college and university system through the inclusion of graduate seminars. Gilman recruited prominent scholars as professors who had been inspired by German scholarship, among them Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve,<sup>8</sup> the great classical scholar, who had himself begun his studies in Charleston but had received his formative impressions as a classicist in Europe. The new paradigm imported from Germany also raised a number of scientists and scholars, who had enrolled in German universities, to the leadership of several Ivy League Schools and other distinguished universities.<sup>9</sup> Nicholas Murray Butler later became President of Columbia University, Andrew White reformed Cornell, while G. Stanley Hall, later president of Clark University, took advantage of the insights he had gained during his prolonged stay at Leipzig University, where he had been inspired by Wilhelm Wundt, the prominent experimental psychologist who supervised no fewer than sixteen dissertations by American graduates and functioned as the second examiner of another seventeen.<sup>10</sup>

It was both in the Humanities and in the Sciences, including Medicine,<sup>11</sup> that the leading role of German centers of excellence was uncontested in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The more than two thousand American graduates matriculated as students in Germany in the 1880s reflect the great reputation, which was to last for another two decades

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<sup>8</sup> On Gildersleeve's career cf. Krumpelmann, *Southern Scholars*, 104-133 and the ed. of Gildersleeve's letters.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. for this analysis Herget, and, in spite of Carl Diehl's critical comment on his documentation, Thwing, *The American and the German University* (1920). See also Diehl's own survey of the two generations of American students in Germany, which, however, underestimates the importance of German institutions for advanced education and research in the South.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Benjamin, "Wundt's American Doctoral Students," 123-131 and Butler in his foreword to Burgess, *Reminiscences*.

<sup>11</sup> On the frequent visits of physicians from the USA to Prussian but also to Viennese clinics cf. the extensive documentation in Neville-Bonner, *American Doctors*, 69-106. Vienna in particular became the Mecca of American practitioners between 1870 and 1914, with no fewer than 10,000 American physicians studying there for a period.

until various factors, especially imperialistic policies and the resulting estrangement between the two governments, led to the rapid decline in the numbers of American graduates visiting Germany. It also brought about the deterioration of the image of the German professor, who later, during World War I, emerged as the scapegoat for the drastic change in the heterostereotype of the German élite.

Considering the limited space we need to restrict ourselves to depicting the situation of one university in the American South, which, under the aegis of its new Chancellor strove for academic excellence. Originally a small Methodist College, Vanderbilt was named after Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt whose son William generously endowed it. It quickly attained a superior position in the South, largely due to one man: James Hampton Kirkland (1859-1939).<sup>12</sup> Kirkland was a South Carolinian, for whose career and achievements the three years he had spent in Leipzig and then in Berlin were crucially important. He had gone there on the recommendation of his teachers in the small Wofford College in his native Spartanburg, South Carolina. His numerous letters to his mother, of which more than 100 have survived, have not yet been edited. His very legible handwriting, however, makes life easy for the reader and enjoyable for the researcher, and the letters are a treasure trove for cultural historians as they provide extremely lively impressions from German cities, and from his European travels.<sup>13</sup> They also show the presence of a network which helped to determine the individual career of young academics and the course of quite a few American universities on their way to becoming 'centers of excellence.'

The significance of the German academic paradigm for the development of American universities can, perhaps, be illustrated by tracing the relay race, so to speak, of American scholars of this part of the nation. They were, as it were, passing on to their disciples the baton of their infectious enthusiasm for the meanwhile prestigious branch of philology they had come to know in post-graduate work in

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<sup>12</sup> James H. Kirkland should, of course, not be confused with John Kirkland, President of Harvard University and the mentor and advisor to the first generation of American graduates who went to the reformed universities in Germany. John Kirkland (1770-1840) gave his graduates generous help and insisted, for instance, that Bancroft go to Germany and become a student of theology.

<sup>13</sup> The only scholar who seems to have made full use of this material was Kirkland's biographer Edwin Mims, for decades Chair of the English Department at Vanderbilt.

Germany. The experience of Kirkland can illustrate this fact and phenomenon. As a teenager in his native Spartanburg in the foothills of western South Carolina in the local Wofford College, he attracted the attention of a young professor of Latin and Greek, who became his first mentor and role model. Charles Forster Smith, himself from Spartanburg, had as a young graduate gone to Harvard in 1873, where he had encountered a generation of scholars who had been trained in Germany, including Francis J. Child, the future expert on ballads. In 1850 Charles Loring Brace had noted and written with admiration about Child, “the wonderfully witty fellow from Harvard College, who is studying for a professorship in Göttingen” (*Life of Brace*, 118). He achieved this goal. Professor Frederic D. Allen, the great classical scholar, had similarly advised Smith to go to Germany with the remark: “if you want to be a scholar, you must go to Germany; [...] Harvard has not yet developed graduate work.” (Smith 384 and Mims, *Kirkland*, 32) So after six months at Harvard Charles Forster Smith went to study in Leipzig. While for financial reasons he had to interrupt his studies and return to America and accept a professorship at Wofford, after a number of years he went back to Germany (in 1879-81) and completed his course of studies and took his doctorate. On the basis of coursework Smith made the young Kirkland his teaching assistant at the age of nineteen and helped him to obtain at nineteen a junior professorship at the small South Carolina college where he, Kirkland, was to teach Latin and German. Thus Kirkland became a colleague of yet another important scholar, who was also to gain prominence as an authority in his field of English philology and literature, William Malone Baskervill. Baskervill had also been at Leipzig where he completed his doctoral work in 1878, and a few years later, received a call to join the faculty at Vanderbilt University, where Smith had in the meantime as well been appointed professor. Baskervill similarly encouraged young Kirkland to turn his attention to Germany as he felt that Teutonic philology should serve as a basis for future study in English (Smith, *Reminiscences*, 38-58). Several decades later Kirkland was to express his gratitude to his erstwhile mentor Charles F. Smith. In middle age Kirkland wrote to the latter, praising him for encouragement he had given him and thus taking him to a “turning point” in his life. Smith functioned, as Kirkland puts it, as “the most positive and most inspiring factor” in his intellectual development (Mims, *Kirkland*, 34) and Kirkland also expresses his

gratitude for the letters he received from his mentor while in Germany.

His mentor's own reminiscences not only include an essay on his colleague and friend Baskervill but also list the names of many other prominent Americans who had sought "in [their] graduate work the centers where such choice spirits most congregate," places [in Germany] where "the atmosphere [...] quickens the germ of scholarship, in which it grows most vigorously and comes quickest to maturity" (*Reminiscences*, 392-393).<sup>14</sup> Both these scholars, Smith and Baskervill, were, no doubt, later instrumental in securing a professorship for their younger colleague Kirkland at Vanderbilt, when after two and a half years in Leipzig and half a year in Berlin he had completed his Ph.D. (with a critical and textual study of the Anglo-Saxon poem "The Harrowing of Hell") and returned home from Europe. They were to serve with him on the same faculty and, though Smith later left Vanderbilt for the University of Wisconsin, together the three professors provided the foundations for the academic prestige and future development of Vanderbilt.<sup>15</sup> Kirkland truly found his vocation in Tennessee. Very soon afterwards (1893) he was appointed and served for more than four decades as Chancellor of Vanderbilt University. He held the post until 1937. It is thus intriguing to note how personal ties and relations between teachers and disciples shaped the future development and also the faculties of academic institutions but presumably this is an inherent element in academe.

In his capacity as a professor and then as a leading university administrator Kirkland repeatedly expressed his enthusiastic approval of the situation in German universities so different from the more familiar pattern of college instruction in America. His convictions are mirrored in various lectures he gave and essays he published, in which he contrasted German and American universities. In 1890 Kirkland

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<sup>14</sup> This list concludes Smith's essay "From Harvard to Leipzig University" in *Reminiscences*, 384-393. There can thus be no doubt that many American academics regarded Germany as just such a bastion of scholarship, which was to be emulated by American colleges and universities.

<sup>15</sup> Before Kirkland was given his professorship at Vanderbilt, there had been earlier attempts to secure for him the Chair of English at the University of North Carolina. Another proponent of the German philological model, Edward S. Joynes, who had almost thirty years previously studied in Germany and was to be a major force in the reform of language studies in the South, had similarly tried to obtain an appointment for him at the University of South Carolina.

produced an essay with the title “The Influence of German Universities on the Thought of the World” after having earlier juxtaposed German and American universities (1887).<sup>16</sup>

One can also argue that Kirkland’s later struggle to maintain and secure academic freedom and to preserve academic standards at his university both at the admission and at the graduation levels is related to these early formative experiences. During his long Chancellorship he regarded the preservation of standards the primary guideline of his policy, and this secured a special reputation for his university. The struggle for full emancipation from the original ties to Methodism round about 1910 can also be seen in that light. There is a trustworthy witness in the person of Edwin Mims, who served for several decades as Chair of the English Department of Vanderbilt University and who wrote both a history of Vanderbilt University and a biography of James Kirkland. In acknowledging the great debt of gratitude of these Vanderbilt figures to German scholarship Mims shows his fairness, as he himself had great reservations about the German approach to scholarship, going back to his own post-graduate work at Cornell in the 1890s.<sup>17</sup> By that time a reaction had set in and more and more intellectuals began to distance themselves from the German academic (and philological) model. In the course of Kirkland’s own career continuing success as an administrator eventually prompted his adoption of a more confident stance in which he underlined the autonomous character of American vis-à-vis German or, for that matter, English universities.<sup>18</sup>

The great advances of German universities had meanwhile also inspired the reform of tertiary education in other countries as Stanley

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<sup>16</sup> In the earlier essay Kirkland compared the limited number of graduate students in US universities (about 900) with the situation in Germany where their number was ten times larger. In the later article he offered a detailed account of prominent American scholars who had made the German universities seats of learning and centers of influence (311).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. his notes for an unpublished autobiography at Vanderbilt, which contain emotional expressions of his discomfort and unwillingness to study the full range of the philological discipline, and to attend Harvard and a German university. On one occasion in 1897 he refers to the “incalculable harm” done by Germany to English studies. See also O’Brien on Mims, *Rethinking*, 131-156, esp. 143-146.

<sup>18</sup> His more positive assessment of the state of “Higher Education in the United States of America” in 1913 was arrived at, partly, in a dispute with Professor Dr. von Holst, whom he himself had appointed at Vanderbilt, and in disagreement with the political scientist from Columbia University, the Germanophile John W. Burgess.

Granville Hall (1846-1924), the pioneer experimental psychologist and educational reformer, who was to train a generation of educators, among them John Dewey, reported in a survey in 1891. In this pedagogical essay "Educational Reforms" he still offered high praise for Germany, lauding its universities and maintaining the desirability of closing the gap between the American and German models. His admiration for the reformed academic institutions in Germany is very explicitly put there and identifies central aspects of the German system: "The philosophical faculty which is devoted to investigation is the heart of the German Universities." (8) Assessing the needs for his own country the first president of Clark University demanded that the "apex of our educational system should no longer be in Germany, where scores of our best graduates still go yearly" (12) and advocated further reforms and investment in that sphere.

Hall's respect for German institutions was shared by William James, whose preference for German academic culture and achievements, developed during his regular visits there since 1867, contrasts strikingly with his brother Henry's Germanophobia and the latter's representation of distasteful and arrogant German scientists.<sup>19</sup> The persistence of the high reputation and the continuing strong appeal of reformed German universities for American graduate students in the 1890s is also mirrored in the semesters W. E. B. Du Bois studied in Berlin.

Stanley Hall's 1891 survey of tertiary education mentioned above also stressed the generous investments in university buildings and professorial appointments in France and England, and thus indirectly reflects the increasing rivalry and competition of these countries with Germany. The funding of scholarships appealing to highly talented young Americans such as the Rhodes scholarships in Oxford established after Cecil Rhodes' death in 1902 began to attract American graduates to the U.K. This development was quickly to reduce the number of students going to German universities although

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<sup>19</sup> The numerous expressions of William's appreciation of German scholarship and intellectual culture clash with the negative view of German science and the arrogance of German scholars in his brother Henry's depiction of such figures as Dr. Rudolph Staub in "A Bundle of Letters." Henry James' general comments on the "powerful German temperament and the comprehensive German brain" in sketches like "Homburg Reformed" reflect his dislike of the imperialistic attitudes of Bismarck's Germany. See James' *Collected Travel Writings*.



official exchange agreements between Berlin University and Harvard or Columbia were signed and implemented in the same decade.<sup>20</sup>

The decline in the numbers of Americans studying in Germany was reinforced by an increasingly negative image of German professors. Some individuals had gained a dubious reputation through arrogant or racist pronouncements, for instance, Helmut von Treitschke, who spoke dismissively of *mulattoes*.<sup>21</sup> Such verbal *faux pas* provided fresh material for a stereotype crystallizing round the nucleus of the type of the arrogant scholar or scientist of German extraction. The image of the immoral German scientist was latent in American thinking and presented in stories even preceding “Dr. Materialismus,” first published in 1890 by F. J. Stimson. The obvious fact that undesirable tendencies in American culture itself had again been projected onto foreign individuals need not be explicated here. German professors in various disciplines seemingly furnished evidence for the affinity of German intellectuals to such a social or rather asocial attitude. The most notorious of them was to be Friedrich Nietzsche.

A German academic who had encountered signs of a growing disaffection during his teaching at Harvard where he had gone on the invitation of William James regarded as necessary an analysis of the factors giving rise to this deplorable trend: Hugo Münsterberg. His *American Traits* of 1901 reflected on the widespread misconceptions about Germany in the US and these “in spite of the millions of German immigrants [who] had poured into the land [and] brought over the spirit of the German working classes” (3) and in spite of the “thousands of American students” who had come to know German culture, and he identified various factors responsible for the negative clichés circulating in America. Yet his efforts could not stem the tide of change and a growing number of publications confirmed the

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<sup>20</sup> The Germanophile John W. Burgess from Columbia University filled the position of the Roosevelt Professor in Berlin, and many prominent scholars from Germany took part in the exchange with Harvard (concluded a few years before), which also nominated Hugo Münsterberg to return for a year to his university. Cf. Herget 206-208.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Du Bois’ note concerning Treitschke’s reference to the “inferiority of *mulattoes*,” which is, however, balanced by Du Bois’ basic feeling at ease in Berlin. Cf. D. L. Lewis, *Du Bois: Biography of Race*, 128-130.

negative assessments and prejudices against the erstwhile admired model of high culture.<sup>22</sup>

In this context it was not helpful that opponents and critics of genteel culture in America found ammunition in the works of German philosophers. H. L. Mencken's praise for and promotion of Friedrich Nietzsche and his presentation of the latter as the spokesman of the "new Germany" tended to substantiate negative perceptions of the academics of "the master race." In the growing animosity Mencken's vehement advocacy of the German position in the War, for instance, in his essay "The Mailed Fist and Its Prophet," November 1914, inadvertently had the contrary effect. The "Appeal to the Civilized World" signed by 93 German university professors in October 1914 supporting the German war aims did irreparable damage in the eyes of the world to their reputation, whilst another declaration signed by more than 1,300 German intellectuals in the middle of 1915 made the situation even worse.<sup>23</sup> The "Committee on Public Information" did not tire in its efforts to use this advantage in the propaganda campaign. Even academic teachers who had felt a sense of elective affinity and a debt of gratitude to Germany felt a need to silence those who persisted in their praise of the universities of the Fatherland. Thus James Kirkland of Vanderbilt, who had at first permitted indefatigable eulogists of German universities in his faculty, such as Herbert Sanford, Professor of Philosophy, to publish their views,<sup>24</sup> thought it

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<sup>22</sup> One may note in passing the exclusion of positive impressions and influences of German academe from the autobiography of Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*, which first circulated in 1907.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Phyllis Keller, *German-America and the First World War*, 173-174. On the disastrous consequences of this initiative by German intellectuals and officials cf. Peter Firchow's comments on "the war of the professors." Cf. his essay "Shakespeare, Goethe and the War of the Professors, 1914-1918," 465-92. On the general context of the propaganda campaign in the Entente (e.g. E. F. G. Masterman in London and George Creel in the United States) cf. Peter Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words*. For older accounts of the war of propaganda and the measures taken at the instigation of the Committee on Public Information see the studies by J. R. Mock on "Censorship" and on "The Story of the Committee on Public Information."

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Sanford's emphatic pro-German confession entitled *The Faith of a Hyphen*, in September 1916, which mirrored his residence of three years in Munich during his studies and his continuing ties to Germany. Cf. also the timely reprint of *Old Letters of a Student in Germany*, the youthful impressions of German university life of the future doyen of philological studies in the South, Edward Southey Joynes, in 1916, almost sixty years after his studies in Berlin and his travel through Germany.

necessary to make them toe the official line after the declaration of war.

An indicator of the drastically altered image of the German professor at German educational institutions can be found in Poultney Bigelow's *Prussian Memories* (1915/16), where he blames German pedagogues for the inhumanity which had swept over Wilhelmine Germany.<sup>25</sup> Disastrous consequences of the association of German culture with the horrors of the war machinery became evident in several cartoons at that time, especially in the New York periodical *Life*. Among these cartoons "The Growth of Kultur?" in August of 1918 encapsulates the dramatic deterioration of the concept of German *Kultur* through its association with unscrupulous power politics.



Similarly significant was the cartoon which appeared in *Life* on July 4, 1918, with the caption "Photographs of Great Germans: Professor von Poisonpickle [...]."

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<sup>25</sup> Bigelow offered a trivial but telling anecdote about the forced feeding of German beer soup he had had to endure in the Prussian town of Bonn in his youth and regarded it as a typical expression of German bossiness and the Prussian inclination to metamorphose everybody into "a cog of the state machine" (4). For the radical revision of Bigelow's attitude towards Germany see the preceding chapter in this volume.



PHOTOGRAPHS OF GREAT GERMANS  
 PROFESSOR VON POISONPICKLE, AUTHOR OF TWENTY-SIX VOLUMES REFUTING THE STATEMENT MADE BY AN AMERICAN DOUGHBOY THAT KULTUR IS AN ODOR, NOT AN IDEA.

The latter confronts us with a corpulent, bearded, bespectacled individual clearly fond of his beer and grasping a quill pen in his left hand. The caption reiterates the traditional cliché of heavy-handed soporific German scholarship, and through his name and the American infantry man's [the doughboy's] construction of "Kultur" as an "odor, not an idea," seems to suggest a link between German *Kultur* and the barbarity of poison gas attacks in the trenches in World War I. (And, as the inscription suggests, all this is done just for fun.)

The nadir in the reputation of German scholarship was reached in a statement disseminated in Ohio in 1918, when the German language was dismissed as a "dead language" (Thwing, *The American Colleges*, 182), an infectious contagion to be avoided at all costs. Within two years passions began to cool somewhat, and H. L. Mencken, emerging again as a major cultural critic, exposed the injustices, the hysteria, and the fabrications of the war years. He spoke out in favor of the much maligned species of the German professor

and contrasted him with intellectuals in Britain and the United States, who had all too willingly joined in the propaganda battle (“The National Letters,” 100-101).

But irreparable damage had been done and the German universities never recovered their prestigious position as centers of excellence to which American students would flock.

## Chapter 12: German Ethnicity in the American South and the Permeability of Ethnic Borders

When nativist agitation against new immigrants approached its climax in the years of the Great War as suspicion against German-Americans for their alleged doubtful loyalty increased, two American intellectuals registered their dissatisfaction with the notion of the melting-pot. In essays which have since become classics, Horace Kallen and Randolph S. Bourne rejected the demand to assimilate those newcomers and to force them to abandon their ethnic past and heritage. In "Democracy vs. the Melting Pot" Kallen<sup>1</sup> analyzed the phases through which the new Americans had to pass in the course of being Americanized. Kallen argued in favor of the retention of their cultural heritage as these newcomers "cannot change their grandfathers" and they, instead of being subjected to Americanization, which would result in a loss of their specific inheritances, should be allowed to contribute their own "melody" to the whole symphony in the new society (Kallen, 91-92). Similarly, in 1916, Randolph Bourne sympathized with the hard-pressed German-Americans and stressed the value of their transatlantic heritage, in which he also saw a dynamic element from which American society would greatly profit.<sup>2</sup> Kallen's argument for "cultural pluralism," of course, has been hailed as one of the first articulations of an attitude since adopted in "multicultural America."

It is intriguing to note the degree of agreement between these two cultural critics who had both been students of Josiah Royce at

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the reprint of Kallen's essay in *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader*, Werner Sollors, ed. (1996), 67-92.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Randolph S. Bourne, "Trans-National America," rpt. in *Theories of Ethnicity*, 93-108. For the important contribution of German-Americans which was widely recognized in the 19<sup>th</sup> century cf. the contemporary account in A. B. Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (1909), and on the undisputed significance of German cultural influences the comprehensive description by Henry A. Pochmann. For a general survey see also LaVern J. Rippley, *The German-Americans* (1976).

Harvard. Their interest in the lot of German-Americans was, of course, a minority opinion during the Great War, and they were not able to prevent an erosion of the ethnic heritage, especially as far as German-Americans were concerned. The acceptance of a dual 'spiritual citizenship' seemed impossible at the time and the propaganda machinery of the 'Committee on Public Information' branded German-Americans (especially the Prussians) as potential traitors on account of their alleged loyalty to the 'fatherland' and the Kaiser. The negative consequences of this propaganda campaign, which was supported by numerous Hollywood movies and cartoons in journals like *Life*,<sup>3</sup> were especially felt in the Midwest. A sizeable proportion of the population there was of German origin, and numerous newspapers had continued to appear in German (Wittke, 243-244), which was the first foreign language there taught in high schools with more than a quarter of the student population taking the language.

In the Southern states there were some regions and areas in which German settlers also composed a significant segment of the population; these ran from Baltimore through the Shenandoah Valley into certain areas and towns in the Carolinas, though the process of acculturation and assimilation had progressed fairly rapidly since the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Quite a few newspapers were published in German in the South, even if they were mostly only short-lived.<sup>4</sup> The most successful of them was the Charleston paper *Deutsche Zeitung*

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. the various cartoons such as the December 17, 1914 cartoon on "The Gorilla That Walks Like a Man," exposing the alleged barbarities committed by the Germans in Belgium, the cartoon offering a "Frenzilogical Chart" in the Christmas Edition of *Life* on December 6, 1917, which intensified the propaganda, or the cartoon which parodied "The Growth of Kultur?" August 15, 1918 (cf. the reproduction in the preceding chapter). The propaganda campaign was masterminded by George Creel and involved also the use of Hollywood movies blackening the image of the Germans and representing the Emperor and the Prussians as evil barbarians.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. E. Bell, "Regional Identity in the Antebellum South: How German Immigrants Became Good Charlestonians," *Carolina Historical Magazine* 100.1, 1999, *Germans in Charleston*, 9-28, especially 10-11. Bell supplements Carl Wittke's study of the German language press in America, whose focus is on German immigrant newspapers from towns in the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys.

under the editorship of Franz Adolf Melchers, which appeared between 1853 and 1917.<sup>5</sup>

It seems rewarding to trace the fortunes of the German ethnic group in this region in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and, especially, in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, fortunes which reached their nadir during and after the Great War. Resistance to the anti-German propaganda came from various individuals in the South, for instance, from H. L. Mencken, whose opposition to what he regarded as Puritan-inspired parochialism reactivated in him a dormant sense of his German cultural heritage. It was not only the appeal to him of the beer garden, which, in the 1850s, had come to be associated with the wave of German immigration and had alienated the advocates of an abstemious Puritan culture and spokesmen for the ‘American way of life.’ It is true that exposure to German conviviality inspired Mencken’s “Beeriad,” or the documentary *Europe after 8:15*, and other positive assessments of Central European popular culture. Even more significant was the appeal of Friedrich Nietzsche’s philosophy, which Mencken tried to mediate to his American readers. The German philosopher and the avant-garde German theater provided him with ammunition against the forces of Philistinism and the bourgeoisie in the USA, but especially in the South.<sup>6</sup>

Originally, the German ethnic element in the New World had been largely represented by German farmers, who, from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, had entered the country and, under the label “Pennsylvania Dutch,” had established themselves as a significant segment of Pennsylvania society. One does remember, of course, Benjamin Franklin’s concern at the risk posed by the “Pennsylvania Dutch” to the English-speaking people in this colony (1751). There was, in his eyes, a threat that the former might “Germanify” the population of Pennsylvania, instead of being “Anglified” themselves.<sup>7</sup> Yet the reliability and efficiency of colonists of German origin,

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<sup>5</sup> On Melcher’s ideological commitment, which managed to turn Charleston’s Germans into ardent Southerners cf. Andrea Mehrländer, “...to Strive For Loyalty’: German-Confederate Newspapers” (Winter 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Mencken’s *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1908), 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1913. “The Beeriad,” which resembles a mock heroic in prose, appeared in *The Smart Set* in April 1913, while *Europe After 8:15*, edited in the spring of 1914, lost its appeal due to the breakout of the Great War and the propaganda machinery triggered off by it.

<sup>7</sup> His notorious letter to Peter Collinson is contained in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin: Volume 5*, ed. Leonard W. Labaree (1962), 159.



especially in the middle colonies, was recognized in Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer*, where they were very favorably compared and contrasted with Irish settlers and where their notable contribution to the culture of the colonies was acknowledged (84-85).<sup>8</sup>

The Carolinas had, of course, attracted German Protestants who, under the name of Moravians, had established communities in Winston-Salem, acquiring a large tract of land under the name of Wachovia with Salem as its center. South Carolina had similarly become the destination of many immigrants from German states, which made Charleston a cultural focus for newcomers of German descent. This was a city where they were fully integrated and gained positions of importance as early as the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, though many settlers subsequently moved upcountry.<sup>9</sup> The famous case of the Salzburgers who, after their expulsion from the Archbishopric of Salzburg as Lutherans in the 1730s, settled in Georgia on the banks of the Savannah River, establishing New Ebenezer, is particularly well documented.<sup>10</sup> Other parts of the South saw the arrival of a significant influx of immigrants from Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1840 and 1860 the number of Germans in Virginia increased until it comprised 18 percent of the white population of Richmond and supported many ethnic institutions and organizations in the city.<sup>11</sup> That Missouri, among the border states, received many thousands of German immigrants from the 1830s onwards is well known. Similarly familiar are the populous German settlements in Texas along the Brazos River, centered on New Braunfels near San Antonio and Fredericksburg in the 1840s. They were established under the auspices of the 'Adelsverein'; there were

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Letters*, rpt. 1981, 84-85: "How much wiser, in general, the honest Germans than almost all other Europeans; [...] out of twelve families of emigrants of each country, generally seven Scotch had succeeded, nine German, and four Irish. The Scotch are frugal and laborious, but their wives cannot work so hard as German women, [...] the Irish do not prosper so well; they love to drink and to quarrel."

<sup>9</sup> On the "Peopling the Province" with the creation of various townships in South Carolina, see especially Walter Edgar, *South Carolina: A History* (1998), 52-62; on Charleston esp. 290.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. George F. Jones in his *The Salzburger Saga* (1983) on German settlements in colonial Georgia and their copious documentation. He has used the comprehensive account compiled by Samuel Urlsperger in his *Ausführliche Nachrichten von den Saltzburgischen Emigranten*, Halle 1735-1751.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. M. E. Bell, esp. 12.

also significant numbers of German settlers in LA and in New Orleans.<sup>12</sup>

German farmers who had been lauded by Crèvecoeur and others were less favorably perceived by Southern writers such as George Tucker, who, while acknowledging the economic success of this ethnic group, in his novel *The Valley of the Shenandoah* in the mid-1820s portrayed them as dour, frugal people, the “dray-horses of society,” not “fitted for the turf,” no race horses, as it were. He also described them as people who paid little attention to education for their children or to the more sophisticated aspects and pleasures of life (George Tucker, 52-54). This view of the German ethnic group, which corresponded to heterostereotypes current in Western Europe before 1800, where the Germans were unfavorably compared with the sensuous and intellectually agile French, whose various talents, especially *le gout* and *le bon sense*, were said to be lacking in the Germans, underwent a dramatic change in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also in the American South. While books like Tucker’s *The Valley of the Shenandoah* echo the traditional stereotype of the Germans as “somewhat plodding, slow-moving people,” who “apply” themselves and are “industrious, hard-working, diligent” (George Tucker, 49-52), the arrival of political refugees from Germany in the 1820s and the dramatic improvement of the reputation of German educational institutions changed the general perception of this ethnic group. Reformed German universities like Göttingen, Berlin and Heidelberg now began to attract graduates also from the Southern States, and as a result of exploratory visits by graduates from New England and – almost equally important – from the Carolinas, brought about a significant change in the dominant heterostereotype of Germans and of settlers of German extraction in the South.

The presence of German intellectuals in the region and the contacts of German refugees like Franz Lieber, who taught for more than 20 years at South Carolina College, no doubt, had their impact. The close ties between members of the cultural and political élite of Charleston with transatlantic scholars led to a re-orientation and a change in the perception of Central Europe and the people rooted

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. Kathleen Neils Conzen, “Germans,” in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, ed. Stephan Thernstrom (1981), 405-425, and further research in her essay “Phantom Landscapes of Colonization,” in Frank Trommler and Elliott Shore, eds., *The German-American Encounter* (2001), 7-21.

there.<sup>13</sup> Hugh Swinton Legaré's encounters with leading German intellectuals like A. W. Schlegel encouraged the inclusion of reformed German universities in the Grand Tour dear to scions of families of the planter class from South Carolina and other Southern states, like Thomas C. Reynolds or David Ramsay. Despite William R. Taylor's claim that the preoccupation of the South with its 'peculiar institution' and the problems of its social hierarchy and class structure in the Antebellum were due to the severance of its ties with Europe, many young Southerners spent a number of semesters in Germany, and returned with great respect for the musical and the intellectual culture of the country. They were also inspired in their own search for a Southern collective identity by the spirit of nationalism in Germany before unification.<sup>14</sup> Quite a few of the Southern visitors felt a strong sense of affinity with at least parts of Central European culture.<sup>15</sup> It is fair to say that this sense of affinity also supported the Southern spokesmen in their vigorous defense of their own region against the influential voices from the North and the demands of Yankee culture.

The wide-spread respect for the German cultural élite also had positive consequences for the waves of immigrants from the heart of Europe. This occurred despite nativist resistance to what critics as early as 1840 called 'Teutomania', and also skepticism concerning newcomers whose habits did not (fully) correspond to the 'American' mainstream, for instance, in their way of celebrating the Sabbath. There were, of course, the serious reservations of the advocates of teetotalism against German immigrants, whose delight in beer gardens alienated the social reformers fighting drunkenness.<sup>16</sup>

Yet immigrants from Germany were not resistant to the trend towards acculturation and even assimilation to the mainstream,

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. various studies by John T. Krumpelmann, especially *Southern Scholars in Goethe's Germany*. Cf. also O'Brien, "The Lineaments of Antebellum Southern Romanticism," in *Rethinking the South*, 38-56.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee* (1957/1961). Cf., however, O'Brien, *Rethinking*, 48-49.

<sup>15</sup> For the close ties with Europe as a result of the presence of the sons of many Southern plantation owners and professionals, see the preceding chapter on "Southern Alumni."

<sup>16</sup> On the conflicts which resulted from the anxieties of early nativists who opposed fashionable 'Germanophilia' or later resented the German habit of gregariousness on the Sabbath, cf. the chapter "Atlantic Double-Cross" and *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur*, especially 65-71.

especially when personal ties had been established, as may be inferred from the example of Christopher Memminger. When the future first Secretary of the Treasury of the Confederacy (who had been adopted as an orphan by the governor of South Carolina, Thomas Bennett, and who later became a successful lawyer and politician), decided to visit Central Europe in 1854, he revealed the extent of his integration in his reaction to sights and scenes in Germany. In his correspondence with his wife 50 years after his mother's emigration to South Carolina, he distanced himself vehemently from the Catholic "idolatry" he had observed in the Cathedral at Cologne and the "breaking of the Sabbath" there. That in his letter he effusively praised his "Protestant" country and the church, in which "God's own word is honoured" (Sept. 5, 1854) reminds us of the fact that denominational factors, of course, shaped the attitude towards segments of the German population. The question of ethnic identities and elective affinities asserted and of heterostereotypes employed is thus dependent on and complicated by the presence of denominational loyalties and affinities resulting from such ties. Still, natives of Germany continued to be respected in South Carolina as the biography of John A. Wagener demonstrates. After a career in public service and of founding various ethnic organizations, societies, congregations and clubs, Wagener was even elected mayor of Charleston in 1871.<sup>17</sup>

Research has shown that the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the consolidation of a fundamentally favorable image of immigrants of German extraction in American fiction and in the theatre. This trend is mirrored in the production of many plays in which engaging German immigrants tread the stage. From 1869 onwards Joseph Klein Emmett, for instance, entertained audiences in many cities taking the part of a German immigrant in Charles Gaylor's play *Fritz, Our Cousin German*. The eponymous figure, who uses a hybrid English-German, is shown in his struggle against unscrupulous American antagonists and thus gains the sympathy of the audience. In the 1880s the character of the German immigrant gained a foothold in American vaudevilles and star actors such as Lew Fields and Joe Weber began specializing in comic parts using a hybrid German-English dialect.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. the portrait of John A. Wagener by Gertha Reinert in the special issue on *Germans in Charleston* of the *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 49-70.

<sup>18</sup> See Charles Gaylor, *Fritz, the Emigrant: A Story of New York Life* (1876). Cf. the detailed discussion of this very popular play and the appearance of similar characters

The two comedians clearly avoided appearing in ‘Hebrew’ parts, which also gradually became popular as a reflection of the waves of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. This preference for ‘German’ parts shown by this duo from a Jewish neighborhood in New York seems to have mirrored a hierarchy in the estimation of practitioners and theater-goers alike, which brings us also to the question of the borderline between these two ethnic groups.

Southern theater audiences, no doubt, also took an interest in the histrionic skills of the American-born comedian and author Louis Mann, whose repertoire included many roles of German-Americans and who regularly employed variants of stereotyped German dialects in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>19</sup> He entertained audiences until various, especially political, factors discouraged the representation of members of the German-American community on the stage. Early in the Great War Mann offered a defense of German Americans and spoke about the high regard the American people had for the German character.<sup>20</sup>

Mann’s praise, however, did not stem the tide of change and could not halt the decline of this theatrical phenomenon. The German ethnic group in big cities like New York had rapidly acculturized and was increasingly ready to communicate and function in English. So the popular theaters began to react by cutting back on both dramatic material and figures harking back to the German ethnic heritage. But it was above all the Great War which led to the reduction or even elimination of German parts in the programs of the theatrical companies on the circuit, which also included Southern cities. By the time Mann spoke favorably on German-Americans in 1915, the Germans had already been represented as villains raping Belgian women and ruthlessly destroying cultural monuments. As the propaganda machinery gained momentum, it led eventually to the departure of the stock-character of the German from the American vaudeville stage and from serious drama. Somewhat surprisingly,

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in American popular culture in “The Rise and the Demise of German and Hybrid German-English in American (Popular) Culture” (2007), rpt. in this volume.

<sup>19</sup> Louis Mann (1865-1931), appeared frequently together with Sam Bernard (1863-1927), impersonating Americans of German origin as duos in ethnic comedies and vaudevilles, but also in serious plays. On Mann’s contemporary reputation see the following chapter.

<sup>20</sup> On Mann’s comments on the nobility of character of the American of German extraction also see below.

given the degree of anti-Semitism in the South<sup>21</sup> round about 1920, theatrical gazettes suggest that Hebrew characters benefited from this change in attitudes and taste.

That actors who might have otherwise continued to appear in the roles of German-Americans shifted to the impersonation of Jewish ethnic characters can at least be partly explained by reference to the fact that the borderline between immigrants of German descent and those of Jewish extraction was still permeable. In the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, possibly as many as 100,000 Jews from Germany reached the United States.<sup>22</sup> They came as a result of certain political restrictions introduced by reactionary governments, and while the majority of them settled in the urban centers of the North from New York to Cincinnati, a not insignificant number joined Jewish settlements in the American South. In Baltimore Jewish immigrants from “German lands” played a major role in the German Society of Maryland, with Benjamin J. Cohen and his son, Israel, serving as its treasurers for half a century, from 1825 to 1876.<sup>23</sup> In Richmond, for instance, a quarter of the new arrivals from Germany in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century professed Judaism.<sup>24</sup> It is significant that these Jews were effective and active in commerce and various other fields, long before the new waves of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe began to pose a problem and certain tensions developed inside the now heterogeneous ethnic group in Southern cities as well as in the urban centers in the North. Divisions persisted in larger cities between earlier and 19<sup>th</sup>-century settlers, on the one hand, and latecomers from Eastern Europe, on the other, who found little favor among the already established group. Many of the Jewish immigrants from Germany had joined or

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. the persistence and the new wave of anti-Semitism in the South, which had received fresh impetus through the Leo Frank affair in Georgia in 1913 and which was later fired by the renewed agitation of the Ku-Klux-Klan and the rhetoric of some populist politicians e.g. in Mississippi. Cf. my essay on “Stereotypes and Sense of Identity of Jewish Southerners” in this volume.

<sup>22</sup> Jacob Reda Marcus, *United States Jewry: 1776-1985*, vol. ii, “The Germanic Period” (1991), 11-21. Cf. Avraham Barkai, *Branching Out: German-Jewish Immigration to the United States, 1820-1914*, esp. 60-64.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Wust, *Pioneers in Service*, 25-26 and 45.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. M. E. Bell, “Regional Identity,” 12. On the issue of Jewish immigration from Germany cf. also Carolyn S. Blackwell, “German-Jewish Identity and German Jewish Emigration to the Mid West in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century” in: Reichmann, Eberhard, LaVern J. Rippley and Jörg Nagler, eds., *Emigration and Settlement Patterns of German Communities in North America* (1995), 310-321.

established Reformed Congregations, while the newcomers from Eastern Europe were Orthodox Jews.

This, however, did not exclude intermarriage between members of these two groups of Jewish immigrants, as is apparent in the biography the doyen of Southern scholarship Louis Rubin has offered of his “father’s people.”<sup>25</sup> His paternal grandfather Hyman Levy Rubin, who belonged to the East European group and was born in East Prussia, married a member of a family of German Jews from the Rhineland who lived in New York; soon afterwards the young couple settled in Charleston in 1886 and became members of the Reformed Congregation K.K. Beth Elohim in this city Louis Rubin himself has lovingly presented in several books of fiction.<sup>26</sup>

There were fewer newcomers belonging to the German-Jewish group in the Deep South, but they also joined existing communities. The long tradition of Sephardic settlements in South Carolina, especially in cosmopolitan Charleston, where America’s largest Jewish community lived in the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is well known.<sup>27</sup> Savannah and other Southern cities also had sizeable Jewish communities and continued to be important in the history of Jewish culture, with the family of the Sheftalls from Georgia achieving prominence among them. The use of German seems to have characterized many of the secularized Jews from Central Europe, who also heard German used in sermons in their synagogues, had German-sounding names and were not distinguished from their Christian conationals in the census, which merely gave the country of origin.

American observers did not draw any sharp distinctions between new arrivals from Germany with a Jewish cultural and religious heritage, and the other Germans. This fact can be inferred from the fates of young Germans who were illegally recruited into the Union Army. A case study provided by Andrea Mehrländer shows that they were treated in the same (illegal) fashion and found themselves in similar, appalling circumstances in the Civil War.<sup>28</sup> In their helplessness quite a few new recruits wrote to German religious

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Rubin, *My Father’s People* (2002). Cf. the tribute to Rubin in the form of memoir essays, including one by Rubin himself, in *The Southern Review* 38.4 (2002).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. his novels *The Golden Weather* (1961), *Surfaces of a Diamond* (1981), and *The Heat of the Sun* (1995).

<sup>27</sup> On the history of Jews in the South cf. Eli N. Evans, *The Provincials* (1973), and *A Portion of the People*, ed. by Theodore and Dale Rosengarten (2002).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Andrea Mehrländer, “‘Ist daß nicht reiner Sklavenhandel?’” (1999), 65-93.

ministers or to a rabbi, as was the case with the 25 year-old cabinet-maker Jacob Hirsch from Hamburg, who asked a German rabbi to intercede for him and get him out of the Union Army. Hirsch was not successful in this attempt and, lacking the necessary capital and proficiency in the English language, he had to stay in the army even after the War. Later he went to Texas, where he married a German woman, and finally died there without ever having been fully integrated or fully Americanized.

By the time of his death in 1909 his country of origin had come to be regarded as an imperialist rival of the USA, and was soon to appear as the home of the Huns. But it was even before the turn of the century that the status previously granted and conceded to German culture in Europe and its emissaries had already been questioned; the advent of the Great War only put an end to the special German-American relationship. Voices like that of the experienced philologist Edward Southey Joynes or that of the philosopher Herbert Sanborn, the former in South Carolina, the latter in Tennessee, insisted, even in 1916, on the value of the German cultural model and, at least indirectly, also appreciated the contribution of immigrants from that country of “poets and thinkers.”<sup>29</sup> Yet a dramatic change in the situation of the ethnic group was already under way. Some writers still took pains to distinguish between various segments of the Germans and the German immigrant population, differentiating between the welcome and loyal new Americans from ‘South Germany’ and the immediately suspect ‘Prussians and the Prussianized.’<sup>30</sup> They might also have distinguished between Germans according to their religious affiliations, which included Lutherans and Reformed Christians, Catholics, and Jews.

The fate of the semi-illiterate German cabinet maker Jacob Hirsch, who had crossed the Atlantic in 1864, contrasts with and provides a footnote to the fate of a highly literate figure, Ludwig Lewisohn, who had come to Charleston in 1890 and had quickly embraced the culture of his host country, but who later found that his acculturation did not secure equal opportunities for him. His story may also illustrate the permeability of ethnic borders.

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Herbert Charles Sanborn, *The Faith of a Hyphen* (1916), and Edward S. Joynes, *Old Letters of a Student in Germany* (rpt. 1916).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Owen Wister’s foreword to Gustavus Ohlinger, *Their True Faith and Allegiance* (1916).



The shift in the relative “recognition” granted to the members of various ethnic groups, or the denial of such recognition for the German-Americans and Jewish-Americans in the war and post-war years is highlighted by Lewisohn’s turbulent career. This underscores the provisional, almost arbitrary nature of identities: Lewisohn was born in Berlin and cognizant of his German heritage. Like his parents, who had been alienated from their own religion, he was dissatisfied with the low status and parochialism of their Jewish relatives in South Carolina.<sup>31</sup> Not feeling at home with the lower middle-class German community there, he eagerly aspired to “incorporation” in the Protestant social élite of Charleston. Late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century he embraced the Methodist faith and world-view of his peers and associates in Charleston, where his family had gone in search of better economic opportunities. Attending the college in Charleston he felt at ease in American society and, according to his later statements, outdid his fellow-Christians in zeal. But disappointment was in store for him in New York, where he attended graduate school at Columbia University, for, as he puts it in his autobiography *Up Stream* (1922), he was discouraged from pursuing his desire to get a Ph. D. because, as his advisor, Department Chair “Brewer” (probably Matthew Brander) suggested as a Jew he had no chance of preferment and a tenure track appointment.

Lewisohn’s continuing interest in contemporary German literature and also in psycho-analytical discoveries, which liberated him in his private life, now opened up an alternative for him and paved his way for a career in German Studies, a return, as it were, to the culture of his native land. After years of disappointment he gained the position of an instructor in the German Department at the University of Wisconsin and later served for six years at Ohio State. It is ironic that the prolific author provoked the ire of those who, under the influence of nativist trends, wanted to eliminate the negative influence of the literature of the enemy country, obliging Lewisohn to resign from the faculty. Subsequently he shed both his culturally constructed identity of an Anglo-American and his recovered identity as a scholar of German, and endorsed the Zionist movement, to which

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<sup>31</sup> On his career and dilemmas cf. Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity* (1986), 194-207, and his essay “Region, Ethnic Group and American Writers” (1984), 441-462.

he was already committed by the time the first volume of his autobiography appeared.<sup>32</sup>

But his actions do not only reflect the idiosyncracies of a passionate and somewhat unpredictable individual, but also suggest something about the nature of ethnic boundaries, which, due to the degree of acculturation and assimilation of Jews in Germany and Central Europe, allowed them a shifting of allegiances. The tragedy and catastrophe of the Holocaust would seem to reduce the probability or even the feasibility of such a change for later generations. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries such a shift was quite possible as the career of Jacob Hirsch in America would seem to confirm. The fact that a member of the extended prominent Jewish Savannah family of the Sheftalls, John McKay Sheftall, has produced a survey of German settlements in the South East of the USA arguably supports such a reading of social, cultural and ethnic history and seems an apt commentary on the originally close links between German and Jewish immigrants from Germany in the United States.

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<sup>32</sup> On this painful experience cf. *Up Stream* (1922). Cf. the continuation of his critical perspective on his adopted country in *Mid-channel* (1929). There have been some critical comments on the instability of his chosen identity and his various 'reversals.' Cf. Susanne Klingenstein, *Jews in the American Academy 1900 - 1940* (1991), 83-98 and 114-135.

## Chapter 13: The Rise and the Demise of German and Hybrid German-English in American (Popular) Culture

Visitors from the eastern seaboard of the USA and the Midwest to 19<sup>th</sup>-century Germany were not the only Americans who were confronted with the German language, which Samuel Clemens in his well-known speech debunked as “awful.”<sup>1</sup> The waves of German immigrants after the failure of the revolution of 1848 had brought hundreds of thousands of German speakers to America. Their settling in New York and in states like Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, and Texas in significant numbers helped them to retain their language and employ it in everyday social and economic life, in their social networks and in their religious congregations.<sup>2</sup> The sheer bulk of their presence furnished the basis for the development of a German-language press, which in its peak years comprised almost 800 German newspapers throughout the United States.<sup>3</sup> The presence of the ethnic Germans also made itself felt in various forms of popular American culture, and American readers and theater audiences in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also increasingly encountered and became acquainted with their language.<sup>4</sup>

The eagerness of many American graduates from 1815 onwards to earn academic degrees at the reformed universities in Berlin, Göttingen, or Heidelberg, and learn skills there for their professional careers necessitated the acquisition of German though some German educational institutions like Berlin did in fact medical courses in

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Clemens, “The Awful German Language” (1880).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. esp. Rippley, *The German-Americans* (1976) and the comprehensive studies by Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (1909) and, recently, Don Heinrich Tolzmann, *The German-American Experience* (2000).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wittke (1957).

<sup>4</sup> On the impact of German culture on America generally cf. Pochmann, *German Culture in America* (1957). On the regional variants and the continued use of German in some of the primary areas of settlement cf. also Gilbert, *The German Language in America* (1971).

English.<sup>5</sup> The difficulties American graduates had with learning the language, which attained great prestige in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, are well documented in their autobiographies, published and unpublished journals as well as travel diaries.<sup>6</sup> Charles Follen, a refugee from Germany and instructor at Harvard, had provided the first edition of a *German Reader for Beginners* as early as 1826,<sup>7</sup> and later the creation of chairs of German at several American universities put the instruction of the language on a firmer basis.<sup>8</sup>

From the 1820s onwards immersion in German culture was popular, with a period of residence of American graduates in the homes of German university professors greatly facilitating their acquisition of the language. It is not surprising that the development of intimate relationships with members of the other sex and mixed marriages provided a natural stimulus to learn German, or at least more about the language. Frequent contacts with young German women greatly improved the language skills of American graduates, such as in the case of W. E. B. Du Bois, first in Thuringia, and then Berlin.<sup>9</sup> In addition to romances between male American graduates

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Neville-Bonner, *American Doctors and German Universities* (1963). On the earlier attraction of reformed German universities cf. Long, *Literary Pioneers* (1935), rpt. 1963.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. the comments made by American graduates who had little or no linguistic preparation for attending German universities and who had to make a distinct effort in order to benefit from the lectures offered there. Cf. Henry E. Dwight (1829), and George Henry Calvert, whose dedication to this task enabled him to provide the first translations of significant German literature in the early 1830s. Cf. Calvert, *Scenes and Thoughts in Europe* (1846). That studying the German language proved more difficult than acquiring Romance languages is apparent in the diary of James Johnston Pettigrew, the scion of a distinguished Southern family, who as a serious student of languages kept his diary in Italian, French, and Spanish with remarkable discipline while traveling through these countries, but did not make such an effort during his residence in Germany (1850-1851).

<sup>7</sup> Follen's *Lesebuch* saw several editions and proved a commercial success.

<sup>8</sup> Cf., for instance, the appointment of Frederick Henry Hedge (1805-1890), who had attended German secondary schools, esp. Schulpforta, and was thoroughly familiar with German philosophy and literature. He published *The Prose Writers of Germany* (1847), and was appointed Professor of German in Harvard in 1872. On these phenomena generally cf. my monograph *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur* (1998), esp. 27-38, and "Atlantic Double-Cross," rpt. in this volume.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Du Bois's biography, part 1, by D. L. Lewis (1993), where Du Bois's own assessment of his visit to Thuringia and his stay in the house of Dr. Johannes Marbach ("the most perfect summer of [his] life") is quoted, esp. 128-130.

and young German ladies, contacts between American female music students and their teachers were also factors fostering competence in German,<sup>10</sup> and some late 19<sup>th</sup>-century popular romances produced by the spouses of diplomats or journalists who had resided in Germany reflect this trend.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Mary Church Terrell received several marriage proposals there and later produced a sensation when she addressed an international conference on Peace in several languages, including German.<sup>12</sup> The skills of an accomplished poet and translator like Bayard Taylor were also significantly enhanced by such intimate relationships.<sup>13</sup> His second wife, the daughter of the German astronomer Hansen, no doubt, made an invaluable contribution to his competence as the translator of Goethe's *Faust*.<sup>14</sup> Such ambitious projects were undertaken at a time when the prestige of German and of German literature, which had served as an alternative model inspiring efforts to achieve cultural independence from Britain, precluded anxieties about a foreign language potentially rivaling the English norm. Yet as early as the 1840s and 1850s there was a steady drip of expressions of concern about Germanophilia and articulations of discomfort at the potential introduction of modes of conduct undermining the American sabbath through beer gardens, and out of

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. the enthusiastic report by Emma Louise Parry in *Life Among the Germans* (1887). Similarly, two young Southerners, Mary L. McClure and Mary Louise Sims, nostalgically recalled their four years of studying the piano with Professor Karl Heinrich Barth, the famous teacher at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin, as well as their visits to German cities during their vacations about 1900 in *Two In Vagabondia* (1932), a memoir which is studded with German phrases.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. the sentimental novel by Constance Goddard DuBois, *A Modern Pagan* (1895), and Edith Bigelow, *Diplomatic Disenchantments* (1895), composed by the wife of Poultney Bigelow, and set in Berlin. Her husband's revocation of his earlier praise for the Hohenzollerns and Germany generally in *Prussian Memories, 1864-1914* (1915) represents one of the most intriguing reversals of an initially positive heterostereotype within a period of fewer than 20 years.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. her autobiography *A Colored Woman in a White World* (1940).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Bayard Taylor's proud report of his rapid acquisition of German at the beginning of his hike through Germany and Austria, and his recurrent affirmation of an elective affinity with Germans, and his high regard for the German language. Cf. Taylor, *Views A-foot* (1846). Cf. also *At Home and Abroad* (1859), and *At Home and Abroad. Second Series* (1862).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the reminiscences of his widow Marie Hansen-Taylor, *On Two Continents* (1905). On Taylor's translation of Goethe's *Faust* cf. 198-222.

harmony with reformist attempts to reduce the consumption of alcohol.<sup>15</sup>

The challenge the acquisition of German posed and the recommendation of useful strategies for studying the language also found their way into entertaining lyrics contained in books which achieved great popularity in the USA. Those lyrics were collected in 1869 in *Hans Breitmann's Ballads*.<sup>16</sup> The eight stanzas of "To a Friend Studying German" (27-29) offered a humorous description of salient features of the German language, linking them to some characteristics of a seemingly prototypical German. Charles Godfrey Leland, its author, employs a hybrid language combining English and German words, using English words with characteristic deviations in pronunciation and spelling. The author of these verses had himself spent several years in Germany, especially in Heidelberg and Munich (1845-1848), and was to go back there in 1869-70, as his *Memoirs* published in New York in 1893 document.<sup>17</sup> Though he admits that "[it] was fearful work for me to learn German," he acquired such perfection in the language that he was able to translate poetry and fiction into English, especially texts by J. V. von Scheffel, J. v. Eichendorff, and Heinrich Heine. In his humorous poem he offers advice of how to cope with the difficulties of German diction and syntax by adopting the habits and customs which nourish the 'natural expression' of the national character:

[1.]  
 Will'st dou learn de Deutsche Sprache?  
 Denn set it on your card,  
 Dat all the nouns have shenders,

<sup>15</sup> Cf. the unfounded accusations in "letters to the editor" against Charles Loring Brace, who in *Home-Life in Germany* (1853) had lauded the "healthy cheerfulness," "sociability and geniality" of German Sundays and the convivial pleasures of beer-drinking. It was claimed that he had advocated "a state of drunkenness under the table with his boon companions." Cf. E. Brace, *The Life of Charles Loring Brace* (1894), 151. Earlier, Theodore Parker had referred to the anxieties of conservative critics who disliked the rapidly increasing German influence in New England and saw it as "a German epidemic."

<sup>16</sup> This book was often reprinted, with additional lyrics and ballads. An edition with an introduction by the author's niece Elizabeth Robbins Pennell was published by Houghton Mifflin in 1914 and reprinted in 1965 with the addition of a glossary explicating German words on 25 pages.

<sup>17</sup> On his university life and travels in Europe: cf. Leland, *Memoirs* (1893), 107-89, esp. 140-170, and "Europe Revisited," 370-386.

Und de shenders all are hard.  
Dere ish also dings called pronoms,  
Vitch id's shoost ash vell to know;  
Bott ach! de verbs or time-words –  
Dey'll work you bitter woe.  
[2.]  
Will'st dou learn de Deutsche Sprache?  
Denn you allatag moost go  
To sinfonies, sonatas,  
Or an oratorio.  
When you dinks you knows 'pout musik,  
More ash any other man,  
Be sure de soul of Deutschland  
Into your soul ish ran.  
[3.]  
Will'st dou learn de Deutsche Sprache?  
Dou moost eat apout a peck  
A week, of stinging sauerkraut,  
Und sefen pfoundts of speck.  
Mit Gott knows vot in vinegar,  
Und deuce knows vot in rum:  
Dis ish de only cerdain vay  
To make de accents coom.

After recommending listening to music and offering culinary advice (st. 3) he also proposes to “trink afery tay an gallon dry of foamin Sherman bier,” recommendations that should assure one of success in one's linguistic ambition. Leland thus draws on American heterostereotypes of the Germans which were then current in the USA. That the acquaintance with individuals of the other sex and a love relationship can do wonders in language acquisition is suggested in the concluding two stanzas of the poem.

[7.]  
Will'st dou learn de Deutsche Sprache?  
If a shendleman dou art,  
Denn shtrike right indo Deutschland,  
Und get a schveetesheart,  
From Schwabenland or Sachsen  
Where now dis writer pees,  
Und de bretty girls all wachsen  
Shoost like aeples on de drees.  
[8.]  
Boot if dou bee'st a laty,  
Denn on de oder hand,  
Take a blonde moustachioed lofer

In de vinegreen Sherman land.  
 Und if you shoost kit married  
 (Vood mit vood soon makes a vire),  
 You'll learn to sprechen Deutsch, mein kind,  
 Ash fast ash you tesire.

Many of Leland's other ethnic lyrics and ballads, examples of what he himself occasionally called "macaronic poetry," immediately found enthusiastic readers and prompted pirated editions.<sup>18</sup> Several other poems by him, for instance, "Breitmann in Battle," or "Hans Breitmann's Barty," no doubt, dwell on and mediate other traits and habits associated with the Germans, for instance their ostensibly regular fare, beer and bratwurst.

While the mixed dialect with striking deviations from the American standard generates comedy, Leland did not intend to subject both the language and its speakers to ridicule, and his presentation of the "big, gross, metaphysical beer-drinking American-German"<sup>19</sup> did not convey a condescending or even scornful view of German-Americans. In a preface written during the Franco-Prussian War, in which some other writers had taken the liberty of borrowing the persona of Breitmann for a different, negative picture of the Germans, Leland himself had asserted "that not a single word was meant in a bitter or unkindly spirit,"<sup>20</sup> that he did not intend to satirize the Germans. It seems appropriate to emphasize this fact as earlier practice when using figures employing hybrid language seems regularly to have been different. A comparison with the use the Elizabethan theater made of foreigners lacking competence in English shows that they normally appear as figures of fun, and are usually ridiculed as a result of this 'flaw' in their language proficiency.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Leland, *Memoirs*, 375. On the enormous success of *Breitmann's Ballads* and the attention paid to it in reviews cf. Holger Kersten in his unpublished post-doctoral thesis entitled "Dimensionen literarischer Kreativität" (1999), esp. 157-172.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Pennell's introduction to *Hans Breitmann's Ballads*: vi.

<sup>20</sup> The author in his preface himself rejects as "entirely foreign to any intention of the author – that Hans Breitmann is an embodied satire of everything German." (xx) Cf. Kersten, "Dimensionen," on the shifting intentions of the author and the variations in the attitudes and characteristics he projects on this figure, and on the differentiation between the poems in the various versions and editions (103-156).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Eckhardt, *Die Dialekt- und Ausländertypen* (1911) and Clough, "The Broken English of Foreign Characters of the Elizabethan Stage" (1933).



Leland's macaronic verse, both lyrics and ballads with their hybrid language, seem to be used for a broad range of effects, for instance, for offering commonsensical sentiments or comments in an appealing and entertaining form. Some of his texts seem to employ the hybrid linguistic medium to give an exotic touch to a satirical portrait of American reality as seen by an outsider.

Among Leland's numerous imitators Charles H. Harris, who created the figure of Carl Pretzel as early as 1866 and used his peculiar dialect to present the Chicago scene,<sup>22</sup> or C. F. Adams, whose sentimental texts centering on "Yawcob Strauss" were repeatedly published in Boston after 1877,<sup>23</sup> seem not to have been eager at all to present the German ethnic group and its problems either in Europe or America. Other minor writers had fewer or no scruples whatsoever in employing fictional descendants or even Hans Breitmann himself for different goals.

A hybrid German-English was also put in the mouths of an increasing number of figures who appear on the American stage in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many playwrights did not hesitate to present ethnic caricatures, which are, indeed, a regular feature of the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century American theater and continued, or rather varied, the tradition of the minstrel show and burlesque.<sup>24</sup> It is tempting also to relate the German American stage characters to the caricatures popular in the emerging cartoons in various periodicals, where they frequently reflect prejudices against immigrants and thus mirror nativist trends in American culture.<sup>25</sup> This does not apply to the most popular ethnic cartoon of the "Katzenjammer Kids" invented by German immigrant Rudolf Dirks. It ran in William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* from December 1897 onwards and depicted the practical jokes played by the two kids, clearly inspired by Wilhelm Busch's *Max und Moritz*

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Harris, *Carl Pretzel's Komikal Speaker* (1873). For a full bibliography of the numerous editions see Kersten, 447.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Adams, *Leedel Yawcob Strauss and Other Poems* (1877).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Dormon, "American Popular Culture and the New Immigration Ethnicities" (1991). An examination of theatrical periodicals like *Madison's Budget* shows that an abundance of ethnic characters, esp. stage 'Hebrews,' fill the pages of these collections of sketches, monologues and jokes popular on the vaudeville stage.

<sup>25</sup> Dormon, "Ethnic Stereotyping in American Popular Culture" (1985).

in a fanciful Africa.<sup>26</sup> In the light of later comments by actors specializing in such dialect parts (like Louis Mann) it seems, however, advisable not to regard such negative attitudes immediately as major factors contributing to the popularity of ethnic ‘Dutch characters’ in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century American culture.

Situational comedy is engendered in many of these shows which also include German characters, occasionally juxtaposing them with other ethnic types, who similarly speak “with an accent” and thus deviate from the norm. A fairly simple farce printed in 1887 makes such a juxtaposition even in its title “Dutchey and Nigger.”<sup>27</sup> It was composed by a certain James O. Luster and provides an example of a fairly crude caricature of the German immigrant. In this rather trivial piece the Negro servant Pete has fun at the expense of the German servant called Beter. There were many more complex vaudeville pieces, in which musical numbers were part of comic sketches, which offered a variety of actors a wide field in which to show their versatility.

The first comedian who played the part of the German immigrant most successfully seems to have been Joseph Klein Emmet, who trod the stage in “green blouse and cap and wooden shoes” and “talked in broken English” – entertaining audiences in St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Buffalo. It was in the latter place that he excelled in a play written for him by Charles Gayler, *Fritz, Our Cousin German*, which had many sequels<sup>28</sup> and in which he usually appeared as an “amiable, slow-witted fellow, fond of little girls and boys.”<sup>29</sup>

The popularity of this play also inspired a prose version in which the appeal of the upright speaker of a hybrid English German was fully exploited. His desperate but eventually successful struggle

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<sup>26</sup> The awareness of their ethnic heritage is reflected in the change of the names of the figures after the beginning of World War I, irrespective of their continued use of a German English hybrid, when they were temporarily transmogrified into the Irish ‘Shenanigan Kids.’ Cf. T. Inge, *Comics as Culture* (1990), esp. 138-41, and A. Burger, *The Comic-Stripped American* (1973), 35-46.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Luster, *Dutchey vs. Nigger*. 1887.

<sup>28</sup> On the success of this figure of Fritz van Vonderblinkenstoffeneisen in this play and its many sequels cf. Kersten, 284-304.

<sup>29</sup> This phrase like the quotes above are from the *New York Times* obituary of June 16, 1891. Cf. the earlier report in the *New York Times*, April 21, 1890 on a crisis in the career of the “great German comedian” while playing *Fritz in a Madhouse* in Philadelphia.

with unscrupulous antagonists like the villainous Colonel Crafton and his accomplice Bobbet, a dubious theatrical manager, for his beloved Kathrina, endeared him to theatergoers and, in this book version, to a large readership. Their sympathies were not alienated by his linguistic free-style blending of German and English vocabularies and syntactical rules. These remained with him until his final elimination of the revengeful villains, who had pursued him from the city of New York to the idyllic rural setting in which he had established himself as a miller and where they had temporarily taken his little son hostage.<sup>30</sup>

That J. K. Emmet's first success with 'Fritz' was almost simultaneous with the first publication of a collection of Leland's lyrics and ballads in *Breitmann's Ballads* is surely not coincidental; it marked the emergence of the 'Dutch' dialect speaker in American popular culture. He rapidly gained more than a foothold in American vaudevilles and comedies, for instance in Edward Harrigan's successful sketches, vaudevilles and plays. *The Mulligan Guard Ball* (1879) in particular exploits the comic potential of the conflict between the eponymous figure, the Irish-American grocer Mulligan, and the German butcher Lochmuller,<sup>31</sup> with "the instinctive antipathy between Celt and Teuton" flourishing in comedy.<sup>32</sup>

The appeal of such plays lay in the skills of star actors who adopted such 'ethnic' parts and made them their own. Their histrionic and musical talents ensured the success of numerous variations and sequels to such plays, which brought ethnic immigrant figures to the stage in the following decades and led to long runs for ethnic plays until the Great War.

The long popularity of Lew Fields and Joe Weber, stars of the ethnic dialect theatre from the 1880s onwards,<sup>33</sup> is constantly evoked

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Gayler, *Fritz, the Emigrant* (1876), "founded upon Mr. Gaylor's popular drama of 'Fritz' as played by Joseph K. Emmett [sic] all over the world."

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Edward Harrigan's play in Moody, ed., *Dramas from the American Theatre* (1966), 535-65. Cf. also the reprint of the last version of that play in Root, gen. ed., *19<sup>th</sup>-Century American Musical Theatre*, vol. x, *Irish-American Theatre* (1994), xxi-xxiv and 1-128, musical numbers, 129-229.

<sup>32</sup> Quinn, *History of the American Drama* (1927), 87. On this playwright and this comedy cf. especially Dormon, "Ethnic Cultures of the Mind" (1992), 21-40, esp. 24-26.

<sup>33</sup> On the first of the 'Dutch dialect duos' and their slapstick comedy, cf. Isman, *Weber and Fields* (1924), and, more recently, with a focus on their ethnic background, which, however, they eschewed for Dutch and Irish sketches, see A. and L.M. Fields, *From the Bowery to Broadway* (1993).

in later plays and in their reviews, and their imitators, Gus and Max Rogers (the Rogers Brothers after 1893), and Charles William Kolb and Max M. Dill (1899-1918) similarly specialized in comic parts using a hybrid German-English dialect.<sup>34</sup> When they humorously “murdered the language,” their linguistic acrobatics resulted in a carnival of language use. The sheer verbal dexterity with which individual stars or theatrical duos exploited the potential of such a blending of registers was no doubt relished by theater audiences, many of whom of German descent. Unquestionably these entertainers were also making fun of the lack of language competence of German immigrants. That this was not a major objective, however, is argued by Holger Kersten, who maintains that *mimesis* cannot have been the dominant impetus behind such a mixing of registers in a hybrid language as exaggeration was the dominant technique and an inventive game with verbal duels was practiced on the stage. It was pleasure at the humorous verbal “tournaments” on the stage rather than sarcastic laughter at the expense of the immigrants of German stock which was central. In his comprehensive study of the gradual ‘translation’ and ‘erasure’ of the German-American community in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century culture Peter Conolly-Smith is, however, inclined to interpret the increasingly frequent depiction of the broad accent of German immigrants also as indicative of an at least ambivalent attitude towards this ethnic group, which through its linguistic peculiarities was subjected to ridicule, a practice fed by anxieties and reservations concerning subversive elements among recent German immigrants.<sup>35</sup>

There is little doubt that the heavily accented ‘Dutch’ (low) comedy character, which Sam Bernard (1863-1927), who had come as a child from England, chose as his specialty as an actor,<sup>36</sup> also

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<sup>34</sup> On the aesthetics of the vaudeville, cf. McLean, *American Vaudeville as Ritual* (1965), and Kersten’s analysis in “Dimensionen literarischer Kreativität,” 336-340.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Conolly-Smith, “The Translated Community” (1996). Cf. especially introduction and chapter 1. I am indebted to its author for insights concerning the general climate of the times as reflected in the popular ethnic vaudeville, and in the ethnic press. The thesis has since appeared as a book: Conolly-Smith, *Translating America: An Ethnic Press Visualizes American Popular Culture* (2004).

<sup>36</sup> On this prominent actor cf. Gänzl, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Musical Theatre* (2001). Bernard portrayed in almost all cases German or Jewish immigrants. It is

exploited the humorous potential of the immigrant figure, skillfully using his adopted German-English dialect. He shared this *forte* with the American-born comedian and author Louis Mann (1865-1931), whose repertoire included many roles of German-Americans and regularly and fairly precisely employed variants of their stereotyped dialect<sup>37</sup> until the decline or demise of this literary subgenre in the 1920s.

It is significant that these two leading actors were to appear together on the stage at a time when this theatrical subgenre had begun to lose its wide appeal and its patrons. Louis Mann performed his most popular and critically successful role in *Friendly Enemies*, a play by Samuel Shipman and Aaron Hoffman in 1918,<sup>38</sup> as Karl Pfeiffer, a German immigrant who has emotionally remained a son of the 'Fatherland,' eagerly hoping for its victory in the Great War. During the run of this phenomenally popular play in the spring and summer of 1918 Sam Bernard impersonated his antagonist, the patriotic German-American immigrant and successful banker Henry Block.<sup>39</sup> The verbal disputes of Block and Pfeiffer conducted in English, with some imperfect grammar and Teutonic accents, and punctuated with some German phrases provide enough situational comedy.

BLOCK: Dot's not nice – and it's not right – that you should call your boy names when he is not here to defend himself.

PFEIFFER: What names I call him?

BLOCK: Wilhelm. His name is Billy – a good American name, Billy, son of Charley.

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significant that the borderline between these roles was permeable and cannot be drawn with any certainty.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *American National Biography*, s. v. "Louis Mann." Cf. also Felix Isman's report on how he recruited Louis Mann: "He is an undisputed artist in his field; no one probably ever has excelled him as a German comedian. He knows every dialect and colloquial mannerism of the German states, and how best to use them." Isman, *Weber and Fields*, 292.

<sup>38</sup> The play, for which the copyright was granted to the two authors, seems to have been transferred in 1923 to Samuel French and printed in that year. The publication also contains five photographs of the successful production.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. the reviews in the *Theatre Magazine*, vol. 28, August 1918, 87, with photographs of several scenes, and in the *New York Times Theatre Reviews*, vol. 1, 1870-1919, on July 23, 11:1 ("'Friendly Enemies' is an instant hit." The review explicitly refers back to "the well remembered days of Weber and Fields" and concedes that "beneath the thrust and parry of wit and the slapstick of burly repartee there was always an underlying purpose.")

PFEIFFER: His name is Wilhelm, son from Karl. I borned him and I –  
 Oh, go to Hell! (He exits U.L.)  
 (Act 1, Living room of the Pfeiffers, New York City, 24)

But the two families are on the brink of personal tragedy as Karl's son is sent to France and his ship is sunk through sabotage just outside New York.<sup>40</sup> At the height of the American involvement in the Great War the dissension between variants of stock characters engenders some humorous situations but the play more importantly gives ample space to poignant moments as it addresses the problem of divided loyalties of immigrants from the fatherland and pleads for recognition for the plight of the German-Americans. Set in the heart of the ethnic community, it utilizes various stereotypical aspects and negative clichés of Germans which the Allied propaganda had in the meantime disseminated (the total disregard of the loss of lives initiated by Pfeiffer's contact, the head of a German spy ring, Walter Stuart). But it also modifies them through the evocation of the painful dilemma of Karl Pfeiffer, who is finally converted to the patriotic cause and also completes his adoption of the American language.<sup>41</sup> Several reviews of this production acknowledged its genuine expression of the problems of the hyphenated Americans, but also showed themselves aware and appreciative of the final transmutation of the slight foreign accent in the play.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> In the printed version there is a reference to an explosion in the hold "on a transport with five thousand soldiers," while reviews of other productions, for instance, the "Play's Première" at the New National Theatre in Washington, attended by President Wilson, allude to "an American transport [...] reported torpedoed" (*New York Times Theatre Reviews*, March 5, 1918, 9:2). Cf. also the review of "The First of the War Plays" in *The Forum*, 361-62, C. Courtenay Savage, "The Theatre in Review".

<sup>41</sup> At the end of Act 2, when he has realized that his own son may have been lost with that transport ship sunk by a saboteur in an act paid for with his dollars given to the fatherland, Karl Pfeiffer adopts Henry Block's furious dismissal of German *kultur*. He deliberately echoes Block's phrase used before, calling the supporters of German militarism "Huns! Miserable Huns!" (74) At the end of Act 3, having burned all his German newspapers, he is eager to have the American service flag hung up and then to learn from his son, who has escaped unharmed from the incident, the unofficial American anthem, "My Country 'Tis of Thee!" (98)

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *New York Times*, August 11, 1918, III:6:1 on this play, and another dramatic examination of loyalties of Americanized Germans (in "Allegiance") in an essay by John Corbin, entitled "The Hyphen in Our Midst."

The late 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century ethnic plays and humorous music hall productions with a hybrid German-English were, of course, distinct from professional German-language theater, which flourished in the regions and cities where German settlers made up a large part or even the bulk of the population. St. Louis, Cincinnati, and Milwaukee, as well as New York, had German-language theaters, where occasionally even stars from German-speaking countries, such as Josef Kainz, performed, and where the new naturalistic plays were also produced.<sup>43</sup>

As Peter Conolly-Smith has shown, the high-brow theater – and Germany had provided a large part of the repertoire of serious drama and classical music in American theaters – went into a rapid decline in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>44</sup> The offshoots of the music hall tradition (the vaudeville productions in newly furnished houses like the Yorkville Theater) were temporarily serious rivals and attracted much larger segments of prospective audiences, naturally including also potential patrons of the high-brow German-language theatres. Yet the climate of the times also undermined the viability of these institutions and entertainments involving the use of a hybrid German-English. It may be assumed that the process of acculturation, in which the German-language press had also functioned as an agency of Americanization, had led to a gradual attenuation of the linguistic base, culminating finally in language loss. But it was primarily the rapid marginalization of German in its different variants during the Great War which eroded the basis for the continued use of this language in American popular culture.

The formerly close cultural ties between Germany and the USA had been weakened since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and an estrangement between the two imperialist powers had set in. It rapidly progressed in spite of the efforts of academic mediators like Hugo Münsterberg to expose the mechanisms which led to (largely negative) stereotypical assumptions. In *American Traits* (1901)<sup>45</sup> he had critically referred to

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. Christa Carvajal, “German-American Theatre,” Maxine Schwartz-Seller, ed. *Ethnic Theatre in the United States* (1983), 175-189.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Conolly-Smith, “The Translated Community” (1996), esp. 412-416, on the fate of the German stage in New York, especially the Irving Place Theatre, which was managed from 1893 to 1907 by Heinrich Conried. Conolly-Smith stresses the success of the popular ethnic vaudeville at the expense of the high-brow theater.

<sup>45</sup> On Münsterberg’s role cf. *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur*, 129-132 and the chapter on “Transatlantic Differences.”

cartoons and caricatures in the comic papers but also to the regular “funny German in a second-class American theatre,”<sup>46</sup> and the misrepresentation of “the Dutchman” to American eyes.

It is beyond the scope of these reflections to survey the factors hastening the general political ‘alienation’ in German American relations. It is intriguing to note, however, that in 1911 experts on the European cultural scene like Joseph Percival Pollard had still praised the vigorous style and courage of playwrights in Germany. These critics also countered assumptions and prejudices about the suppression of theatrical entertainments in Prussia, or Germany as a whole. “The legend of a Germany ruled by uniforms, military or bureaucratic, became hard to discern under a play of wit and criticism in print that no other land in the world surpassed.”<sup>47</sup>

In fact, iconoclasts like Pollard and H. L. Mencken were ready to take the German example and hope for a liberation of the American theater from the trammels of gentility by using German theatrical culture as a kind of battering ram against the American establishment in thrall to ‘genteel culture.’<sup>48</sup> They did not deign it necessary to assess the popularity of vaudeville entertainments in their own country, but apparently thought primarily about serious drama and theater.

Yet, within very few years this enterprising chapter of American theater criticism was closed. The allocation of collective guilt to the Germans after the outbreak of the Great War by American opinion leaders (for the invasion of and conduct in Belgium, and as a result of submarine warfare) dominated the American press. The pamphlets produced by the propaganda machinery of the Committee on Public Information led to a disastrous change in the general view of

<sup>46</sup> *American Traits: From the Point of View of a German* (1901, rpt. 1971), 7.

<sup>47</sup> Pollard, *Masks and Minstrels* (1911), 15.

<sup>48</sup> H. L. Mencken sympathized with Joseph Percival Pollard and his favorable representation of the “rebellion against spineless literature in Germany” and the “sophisticated satire and bold railery” practiced in the cabarets in Germany. Their tastes were in tune with the approval James Gibbons Huneker expressed for the boldness of the German theater and the new trends manifest there, not only in the acceptance of Scandinavian but especially also of German dramatists. Cf. Huneker’s *Iconoclasts, a Book of Dramatists* (1905), and Mencken’s championship of Nietzsche as the epitome of the “spirit of the New Germany” and as the “spokesman of his race.” Cf. Mencken, “The Mailed Fist and Its Prophet” (1914), 606.



Germans.<sup>49</sup> One has only to look at the disastrous cartoons in the New York papers, especially in *Life*, and at the pamphlets distributed by George Creel's Committee (reproduced in S. Vaughan's study).<sup>50</sup>

In spite of the efforts of the remaining German language papers to argue for strict American neutrality, and the plea for fairness vis-à-vis the Central Powers,<sup>51</sup> and despite assurances of the loyalty of German-Americans, this patriotic virtue was soon called into doubt. The suspicion against them inevitably also affected the view of the suitability of German dialect characters in the various popular forms of the theater.

Colgate Baker interviewed Louis Mann within nine months after the beginning of hostilities when Mann had again taken the part of a German-American (Gus[tave] Muller in *The Bubble*), and had played this role very successfully, using "the genuine Leipzig dialect."<sup>52</sup> The prominent actor intriguingly finds it appropriate to

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. my description of the success of the propaganda machinery of George Creel's committee and E. F. G. Masterman's similar propaganda machinery in Wellington House in London, in *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur*, 157-162. For a more detailed account see Vaughan, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines* (1980), and, more critically, Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words* (1987).

<sup>50</sup> The effect of these efforts putting the antagonists in the roles of the enemies of civilization can be seen in the drastic cartoons, for instance, in New York papers like *Life* from December 1914 onwards. Cartoons like "The Gorilla That Walks Like a Man," *Life*, December 17, 1914, 1117, or "The Missing Link," December 10, 1914, 1070, graphically present the German soldiery in the guise of subhuman barbarians raping Belgium and putting the torch to its cities. In both cases the spiked helmet on the head of an ape underlines the brutishness of the adversary, while the latter caricature ironically upholds the concept of German *kultur*. The metamorphosis of a hog's head into the silhouette of Bismarck's face is effectively used in a cartoon near the end of the war ("The Growth of Kultur?" *Life*, August 15, 1918, 224, reproduced in the chapter on "Southern Alumni"), while eleven capital sins of the German militarist are graphically presented in an x-ray of the brain of the Hohenzollern 'despot' in "Frenzylogical Chart," *Life*, Dec. 6, 1917, 924.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. esp. the efforts of the editor of the leading ethnic paper *New Yorker Staatszeitung*, Herman Ridder, whose early articles on the World War also appeared in a collection entitled *Hyphenations* (1915). Among the most dedicated mediators between Germany and America was Kuno Francke, a historian and philologist, who had taught at Harvard University from 1884 onwards and who asserted on behalf of the German-Americans their loyalty to their new country. Cf. his *A German-American's Confession of Faith* (1915), and numerous essays during and after the war.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. above, note 37, on Isman's tribute to the versatility of Mann in his imitation of various German dialect speakers.

offer a defense of the German-Americans and a positive assessment of the 'stock' character of the German dialect speaker.

He claims that the "German-American we are familiar with in our drama has been taken out of our daily life" and maintains that there is "a certain inherent nobility of character in the German-American type." He elaborates on this statement and adduces as evidence and proof of "the high regard the American people have for German character" the fact "that in all the American plays ever written, you will not find one German villain. We have had villains of almost every other nationality, but the German in our plays is invariably the central comedy figure who sets things right in the end."<sup>53</sup>

Louis Mann thus draws from his own repertoire arguments for fairness for the maligned nation, and for the increasingly suspect segment of the American population with its roots in Germany.

That other ethnic practitioners in the theater responded differently is apparent in the productions by Adolf Philipp. His ethnic parodies involving 'Dutch dialect speakers' had been successful in the 1890s. He continued marketing his specialty (American musical comedy in German) depicting this ethnic community in

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<sup>53</sup> Colgate Baker, "Louis Mann: His Genius of Comedy and 'The Bubble'". The interview appeared on Saturday April 17, 1915 in *The New York Review*. Gus Muller is described as temperamental, "blowing hot and then cold, like April weather," and, like the other German characters Mann portrayed earlier, emphatically presented as "true to [American] life." Baker describes Gus Muller as a "typical hyphenated American of German extraction, a lovable idealist, as temperamental as a first violonist, with a heart of pure gold". Mann also refers to Herr von Mooser in 'The Strange Adventures of Mrs. Brown,' who represents the "sweet, sentimental, anaemic type of German musician, always affable, but always suffering and pensive," while Hans Nix in 'The Telephone Girl' corresponds to the "type of the bumptious, puffed-up German, with an exaggerated idea of his own importance." Mann goes on to say in his interview that "you will find thousands of Mullers in the big cities of the United States keeping delicatessen stores, devoted to their families, model husbands and fathers, as simple as children themselves, in some respects, but honest as men can be, with high moral standards and ideas of business integrity, tender-hearted and as temperamental as prima donnas." Baker adds that the Kaiser "ought to send Mr. Mann the Iron Cross, for he has done more to make Americans love German characters than all the Ambassadors, special commissioners, imperial propagandists [...] who have been making appeals for our sympathy." For the reference to this key passage the author of this essay is indebted to Kersten's "Dimensionen literarischer Kreativität," 384.

‘Kleindeutschland’ on the Lower East Side in his theaters on 57<sup>th</sup> Street and the Yorkville Theatre on East 86<sup>th</sup> Street. His productions gave much scope to a critical view of German activities in the Great War, thus alienating Herman Ridder and others.<sup>54</sup>

It is remarkable to see how quickly the capital in mutual respect for and recognition of Germans accumulated over the preceding decades was lost in America, and how rapidly German-Americans came to feel discrimination as they spoke with a different accent. They were discouraged from using their language or even directly deprived of the fundamental means of retaining their culture. It was their language which came to be regarded as tainted by what Americans had heard about the Huns and their brutalities on the battlefields.

In 1920 Charles Franklin Thwing, who was later to provide a very knowledgeable survey of German universities,<sup>55</sup> was ready to quote without qualification or any indication of critical distance from a publication of the Defence Society in New York, which used hyperbole and sweeping denunciations of the Huns and their language:

The sound of the German language or the sight of a printed page in German, reminds us of the murder of a million helpless old men, unarmed men, women and children, [...] and the crucifixion of Canadian soldier prisoners.<sup>56</sup>

In America, in England, and all British dependencies, the German language now is a dead language. All those who speak it or read it will in self-defense conceal that fact. Never again will it be needed anywhere in the Western Hemisphere, save as a reference language. German ‘science’ now is just as loathsome as German militarism.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. Peter Conolly-Smith, “‘Ersatz-Drama’ and Ethnic (Self-)Parody: Adolph Philipp and the Decline of New York’s German-Language Stage, 1893-1918,” Sollors, ed., *Multilingual America* (1998), 215-239.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Thwing, *The American and the German University* (1928). One wonders whether this survey was an attempt to do some sort of penance for not having kept his distance from the claims of the propaganda machinery in the Great War, which, immediately after its end, were proudly hailed by Creel and others. Cf. Mock and Larson, *Words That Won the War* (1939).

<sup>56</sup> On the exposure of this destructive myth, which even provided the inspiration for a monument entitled “Canada’s Golgotha” prepared for a 1918 exhibit of Canadian War art, cf. Desmond Morton, *Silent Battle* (1992), 2-4, 84, 169-170.

<sup>57</sup> Thwing, *The American Colleges and Universities in the Great War* (1920), 181-182.

Can one imagine a more dramatic change in the evaluation of a nation and its language within just a few years? Only in 1915 had Louis Mann formulated his tribute to German-Americans, and had, as it were, justified his getting into the skins of German-Americans, using a broad accent on the American stage.

This depressingly outspoken denunciation of the language of the enemy was the result of a campaign initiated by journalists, which quickly developed into a crusade and led to appeals for a boycott of the study of German, a witchhunt supported by the early cinema, which in numerous films presented the Prussians as “evil incarnate.”<sup>58</sup> It was successful in prompting the voluntary abandonment of German in many of the high schools, also in the states with the largest concentration of German-speaking settlers or immigrants of German stock. It also led to a ban on German instruction in a number of states even long after the armistice and after the stringent conditions of the Treaty of Versailles had been imposed. The percentage of students in American high schools taking German dropped from more than 24% in 1915 to below 0.6% in 1922.<sup>59</sup>

A culmination of this sad turn of events had been reached in April of 1918, when a huge bonfire was advertised in Cleveland on which to burn German propaganda and German books as such, with the slogan “City to Burn Hun Poison,” the clear implication being that the German book contained “contagious germs.” Two days later the *NY Times* in an editorial entitled “The German Book, the Enemy” was very precise in its radical assessment: “The German book is the most active agent in spreading a mental disease with which the whole German nation is gangrened.”<sup>60</sup>

It is nonetheless some comfort to remember that about the same time in 1918 Sam Bernard and Louis Mann could still use a moderate German-English accent in a problem play with comic elements (*Friendly Enemies*).

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. Michael Isenberg, *War On Film* (1981), esp. 145-54, and Richard Oehling, “The German-Americans, Germany, and the American Media,” Randall Miller, ed., *Ethnic Images in American Film and Television* (1978), 51-62.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Hierl, “Zum Deutschlandbild in den anglo-amerikanischen Deutschlesebüchern von 1945 bis 1969” (1972), 33.

<sup>60</sup> These facts are presented in Clifford Albrecht Bernd, “World War I as a Shaping Force in American Germanics,” David P. Benseler, et al., eds., *Teaching German in Twentieth-Century America* (2001), 58-67, esp. 60-63.

The assault on the German language continued after the armistice. Potential contenders for the presidency in the national elections of 1920, like Ohio governor James Middleton Cox, and the former ambassador to Berlin, James W. Gerard,<sup>61</sup> exploited anti-German feeling, fueling the post-war campaign against Germany and the German language.<sup>62</sup>

Such arguments and such a climate of hysteria, which also led to at least one case of lynching in Illinois in April of 1918 (Robert Prager) with his murderers going free<sup>63</sup> – and also prompted some absurd measures like the renaming of ‘sourkrout’ ‘liberty cabbage’ – make it appear natural that the formerly immensely popular ‘Dutch’ figure on the American stage using a hybrid language was not any longer a viable investment for actors and theater directors, and so the tradition rapidly came to an end.<sup>64</sup> The gradual attenuation of the distinctiveness of a large German-American public in a “process of translation” as described by Peter Conolly-Smith had been dramatically speeded up and completed by the nativist, anti-German propaganda in the war years, thus eliminating the socio-cultural base for specific literary and theatrical phenomena.

While the use of German in American culture never fully recovered from this wave of animosity, several prominent American social and cultural critics were prepared to lambaste their jingoistic fellow countrymen. Thus, H. L. Mencken and Sinclair Lewis were to offer sarcastic rejoinders to and corrections of the black myths which had been circulated about the Huns.<sup>65</sup> Their devastating critiques, however, could not resuscitate the pre-war theatrical practice when German or German-English dialect speakers had entertained large

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<sup>61</sup> Gerard’s notorious report on his term of office as Ambassador in Berlin (*My Four Years in Germany*, 1917) was used as the basis for a film, which was so sensational and crude that President Wilson and other public figures distanced themselves from it and regarded such representations as counterproductive.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Bernd’s essay, esp. 62-63.

<sup>63</sup> On this deplorable incident cf. esp. Luebke, *Bonds of Loyalty* (1974), 3-14, 19-26.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. the almost total absence of parts for German/Dutch comedians in *McNally’s Bulletin* (which appeared from 1917 onwards) in contrast to the frequency with which *Madison’s Budget* included sketches representing German-American figures using their typical hybrid language in the years after 1898.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Mencken’s “The National Letters,” rpt. in *The American Scene* (1977), 55-110, esp. 100-101, and Lewis, “An American Views the Huns” (1925), 19-20.

audiences, for the demise of this strand of tradition precluded once and for all its continuation or recovery.

## Chapter 14: Stereotypes in Walker Percy's Fiction<sup>1</sup>

While W. R. Allen's study has only recently established that Walker Percy's six novels are tied through intertextual links to a number of American books,<sup>2</sup> careful readers have for a long time been aware of the conscious allusion to European texts in his fiction. The serious, serio-comic or playful use of such references seems to place Percy's work in the vicinity of post-modernist art, yet the immensely concrete depiction of place, one of the virtues of Percy's novels,<sup>3</sup> and the serious moral concern and message manifest in his fictional texts locate them clearly on this side of the divide between realist and modernist, on the one hand, and post-modernist fiction on the other. This also applies to Percy's delineation of character, which aligns him with the more traditional writers, though the wide range of figures in his two dystopias in particular includes some characters who might well fit into post-modernist fiction.

In a useful attempt to employ structuralist methods for the analysis of character, Helmut Bonheim has distinguished four narrative modes which in various ways reveal character to the reader:

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is based on a lecture given at the Walker Percy Symposium held at Sandbjerg, Denmark, July 30 - August 4, 1989.

<sup>2</sup> William Rodney Allen has demonstrated Percy's debt to Ernest Hemingway, Mark Twain and R. P. Warren. Cf. *Walker Percy: A Southern Wayfarer* (1986), esp. 35-37; 52-56; 60-69; 113-115; 120-121.

<sup>3</sup> Since his rendition of a suburb of New Orleans named Gentilly in *The Moviegoer*, his first novel, or of the surroundings of the fishing camp of Binx's mother's family at Bayou Des Allemandes, Percy's vivid "sense of place" has been one of the assets of his art. Future references in the text and in the notes are to the first editions of Percy's books. The following abbreviations are used: *M*: *The Moviegoer* (1961), *LG*: *The Last Gentleman* (1966), *LR*: *Love in the Ruins* (1971), *L*: *Lancelot* (1977), *SC*: *The Second Coming* (1980), *TS*: *The Thanatos Syndrome* (1987). His non-fiction books *The Message in the Bottle* (1975), and *Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book* (1983), are abbreviated *MB* and *LC* respectively. Reference will also be made to *Conversations with Walker Percy*, ed. Lewis A. Lawson and Victor A. Kramer (1985), as *C*. Page numbers are given in parentheses in the text and in the notes after the cue titles.

report, speech, description, comment.<sup>4</sup> In his careful demonstration of the ways in which characters are established and made plausible to the reader, Bonheim has noted that while early fiction writers tended to use the most obviously suitable mode to fulfill a certain narrative function, the techniques employed in 20<sup>th</sup>-century texts are usually more varied and complex; action is thus often rendered in conversation, i.e. through speech and not through report. Similarly, descriptions frequently convey a sense of action and not merely a situation. Whereas the most direct way to characterize is through the straightforward (authorial) comment, which since the rise of modernism has been dismissed as somewhat old-fashioned, evaluation is often achieved and conveyed through the rendition of a character's thoughts. It is apparent that the mediation of these "narrational characteristics," as Bonheim terms the features selected from the myriad characteristics possible, is dependent on the narrative situation chosen.

Superficially considered, Walker Percy's preference for the first-person narrative situation somewhat restricts the options in this respect, as it excludes the possibility of direct access to the minds of other characters. As if to make up for this limitation, the author appears to have resorted to familiar methods of direct evaluation, but also to have tapped other fictional resources, especially imagological allusions, i.e. the associations of certain ethnic and national groups and national stereotypes readily available to a late 20<sup>th</sup>-century writer. The following investigation into Percy's use of the latter option will employ the terminology and the frames of reference supplied by social psychology: for instance, its study of the mechanisms underlying the genesis and use of autostereotypes and heterostereotypes.<sup>5</sup> As has been shown in the case of other writers, Percy, through the use of

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Bonheim, "Characterization in the Short Story: Analysis by Narrative Modes," *Literatur in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 15 (1982), 175-187. Through the rigorous application of the model and extensive charts Bonheim tries to put the hitherto somewhat impressionistic study of character - cf. W.J. Harvey, *Character and the Novel* (1965) - on a more scientific basis.

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of these terms (borrowed from social psychology denoting the images held by members of a group of themselves and of outsiders or foreigners respectively), and of the contribution of imagology to modern literary scholarship, see the chapter "National Stereotypes in Literature in the English Language: A Review of Research" in this volume. For an early investigation into the underlying mechanisms cf. P. Hofstätter, *Das Denken in Stereotypen* (1960).



national stereotypes, was able to activate the reader's participation and to make them contribute to the filling of lacunae in the necessarily schematic presentation of (especially subsidiary) characters, a phenomenon Bonheim seems not to have sufficiently taken into consideration in his methodological proposal for the analysis of literary characters. The former option employed by Percy's narrators, i.e. direct evaluation, is closely connected with one of their salient features: their uncanny gift for locating the home region of individuals they meet by listening carefully to their accent.<sup>6</sup> Their skill at linguistic observation, which they share with their creator, also enhances their propensity to typify characters.<sup>7</sup>

This trend is turned to good account in the two dystopias, with their introduction of a central character as doctor-cum-patient,<sup>8</sup> whose habit of diagnosing is particularly prominent in *Love in the Ruins*. Such a strategy comes in handy, considering the large number of characters Dr. Tom More encounters in the deeply divided society during the turbulent phase of the 1980s. Tom's tendency to offer a summary, shorthand evaluation of everybody he meets with seems a natural if hypertrophic accompaniment of his professional role and his duty to his patients to offer medical and psychological advice. That his assessment does not eschew clichés, however, is evident in his presentation of the various American girls and women he deals with,<sup>9</sup> which reflects some regional, ethnic, and denominational stereotypes.<sup>10</sup> Such fictional resources are tapped in the repeated depiction

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<sup>6</sup> While Will Barrett can surprise Mr. Vaught in *LG* by being able to identify precisely the latter's exact origin in Alabama, this talent can also be used to expose humbugs and fakes. Cf. T. More's similar gift, below in the discussion of *TS*.

<sup>7</sup> Binx's confident assessment of his fellow travelers on the bus down from Chicago is one early example of this trend. Cf. *M* 214-216.

<sup>8</sup> It is in the dystopias that Percy further develops the material he had first selected for the unpublished "Gramercy Winner," which is in itself intertextually connected with Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*, one of Percy's major models and sources of inspiration.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. his portrayal of Hester, a "post-Protestant," "post-Puritan" Massachusetts girl, *LR* 49, 53, etc.

<sup>10</sup> One cannot overlook the stereotypical depiction of women characters generally in Percy's fiction or the stereotype features of the numerous black characters populating his books, ranging from the faithful retainers, the Mercers, Merriams etc. (*M* or *LG*), on the one hand, to the technological and electronic wizards, the Elgins, Colleys and Vergils (*L*, *LR*, and *TS*, respectively), on the other. We cannot deal with this problem within the narrow compass of these remarks and shall ignore the self-image of the

of Ellen Oglethorpe, eventually Tom's wife, as a "stern but voluptuous presbyterian nurse" (*LR* 14).<sup>11</sup> Quite early on, Percy already hit upon one subcategory of the *homo americanus*, which almost became a hallmark of his humor and a familiar feature of the cast of his novels: the Ohioans. The elderly couple from the Buckeye State traveling down to Florida are merely the precursors of a figure who become a favorite butt of Percy's satire.<sup>12</sup> In *LG* (20) Will Barrett's skill at adapting to a group of Ohioans is presented as a dangerous alienation from his own unstable identity, while the healthy Ohioans in their self-complacency resemble the commuter discussed in the essay "The Man on the Train" who "exists in true alienation as he is unaware of his despair." These individuals modeled on a cliché coined and employed with great relish by the author and the regional variants of the American autostereotype seem to correlate with the various instances in which the author and his first-person narrators take advantage of aspects of the American heterostereotypes of Europeans,<sup>13</sup> especially Central Europeans. The following remarks will be largely restricted to this specific phenomenon.

The most obvious example of its use for purposes of caricature is provided by More's not very delicate references to the appearance and behavior of Dr. Helga Heine, a "West German, interpersonal gynecologist" in the Love Clinic, the assistant to Dr. Kenneth Stryker. Tom ridicules her in the various modes which are available to a fiction writer: through the slightly derogatory description of her outward appearance<sup>14</sup> and her sentimental habits.<sup>15</sup> He also emphasizes her broad accent, a fairly conventional device to make foreigners function

Southerner, presented already in *M*, but we would like to offer some observations on the European origin or ancestry of major or subsidiary figures of his narrative art.

<sup>11</sup> Ellen is referred to later as a "Georgia presbyterian of the strict observance," or as "a beautiful but tyrannical Presbyterian," (*LR* 30, 155).

<sup>12</sup> *M* 125, earlier 75. This couple, who are to blame for the (fortunate) accident which eases Binx's relations with his secretary Sharon, have various counterparts in later novels up to *TS*. There, 338, Ohioans turn up again as residents of Florida.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. e.g. the references to the Irish heritage of the former curate and ex-priest, and now love counselor, Ken Kevin, and the curious unspecified Alpine origin of Msgr. Schleifkopf, the local representative of the satirized patriotic and bourgeois "American Catholic Church."

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Heine resembles a "regular hausfrau" from Bavaria, from her plump pink fingertips to her pink bottom. Cf. *LR* 123-125.

<sup>15</sup> She is in the habit of bringing a cake and regularly plays "Zwei Herzen" on her little Bavarian guitar. Cf. *LR* 125.

as figures of fun, but above all, he exposes the fraudulent nature of the pseudoscience she is involved in.<sup>16</sup> This exposure is topped by the report of her breach of the professional code by her frequenting "the Observer Stimulation Overflow Area" with Dr. Stryker, where her rosy body embarrasses Tom, who happens to intrude (*LR* 332). One might speculate in this context if Percy had, beside other topical allusions, possibly also included a parody of a German sex-shop chain (Dr. Beate Uhse) in Helga Heine's key role in the "Love Clinic."

There is no immediate need here to trace any further the serio-comic exploitation of the Faust and the Don Juan myths in *Love in the Ruins*, though it is proper to note that one consequence of this strategy is a number of allusions to the fictional map of Europe, and not all are of so flippant a nature as in the not exactly subtle caricature of Helga Heine. The most trenchant brief allusion occurs in connection with Tom More's reading of a history of the Great War, especially of the battle of Verdun, which evokes an image of the suicidal confrontation between "sentimental music-loving Germans and rational clear-minded Frenchmen" (*LR* 47), who were driven to fight against each other in 1916, thus heralding the death of Western culture. It is this facet of the cultural and political scene, and of the heterostereotypes involved in its depiction which seems to haunt not only several of his protagonists but also their creator, who has referred to this tragedy in several interviews and essays.<sup>17</sup>

In comparison with this earlier book which seems to fuse elements of the dystopia and the Menippean satire, Percy's characterization in the sequel to the dystopia gained in depth and complexity. Yet here, too, the allusion to stereotypes contributes indirectly to the swift delineation of individuals. The most obvious example, of course, is Dr. Van Dorn, whose eulogy as a "Renaissance Man" and an immensely versatile scientist, a successful soccer coach and educator on the cover of *Dixie*, is swiftly followed by sinister references to his resemblance to "a German officer standing in the open hatch of a tank and looking down at the Maginot line" (*TS* 44). Shortly afterwards he is likened to a Prussian general (*TS* 49), and

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. *LR* 131 etc. Already in *M* Percy had subjected two marriage counselors and the authors of a book on *Technique in Marriage*, Dr. and Mrs. Bob Dean, to merciless satire, with Binx imagining the two old people in amorous embrace "like a pair of brontosaurus," cf. *M* 190.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. "The Delta Factor," in *M* 6, 27 etc.

such analogies are elaborated upon during the embarrassing fishing trip with Dr. More, when the former detainee closely observes the handsome, self-confident head of the computer division of the Grand Mer nuclear power plant, whose spurious claim to be from Port Gibson in Mississippi and to possess eminently respectable Southern roots meets with skepticism (*TS* 56-64). This is partly due to the natural suspicion of a husband so long separated from his wife, whose sexual mores seem to have undergone a remarkable change during his absence, but also to the habitual scrutiny by another of Percy's keen listeners and observers. There are further allusions to certain dubious traits as, for instance, the fact that Van Dorn reminds Tom of "an Africa Corps officer" (*TS* 60), and the reference to the semblance of a saber scar on his face and to the coldness of his blue eyes. Such details function as implicit comments on the character, whose leading role in the unauthorized large-scale experiment involving the addition of heavy sodium to the drinking water of the unsuspecting population of Feliciana later reveals his unscrupulousness. But it is the discovery of the criminal sexual abuse of the drugged pupils entrusted to Van Dorn at Belle Ame school, which he would perversely place in the "old European Gymnasium-Hochschule" tradition (*TS* 218), which causes revulsion. Yet long before Van Dorn regresses to a pongid level of behavior under the influence of the undiluted potion of heavy sodium (he is treated to MOLAR, i.e. Na 24), which he is forced to take in atonement for his criminal offences by the avenging angel Tom More, the implicit commentary offered through similes has prepared him for what some critics regard as the scapegoat function of the man.<sup>18</sup> Van Dorn's status has been undermined from the outset by the sinister associations linked to a negative heterostereotype of the Germans, latent since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and dramatically confirmed by the villainous brutality of Nazi doctors and technicians, and elaborated upon in numerous fictional texts written since the war. There is no doubt that the reader is almost from the very beginning biased against Van Dorn, and at no time is there any danger of the focus of sympathy moving too close to this character.

Van Dorn's relegation to the role of playmate for the morose gorilla, Eve, and later his long-term sentence at Angola prison, satisfy

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. J. E. Hardy, *The Fiction of Walker Percy* (1987), 243-244. Hardy also stresses the parallels between Van Dorn and Bob, on the one hand, and the two 'pitiful rascals' in Twain's *Huck Finn*, on the other hand.

the demands of (poetic) justice, it seems, and diffuse some of the *saeva indignatio*, the polemical steam<sup>19</sup> Percy has admitted to being in need of.

While a somewhat chastened Tom More seems definitely less rash in attributing certain typical traits to the characters surrounding him, and while his excessive readiness to employ clichés and stereotypes familiar from *Love in the Ruins* seems diminished, Father Rinaldo Smith now functions as the satiric mouthpiece. He lashes the moral shortcomings of American society and scourges the arch-enemies, the behaviorists, who reduce the status of man, the wayfarer and creator of symbols, to that of an organism shaped by environmental forces and Skinner boxes, by establishing the close parallels between the advocates of "Qualitarian Life" in Louisiana and German doctors. Though More can scarcely suppress his skepticism when Father Smith again broaches the subject, the connection between Van Dorn and his ilk, who practice what is euphemistically termed *paedeuthanasia* and *gereuthanasia* (that is, the killing of handicapped children and of useless elderly persons), on the one hand, and the mass extermination of such children and the mentally sick by Nazi doctors, on the other, is imagistically underlined.

For the delineation of the connections between the prototypically arrogant Faustian scientist and the Louisiana behaviorists, who in their hubris take Tom More's trust in a secular cure for all ills in society to its radical solution, Percy's Jeremiah figure Father Rinaldo Smith was able to draw directly on the devastating documentation provided in Frederic Wertham's book *A Sign for Cain*. In this book, the leading psychiatrist and graduate of universities in German-speaking countries furnished material on the later involvement of prominent Weimar Republic doctors in the death machine.<sup>20</sup> The (rambling) account by Percy's proxy, Father Smith, of his visits to Germany before and after World War II, and his disquisition on his impressions in his "Confession" and his "Footnote," bear witness to the puzzling inconsistencies in the behavior of these physicians and, indirectly, to the continuing

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Percy's explicit reference to his indebtedness, in this respect, to Søren Kierkegaard, in the far-ranging interview with Bradley R. Dewey, rpt. in *C* 125.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Wertham, *A Sign for Cain: An Exploration of Human Violence* (1966). The relevant passages are contained in ch. 9, "The Geranium in the Window: The 'Euthanasia' Murders," 153-191.

bifurcation in the image of the Germans. The account of Smith's youthful impressions relates to a dominant facet of the heterostereotype of the German disseminated in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, when an older stereotype had undergone a dramatic development and Germany appeared as the country of poets and thinkers. Father Smith's report demonstrates his merely selective perception of things in Germany in the 1930s under the influence of preconceived notions, in this case a positive heterostereotype; notions which were ostensibly confirmed by autoptic experience. This is, incidentally, a phenomenon not infrequently observed by social psychologists in their empirical analysis of the impact of study visits by students in exchange programs, who often return to their home countries without really experiencing the benefit of having shed certain stereotype views of the country visited.<sup>21</sup> It is ironic, of course, that young Rinaldo Smith should have been prone to look down upon his, even more, naive father and to have distanced himself from a stereotype he believed was confirmed by his German hosts: "the Heidelberg smell" (*TS* 247). Yet, in the narrative act, Father Smith does not evince naïveté but, on the contrary, a certain defensiveness and a distinct awareness of the problematic nature of generalizations about nations, when he dwells on the general inclination to give stereotypical responses.<sup>22</sup> Still, his attention during his visit to Germany was taken by the discovery of "romantic German feeling" in the artistic life and the high culture of the academic community in Tübingen (*TS* 239-240, 245-247), and he obviously failed to notice the ominous signs. It is from his later perspective that he can explicitly relate the outward appearance of his distant cousin, a leading psychiatrist, who so strikingly differs from his own unwordly father, to "the 'good German' as portrayed in Hollywood, say by Max Schell or earlier by Paul Lukas in *Watch on the Rhine* - you know, sensitive, lover of freedom, hater of tyranny, ..." (*TS* 240), thus drawing on Percy's cinematic expertise and indirectly underlining the already

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. the empirical studies by Gottfried Keller on the heterostereotype of the English held by German students before, during, and after a brief sojourn in England, e.g. "Die Änderung kognitiver Urteilsstrukturen durch einen Auslandsaufenthalt," *Praxis des Neusprachlichen Unterrichts* 17 (1970), 352-374.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *TS* 121, where Smith refers to associations automatically evoked when referring to the Irish, the Blacks etc.. His concern with this problem is, however, related to his favorite idea of the significance of the fact that Jews alone are "unsubsumable" and continue to be a sign of God's presence in the world.

mentioned bifurcation in the cliché. Dr. Jäger was ostensibly able to combine a taste and a talent for high art with scientific precision and even genius. The more shocking to Smith is the transformation of these very humane music lovers into unscrupulous executors of an amoral policy, and their willing participation in large-scale murder.

While this sea change prompts the ruminations of the isolated priest, with his perplexing syllogisms (derived from the ominous debate in progress then and there about "The Release of the Destruction of Life Devoid of Value") and his warnings against the dangers of unanchored, abstract "tenderness," the prominence of the German example in Smith's and Percy's satiric conception is apt to remind the imagologist (and the reader as an active participant in the construction of characters) of a well-known literary figure with a German name. This figure's high idealism underwent a similarly frightening reversal, exposing the darkness in the heart and prompting an awareness of the destructive urges erupting through the surface of bland idealism. Of course, "all Europe had contributed to the making of Kurtz,"<sup>23</sup> yet the frightening thoroughness of his dedication to his mission, released from moral scruples, seems in tune with another facet of the British and American heterostereotype of the German which had emerged in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It had found expression in a number of short fictional texts in which German scientists and especially physicians had been presented as dangerous egoists, misusing their power over their patients, for example, practicing hypnotism, magnetism and mesmerism unhampered by any moral taboos.<sup>24</sup> It is also interesting to note that this negative view of these Teutonic members of the medical profession, which reflects the concern of conservative Christian thinkers about the arrogance of modern scientists, was probably related to controversial statements by, and the (American) reputation of Rudolf Virchow. This prominent German pathologist from the 19<sup>th</sup> century is said to have remarked after countless autopsies, "I have dissected thousand of bodies and

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<sup>23</sup> Joseph Conrad, *Youth: A Narrative, Heart of Darkness, The End of the Tether*, Everyman's Library ed., 117.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Horst Kruse in "Dr. Materialismus," *Schlüsselmotive der amerikanischen Literatur* (1979), 43-94. Cf. various stories ranging from Frank M'Carthy's "The Professor's Victim" (1877), Allan MacLane Hamilton's "Herr von Striempfel's Experiment," W. Francis' "The Professor's Jealousy" to Frederic Jessup Stimson's "Dr. Materialismus" (1890).

never found a soul," a phrase possibly echoed in one of Percy's interviews.<sup>25</sup>

Percy, of course, need not have known the earlier texts with their stereotypical view of German physicians. Yet the unorthodox radical stance and the materialism of German medical authorities also finds a refraction in Percy's two dystopias in the figure of Max Gottlieb. His ethnic and cultural heritage link him, as Lawson has plausibly argued,<sup>26</sup> to his namesake, the famous bacteriologist and prominent advocate of the "Quantitative Method," the teacher of the eponymous character in Sinclair Lewis' novel *Arrowsmith* (1925). Since one can read Percy's novel as a rejoinder to the idealized, optimistic view of medicine in Lewis' book, the inability of the sympathetic and amiable "neobehaviorist" Max Gottlieb (*LR* 115), a native of Pittsburgh and probably a grandson of the (fictional) radical German graduate of Heidelberg in Lewis' novel, to cope with the human malaise experienced by his patients, especially his close friend Tom, comes as no surprise. Yet one must grant that Max Gottlieb has only been a "reluctant conspirator" (*TS* 217), kept in the dark about the lack of official approval of the pilot project and on the fringe of the sphere of direct influence of the unscrupulous "scientific humanists" with their actions similar to those of Nazi psychiatrists. At the same time, the renewed emphasis on Gottlieb's Jewish background, while providing some occasion for the author's introduction of a favorite idea of several of his characters (the significance of Jews as permanent signs of God's immanence<sup>27</sup>), removes Max from our immediate concern here.

But while there are some intertextual and imagological links between Conrad's and Lewis' fictions, and Wertham's factual report, on the one hand, and Percy's novels (especially Father Smith's

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. his interview with Jo Gullledge (1984, rptd. in *C* 299), in which Percy alludes to a pathologist who finished an autopsy and said to his students "where is the soul?"

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Lawson, "Love in the Ruins: Sequel to *Arrowsmith*" (*Mobius* 4, April 1984), rpt. in Lawson, *Following Percy: Essays on Walker Percy's Works* (1988), 164-177. Cf. also Mary G. Land, "Three Max Gottliebs? Dreiser, Lewis, and Percy and the Vitalist Controversy," *Studies in the Novel* 15,4 (Winter 1983), 314-331.

<sup>27</sup> For the preoccupation of Percy's characters Binx, Will Barrett (in *SC*) and Father Smith with the Jews and their allegedly "unsubsumable nature" as the "chosen people" cf. K. Scullin-Esser, "Connecting the Self With What is Outside the Self in *The Thanatos Syndrome*," *Renascence* 40,2 (Winter 1987), 67-76.



“Confession” and “Footnote” on his fire tower), on the other,<sup>28</sup> there is an intensely personal touch to this seeming digression. It contains Father Smith’s painful admission of his fascination with the sense of purpose of young Germans at the time, the courage of his cousin Helmut Jäger, a volunteer in the ranks of the SS, whose dedication to highly dubious ideals deeply impressed him. The confessional tone of this account leaves little doubt about its personal resonance in terms of the author. Percy himself relatively recently disclosed the deep impression of his autoptic experience in the summer of 1934 in the company of an old professor of German from Chapel Hill.<sup>29</sup> Only in his last years did the author furnish information on this autobiographical basis for Father Smith’s cathartic report on his youthful experiences in Germany and his misguided response to menacing phenomena.

Yet Percy’s earlier novels had themselves foreshadowed this preoccupation with a dangerous form of idealism rampant in Germany in the 1930s.<sup>30</sup> They had also referred to products of German technical and mechanical efficiency, and had introduced images suggesting German militarism and an uncanny fascination with its insignia. While Binx in *The Moviegoer* is merely fascinated by a photo of his father and his uncles in the Black Forest (*M* 24 and 50),<sup>31</sup> the plot of *The Second Coming* gives some prominence to products of German workmanship and mechanical ingenuity. Beside the Mercedes car it is primarily the automatic pistol, the Luger, which Will inherited from

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<sup>28</sup> There is obviously also a dramatic contrast between the degeneration of Kurtz in the jungle and the seemingly unruffled taste and good bearing of Central European physicians involved in the extermination not of “the brutes,” but of allegedly unworthy lives.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Phil McCombs’ interview with Percy, “Century of Thanatos: Walker Percy and His ‘Subversive Message,’” *Southern Review* 24,4 (1987), 808-824. Cf. also the earlier interview with B. Forkner and J. G. Kennedy (1981), rpt. in *C*, 226-244, esp. 239.

<sup>30</sup> Percy had, of course, been familiar with German literature since the days when he majored in chemistry and German (cf. interview with the Kramers, *C* 316). Like his erstwhile model Thomas Wolfe, who only reluctantly qualified his Germanophilia in the 1930’s, Percy’s long-standing interest in German culture, his reading of Thomas Mann, the German existentialist philosophers, and his admiration for music by German composers gave a certain poignancy to the revision of the image of the Germans which was forced upon him.

<sup>31</sup> There Binx questions his great aunt about their sojourn in Germany and hears from her about his father’s journey down the Rhine “with a bottle of *Liebfrau[en]milch* under one arm and *Wilhelm Meister* under the other” (*M* 50).

his father and which is linked with an SS colonel, whose memory haunts Ed Barrett. It functions as a symbolic object expressing, it seems, an elective affinity between his father and the colonel, who is as much remembered as the theater of war and the photo of a Tiger tank “in all its menacing beauty” (*SC* 132). Tom’s dream about the sudden emergence of a German tank in the Black Forest, while, purely in his imagination, hiking there with an American girl, may be regarded as a similar imagologically significant instance, providing a glimpse of an appropriate backdrop to the dystopian action in Percy’s latest book (*TS* 162-163). Even the earlier partial recovery of the crucial pre-suicidal scene with his father in *The Last Gentleman*, which is associated with products of German high culture, is pervaded by a sense of doom: “the victorious serenity of the Great Horn Theme” of the “beautiful terrible Brahms” accompanies these fateful moments (*LG* 329ff.). It is the potentially destructive weapon, however, which Will disposes of in a suspenseful scene before the happy ending of *SC*, which carries much of the suggestive weight of the predominant aspect of the German stereotype in the book, also to appear in Percy’s last novel.

The two dystopias, *The Thanatos Syndrome* in particular, seem to exploit yet another heterostereotype of Central Europeans, also deriving from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, for the characterization of various figures involved with the protagonist. The first example in *Love in the Ruins* is Dr. Dusty Rhoades, Lola’s father, whose healthy sensuality, later diagnosed by Tom, is echoed in his enjoyment of the stereo concert in his “new electric Toyota Bubbletop,” in which Dusty has a tempting proposal to make to Dr. Tom More: he offers him nothing less than beautiful Lola, and, as her dowry, his clinic and the plantation house of Tara, a substantial property. Though Dusty’s car serves as the immediate setting for this scene, it is seemingly transformed by a series of musical pieces performed by a giant orchestra: “Strains of *Wienerblut* lilt us over the pines. We might be drifting along in a Jules Verne gondola over happy old Austria” (*LR* 77). This magic change through the “sound of music” is in tune with Dusty’s hedonistic enjoyment of life merely on the aesthetic level. Here and elsewhere in the novel, the protagonist similarly surrenders to the sweetness and flavor of aesthetic pleasure, which represents a major temptation for the characters. A pattern of allusions to musical pieces, to which Tom responds passionately (and this is not a foreign

experience to the author, who has spoken about his delight in operas by Richard Strauss and Mozart)<sup>32</sup> establishes the connection between this art form and the appeal Tom's three nubile partners have for him. In fact, Tom's role as a Don Juan and his comical inability to choose among the three young ladies, is closely linked with light classical music, especially pieces by Viennese composers from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including waltzes from operettas, which earned the city its reputation as a center of *joie de vivre*.<sup>33</sup>

It is revealing, however, that the enjoyment of both women and music is favorably influenced by Tom More's invention of MOQUOL, the virtues of which are extolled by no less a figure than Art Immelmann, who also rehearses and almost instructs the inventor in its beneficial properties, its potential stimulation of "Brodman 11, the area of the musical-erotic" (LR 213). When Tom acts accordingly and treats himself to a light brain massage, he can immediately feel "the sound of violins" and can surrender to the appeal of the music, ignoring Ellen's admonition, abandoning himself to "waltzing 'Wien, Wien, [nur] du allein'" (LR, 250). His tryst with Moira and his passionate embrace of Lola are later similarly accompanied by melodies, with Lola's proficiency on the cello and her intense dedication to her art even exempting her from the anxiety normally to be expected in human beings. For Percy's narrators, Viennese music is thus apparently a prototypical manifestation of an art which, in its very nature, is closely linked with the working of eros, a conviction expressed by Art Immelman but ultimately traceable to Kierkegaard. The Danish philosopher, in *Either - Or*, offered a long disquisition on the importance of the musical-erotic, and presented Mozart's music, especially in *Don Juan*, as the culminating example of this supreme experience on the aesthetic level, an analysis which deeply impressed and even shocked Percy. He was to speak about the plot of LR in exactly these terms, interpreting it as the Devil's temptation of More with "Kierkegaard's musical-erotic," elaborating on the problems of More's "deep enjoyment of women and music as beautiful objects of

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. his interview with Gilbert Schricke, 1981, rpt. in C 247.

<sup>33</sup> After Dusty's cassette with "Viennese Waltz Favorites" Tom's mind is filled with echoes of "Wien, Wien, [nur] du allein," LR 250, and "Wein, Weib und Gesang," 249-250, but his loves also hum or perform favorite musical pieces, cf. Lola, the Dvorak cello concerto, or themes from "Don Quixote," or "Hills of Home," the Tara theme.

pleasure.”<sup>34</sup> Percy, who had earlier repeatedly expressed Binx Bolling’s infatuation with his (third) secretary, Sharon, in terms of figures from the most Viennese of Richard Strauss’s operas, “The Rosenkavalier,”<sup>35</sup> drew on Kierkegaard’s notion<sup>36</sup> and elaborated on it by combining it with the stereotype image of Vienna, popularized since Biedermeier days. This cliché had developed especially during a period when a dissociation took place between the images of the Prussian/North German and the Austrian,<sup>37</sup> and was given a special lease of life in the Hollywood movies of the 1920s and 1930s, which had done much to popularize this view in the Anglophone world. Presumably, they also impressed the eager moviegoer Percy, who came to use the Viennese heterostereotype as a kind of objective correlative for a purely aesthetic kind of existence.<sup>38</sup>

It is all the more perplexing to note that not only the innocuous proctologist Dusty but also one of the chief architects of the “Blue Boy” project, Bob Comeaux, is associated with Viennese music in a central scene, in which he applies pressure on Tom More to join the team. Bob explains and tries to justify the illicit practices of the project to Tom More, to whom he can offer a very lucrative position as a senior consultant. An exhilarating sequence of waltzes, “Artist’s Life,” “Wiener Blut,” “Tales from the Vienna Woods,” and the “Beautiful Blue Danube,” played in Comeaux’s stereo-equipped Mercedes Duck, evokes an image “of the golden woods of old Vienna,” thus providing an ingratiating ambience and an almost triumphant resonance (*TS* 190-201) for the impressive statistical evidence of desirable changes in Feliciana Parish. While the music

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. his interview with Bradley Dewey, rpt. in *C* 112.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *M* 68: “singing about him was *Rosenkavalier*,” and 106-108: he feels “Baron Ochs’ waltz singing in his ears.” Later, when he sees a film with his sick half-brother and Sharon, his “heart sings like Octavian.” (144)

<sup>36</sup> Cf. his interview with J. N. Gretlund (1981, rpt. in *C* 203-204).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Zacharasiewicz, “Das Bild Wiens und der Wiener im anglo-amerikanischen Schrifttum,” *anglistik & englischunterricht* 29/30 (1987), 247-263.

<sup>38</sup> Percy was no doubt familiar with the film “The Sound of Music,” which did much to consolidate the stereotype of Austria as a country devoted to music. The Canadian writer Henry Kreisel e.g. explicitly refers to the shaping influence of Hollywood movies on the image of Vienna in his novel *The Rich Man* (1948, rpt. 1961), 50. The use Percy’s narrators make of the cliché of the musical Viennese/Austrian matches perfectly with Sam Yerger’s story about an experience in Venezuela, related in *M* 180, about an Austrian engineer who sang lieder – “the whole of *Winterreise* [...] better than Lotte Lehmann.”

seems to let them sail "through the sunlit pines," Bob can elaborate on the dramatic drop in violence and criminal activities, the significant reduction of dissatisfaction and suicidal tendencies, undesirable pregnancies and AIDS in the area, in order to bolster his claim that the (unauthorized) provision of heavy sodium to the population in Feliciana and to the inmates of Angola prison is justified. Obviously, the vision that this project can take man a long way towards a secular paradise is soon afterwards exploded in the text by the exposure of utter corruption of those individuals who masterminded the experiment and by their deserved punishment, though Bob tries to preserve his illusion until his departure. Still, Bob is himself granted clemency at the end. Though the reader's suspicions were aroused by the early realization that Bob is guilty of a spurious improvement of his ancestry by pretending that he is "of old-line Delaware Huguenot stock" (TS 98) and not of Italian descent,<sup>39</sup> the final act of mercy is connected with some redeeming features in this doctor. Through his later concern for the well-being of his slightly handicapped son Ricky and his violent dissociation of himself from Dr. Van Dorn, he seems to gain the right to a relatively quiet and unobstructed departure from the location of his illegal activities, and his reemergence as Dr. Bob Como in his native Long Island. All the same, one wonders whether the modicum of sympathy granted him may, in accordance with the "primacy factor," have also been due to his earlier association with Viennese music, or whether, on the contrary, this connection between him and the aesthetic world of Viennese music reflects on these symbols of aesthetic experience. This ambiguity cannot be resolved here, although the transfer of the tunes from the mobile environment of the healthy proctologist to the car of one of the much more dubious originators of the uncannily realistic Blue Boy project may be related to Father Smith's verbatim quote from Wertham's *A Sign for Cain*. Both refer to the frightening transformation of the "charming Austrian" Dr. Max de Crinis. Does Percy's book, perhaps, also contain an echo of Wertham's sarcastic comment on the criminal involvement of Austrian psychiatrists, "the golden Viennese heart notwithstanding?"<sup>40</sup> A venerable stereotype would thus be dismissed in the exposure of the agonizing reality of the diffusion of evil and the destructive impulse. Father Smith, in response to one of Tom's

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. Hardy, 241-242.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Wertham, 184.

insistent questions (“Are you saying that there is a fatal flaw peculiar to the Germans, something demonic?”), couched his answer in the form of the rhetorical question: “Do you think we are different from the Germans?” (*TS* 256). Considering the flaws in the character of this “whiskey priest,” one may be reluctant to accept the implication of this question. The present writer, at least, is willing to grant its validity.

The preceding sketchy analysis of Percy’s use of stereotypes has tried to demonstrate that there are some indications that the imaginative map of Europe which Percy’s narrators use gains in complexity and ambiguity. The Black Forest of Germany, scenes from which have haunted several of his earlier narrators and characters, continues, it seems, primarily to conceal “the darkness in the heart,” while the Vienna Woods appear still predominantly “bathed in sunshine” and function as a proper ambience for a life-affirming mood with its lilting rhythms and dancing. The latter is not immediately associated with the warning articulated by an early 19<sup>th</sup>-century moralist in an “Original letter written from Naples” published in the *Monthly Anthology and Boston Review*, who had castigated the new fashion of the “Waltz,” which in his view resembled the “abominable dances of the Bacchanals” and was apt “to scourge and debase if possible still more the [Italians].”<sup>41</sup> Yet the evocation of the Viennese setting and its sociocultural correlate in connection with various characters reveal the risk of blandly ignoring the human malaise Percy has been at pains to diagnose and furnish remedies for in his fiction and in his expository writing.

As man in Percy’s view is not only “an organism in an environment,” the various regions of Europe discussed here have some semiotic significance in his texts, and allusions to stereotypical associations may support the characterization of individuals, especially in his dystopias. In exploiting them for his satiric goals Percy runs the considerable risk of being misunderstood by the general reader, who may confuse satiric persona and author, and of allowing the glib, possibly xenophobic generalization or the confident, pseudoscientific tabulation of national characters to stand for elusive individuality. Such a short-circuit is, no doubt, a possible impediment to an intersubjective encounter, which is a major concern of Percy’s.

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<sup>41</sup> *Monthly Anthology and Boston Review* 4 (1805), 536-537.

Yet the satirist, who also wants to entertain and who works with guile, takes this risk. Percy's works as a whole tell us, however, that one cannot claim that the "national characters" referred to in his fiction are unambiguous. Neither are their regions and countries in themselves exempt from nor particularly prone to, "evil,"<sup>42</sup> which is a universal phenomenon. Instead, they can all be islands on which "castaways" receive a significant message in a bottle.

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<sup>42</sup> This also, naturally, applies to the fictional Denmark in *LR*, which is presented merely as Art Immelmann's alleged "home base" (*LR* 375). Cf. Percy's facetious reference to the designation of the Mephistophelian figure and his combination of "German genius and Danish spirituality" in the interview with J. Gretlund (*C* 206).

## **Images of Vienna and Austria in Anglophone Cultures**

- Elective Affinities and Biased Encounters in the Alpine  
Provinces of Austria
- Masks, Minstrels and Melancholy: From Waltzing in the  
German Paris to Descending into Dreams of Decadence
- La joie-de-vivre et l'ombre des tombeaux: Vienna and Austria  
in Canadian Literature



## Chapter 15: Elective Affinities and Biased Encounters in the Alpine Provinces of Austria

Among the Austrian provinces visited by Anglophone travelers and rendered in their accounts, some received more attention until the twentieth century than the other crown lands. Franz Karl Stanzel has offered an entertaining survey of the biased account given by none other than David Hume, who claimed to have encountered more idiots and cretins in the region near Knittelfeld in Styria than in other parts of Alpine Austria.<sup>1</sup> Hume indirectly contrasted the people of this region, who, to their detriment, had allegedly received the genes of the many armies which had marched through it, with the Tyrolese, who shared with the Swiss the positive ideals of freedom and the defense of liberties widely associated with sturdy mountain peoples. It is true that, among the North American visitors, Nathaniel Parker Willis praised the location of the provincial capital of Styria, Graz,<sup>2</sup> whilst Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was ready to adapt and translate poems celebrating the province and the strength of its male population (cf. “Steyermark, Steyermark” in *Rhymes of Travel, Ballads and Poems*<sup>3</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hume’s letters dated April 28 and May 4, 1748, in *The Letters of David Hume* (1932), in which he reports to his brother about the ugly and savage appearance of the locals: “Very many of them have ugly swelled Throats: Idiots & Deaf People swarm in every village; & the general Aspect of the People is the most shocking I ever saw. One wou’d think, that as this was the great Road, thro which all the barbarous Nations made their Irruptions into the Roman Empire, they always left here the Refuse of their Armies before they entered into the Enemies’ Country; and that from thence the present Inhabitants are descended. Their Dress is scarce European as their Figure is scarce human.” (Quoted in Stanzel, “Häßliche und andere Steirer,” 594-595)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Willis, “First Impressions of Europe,” rpt. in *Pencilings by the Way*, Letter XXV, July 15, 1833. Willis admired the view from the citadel of Graz which was “a feast to the eye.”

<sup>3</sup> Cf. This poem refers to the landscape and the iron ore and forges found in this province and ascribes to its men “framed in the manly mould / Of their stalwart sires, in the times of old [...] the flame of Freedom.” It is “kept alive by the iron men.” Thus the Styrian autostereotype disseminated by Longfellow’s translation included

Willis' protégé Bayard Taylor similarly included the province in his friendly tributes to the German-speaking inhabitants to whom he felt an elective affinity.

That a bias of uncertain origin colored the rendition of certain locations on the more or less detailed imaginary maps in the travelogues of Anglophone visitors becomes apparent when tracing the development of yet another negative regional heterostereotype, one which seems to have emerged in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It has puzzled Anglophone readers since Oliver Goldsmith coined a notorious phrase in his poetic survey of Europe. In *The Traveller or, A Prospect of Society* (1764) he inexcusably (Carinthians will say) dramatizes the plight of a stranger by evoking the hostility of a local who displays no sympathy and understanding for the melancholy experience of the outsider. This stranger has roamed Europe as far as "where the rude Carinthian boor/ Against the houseless stranger shuts the door" (ll. 3-4). This laconic exposure of alleged Carinthian inhospitality in a memorable poetic phrase which as such commanded authority, has prompted speculations by generations of readers on why such an unfavorable picture was drawn of the people of Carinthia. Critics have wondered whether Goldsmith himself met with such a rebuff on a Grand Tour. But as there is no evidence of any such experience, the critic can only note that this alleged vice of people in the heart of Europe also drew the attention of an early American writer. In a collection of fictional letters and essays entitled *The Old Bachelor* (1811) William Wirt, soon to become a prominent Virginian lawyer, and later Attorney General of the United States, alludes to this passage and employs it as quasi-evidence for the evils ignorance and a lack of schooling can produce. Such harshness and inhumanity would be impossible wherever the peasants enjoyed proper education.

Wirt contrasts such deplorable behavior with the bearing of farmers, for instance, in Switzerland, where the peasants are said to be pure, gentle, and hospitable. Wirt's own paternal ancestors originated from Switzerland, and his statement thus contains a touch of ethnocentrism. It is also instructive to discover that Wirt contextualizes the poetic line from Goldsmith by shifting this instance of alleged rude behavior from the center to the periphery of Europe. Without repeating the name of the province (Carinthia) Wirt seems to

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traits only granted to the Tyrolese and Swiss by Hume and other visitors (and not to the inhabitants of Styria).

take over Goldsmith's phrase as an allusion to the inhospitality practiced in Russia.

The credibility granted to the expression of such prejudice through the memorable formulation of this notion in poetry is underlined in a travelogue by Bayard Taylor, who, almost half a century after Wirt's creative adaptation of the poetic line of the Anglo-Irish poet, was ready to confirm its bias. He had no scruples about maintaining his conviction that Goldsmith's jibe was well deserved: "I have no doubt that Goldsmith's record of the inhospitality of the rude Carinthian boor is perfectly correct." Examining this dictum in one of Taylor's numerous travel writings, one notices that at this point he had had only the most fleeting contact with the locals in the Alpine province, sitting, as he was, in a carriage and conversing with a young Bavarian officer. In rashly substantiating Goldsmith's claim, he had apparently not checked this information as his mistakenly regarding Ljubljana as the capital of Carinthia rather than of Carneola shows.

It is probable that Taylor's negative allusion was to the Slovenes, difficult partners in conversations due to their not readily accessible language. It is significant that Taylor's command of German was quite good, and that it later enabled him to become one of the chief mediators between German and American culture. In this context he offered some crude, critical comments on the outward appearance of Slovenes, a reaction in tune with his prejudices against various speakers of Slavonic languages in Central Europe, and in the Austrian Empire specifically.

This historical anecdote illustrates the fact that while the absence of direct contacts with ethnic groups may result in their omission from an imaginative map of regions such as Central Europe, superficial contacts, however, may result in negative heterostereotypes. It would seem that the representation of ethnic groups or of certain minorities in multicultural societies depends on a rapport between individual travelers and the majority ethnic group, and that a sense of affinity to this majority may negatively shape the rendition of other ethnic groups to be included on the ethnic map of Europe.

## Chapter 16: Masks, Minstrels and Melancholy: From Waltzing in the German Paris to Descending into Dreams of Decadence<sup>1</sup>

Before Nathaniel Parker Willis discovered Vienna's attractions and paid tribute to them in his romantic tale "The Bandit of Austria," where he referred to Vienna as "this Paris of Germany,"<sup>2</sup> few American travelers had thought it worth their while to depart from the standard route of the Grand Tour and include the capital of Austria among the stages of their European itineraries. The scanty news concerning this region on the fringes of the American awareness of continental Europe included rumors of the exceptional appetite of the Viennese for food and reports about the strict censorship in the monarchy. And this phenomenon did little to encourage a detour south, even after the dramatic shift of interest from the well-traveled destinations in western and southern Europe (England, France and Italy) to the previously untrodden paths and places in Germany. The young intellectuals from New England who from 1815 onwards made their pilgrimage to the universities in Göttingen or Berlin seem to have felt little inclination to visit the city on the Danube where, as the *Monthly Anthology* and *Boston Review* had put it during the Napoleonic Wars, there was a scarcity and poverty of intellectual life, which was hampered by censorship and rigid traditions. As an anonymous author of an essay published in this journal in 1807 had put the rhetorical question "can anything good come from Vienna?" and added a very critical sketch of the life style of the Viennese: "Among a continual round of eating and drinking [...] the restraints of the censurate, and the manifest want of inclination for the nobler

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is a revised version of an essay published in a collection which appeared in 2003.

<sup>2</sup> This romantic tale was included in *Romance of Travel* (1840), and rpt. in *The Complete Works* (1846). For Willis' career see the introduction by Cortland P. Auser (1969), which, however, seems to be marred by several contradictions and omissions in the documentation.

employments of the mind, evinced by the higher classes, how could anything sublime or mental flourish?"<sup>3</sup>

Mme de Staël's seminal re-evaluation of German culture in *De l'Allemagne*, which from 1813 onwards popularized the notion that the Germans were a nation of poets and thinkers possessing a culture to be emulated, and in turn fostered the rise of a national American literature<sup>4</sup>, also included chapters on Vienna. In them she drew, in spite of a slightly condescending tone, quite a favorable image of the Viennese. To be sure, she referred to Vienna's reputation as a place where more victuals are consumed than in any other city of similar size, and offered extensive comments on Viennese leisure habits, especially on the daily excursion to the Prater, their favorite place of amusement, and on the regular promenades of well-fed burghers returning from there with their families. She was struck by the uniformity in the enjoyment of pleasures, and contrasted the quiet spectacle of the bourgeoisie returning from this park with the vivacity of Parisian crowds, which would fill the air with jokes and other manifestations of their 'esprit,' something apparently lacking in the subdued deportment of the quietly ruminating Viennese. While a categorical difference between the Parisians and the Viennese is thus claimed, young American travel writers two decades later seem to have been affected rather by the similarity than the difference between the French and the residents of the imperial city on the Danube. Mme de Staël, however, had evinced a readiness to differentiate between northern Germans and the people from southern Germany and Austria, and had drawn on her favorite climatic hypothesis to account for the dissimilarities, a notion which continued over the next century to play an important part in the frequent juxtaposition of cities and mentalities in the north and in the south of Germany.

One of the first Americans to whom the city of Vienna appealed was the above mentioned roving correspondent of the *New York Mirror* (and future editor of various other newspapers as well as a minor fiction writer) Nathaniel Parker Willis. His regular column in the *New York Mirror* entitled "First Impressions of Europe," which was soon afterwards collected as *Pencilings By the Way* (1835), like

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Monthly Anthology and Boston Review* 4 (1807), 617.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Danielle Johnson-Cousin, "The Reception of Mme de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* in North America" (1979) and Kurt Müller-Vollmer, "Germany and the Beginnings of an American National Literature" (1991).

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's slightly earlier *Outre-Mer* (1833-34), does not deny its indebtedness to Washington Irving's *Sketch Book*. Unlike Longfellow's west European vignettes, however, Willis definitely chose landscapes and environments then still beyond the ken of most American authors who came to adopt the increasingly popular genre of the travelogue. His travel letters, based on his impressions from his European sojourn 1831 to 1834, contain hyperbolic tributes to the spectacular mountainous scenery on his journey from Istria to Vienna via Ljubljana and Graz, and praise the metropolis on the Danube. His story "The Bandit of Austria" exploits the superficial impressions he gained during his stay in Central Europe.<sup>5</sup>

Though his initial designation of Vienna as the "German Paris" is not further elaborated upon in the story, the city furnishes the setting for romantic entanglements with intrigues of outlaws and disguises, thus implicitly justifying the label applied. In itself, the image evoked illustrates a natural inclination on the part of travelers to comprehend and describe the unwonted by relating it to more familiar phenomena.<sup>6</sup> Future visitors to the city were similarly to report on the lifestyles of the Viennese with such references, and over the next decades Vienna was again and again compared with Paris. Such a comparison between cities was not rare in contemporary travelogues where Berlin, the capital of the emerging power in the north, Prussia, was quite often juxtaposed to Vienna. Other political and cultural centers such as Dresden, which attracted many American families and was labeled the "Florence of Germany," or Munich, which during the remarkable phase in its architectural history determined by historicist

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<sup>5</sup> He was to include some landmarks from the city (St. Stephen's Cathedral) and regional sights (like the fortress in the city of Graz) on which he had also reported in his regular column. His visit to the limestone caves and caverns at Adelsberg (Postojna) in Slovenia also becomes functional in his story as the haunt of romantic robber-insurgents. Apparently Willis had no true command of German, but responded to the rural landscape and urban setting, which struck him as highly exotic.

<sup>6</sup> Willis had begun his long European sojourn by spending six months in Paris, where he was also attached to the American legation, and so the French capital was a natural yardstick. On the frequency with which American travelers sought out Paris cf. Foster Rhea Dulles, *Americans Abroad* (1964). See also James Buzard, *European Tourism* (1993) and "A Continent of Pictures: Reflections on the 'Europe' of Nineteenth-Century Tourists" (1993).

trends gained the honorific of the “German Athens,” were similarly related to classic models.

The aura of secrecy called for by the hyper-romantic plot of “The Bandit of Austria” arguably precluded or, at least, limited the use of some facets of the convivial image of the “German Paris” like the popular musical performances in the various parks, especially in the Prater and Volksgarten, or the festive atmosphere of Viennese ballrooms. In his articles Willis himself paid tribute to such pleasures, for example, in connection with a village ball in the affluent suburb of Hietzing, where he explicitly acknowledges the quasi-Parisian *joie-de-vivre* of the Viennese,<sup>7</sup> culminating in the waltzes conducted by the celebrated Strauss (Cf. *New York Mirror* 1834, 220).

While Willis thus esteemed the lifestyle of the Viennese in the Biedermeier period, Henry E. Dwight, the younger son of the Congregational stalwart and President of Yale University, Timothy Dwight, in the first extensive description of Germany’s university culture in *Travels in the North of Germany* (1829), offered a few years earlier a dismissive comment on the Austrians. It was included in a work that provides the earliest documentation of the new enthusiasm for the reformed universities of northern Germany. Dwight’s sense of affinity between New Englanders and North Germans prompts his disdainful remark on *les autres chiens*, which reflects the scorn in which Lutheran and Calvinistic northern Germans held the Catholic people of southern Germany, and especially Austria.

The ignorance and the superstition of the Austrians and Bavarians, are despised and ridiculed by the Germans north of the Mayne [...] they have ceased to regard the Austrians as brethren [...] They laugh at their dulness and easy digestion, as much as the Athenians did at their equally physical neighbours, the Boeotians. They speak of them as slaves, and as being unworthy of the name of Germans; as slaves both mentally and physically. [...] The Germans of the north call them *les autres chiens*, or “the other dogs” from the resemblance to *les Autrichiens*, the French word for Austrians. (237)

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<sup>7</sup> At about the same time Francis Lieber in his pioneer achievement of the *Encyclopedia Americana*, s.v. “Vienna,” supported and confirmed the prevalent view of the Viennese by claiming that certain infirmities were due “to the irregular lives of the inhabitants, who are more devoted to pleasure than the people of any other city in Europe” (vol. 12, 559).

Yet, an ever increasing number of travel writers seems to have appreciated the social life in the “German Paris,” which they visited, choosing previously untrodden paths. Among them was the formidable British writer Frances Trollope in whose work Vienna figured prominently. In the two volumes of *Vienna and the Austrians*, she praised the city. She had already exposed the alleged vulgarity of the egalitarian society in the New World in *The Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832), but was now willing to laud Vienna where she had been received so hospitably by Chancellor Metternich and his circle.

Mrs. Trollope did not draw extensive comparisons between the Parisians and the Viennese, though she alluded to “the strong taste for amusement” they basically shared (2:50) and noted many parallels and contrasts between Paris, London and Vienna. Instead, she was primarily concerned with the dissimilarity between the Austrian population paternalistically ruled by their masters and the ceaselessly electioneering Americans. Mrs. Trollope, for her part, while exempting the Viennese from the grosser sins of the epicurean spirit, commended the manner in which “the singularly strong national *besoin* for amusement and music”, apparent in the complete dedication of the Viennese to musical and operatic performances, was “not only unchecked but cherished by the authorities” (2:27). She also stressed her conviction that the “love and taste for music” were “thoroughly genuine and inherent in the Austrian character” (1:371). No wonder that her portrait of the *crème* of Viennese society in *A Romance of Vienna* (1838), the toned-down Gothic story of the protracted suffering of Mary Ringold, the unrecognized, British-born spouse of an Austrian count, and the final “reparation” granted her and her handsome son Ferdinand, is conjured up by means of various celebrations, elegant balls and dances. In Mrs. Trollope’s opinion, this musical trait in the Austrian character helped to account for the “superior tranquility and contentment of the populace of this country” (2:27). Evidence of this musical inclination was the dominant role of the waltz in public concerts, which in Mrs. Trollope’s view was almost “excessive,” with Strauss and Lanner almost eclipsing the earlier “immortal composers” (1:372).

The complete abandonment to the dance seemed intricately connected with the presence of the presiding spirit or *genius loci* Johann Strauss, who was regularly spotted as a conductor by



American visitors in the following decades. Their travelogues and travel letters regularly pay homage to his perfect command of the musical medium. Though some later observers were still to associate waltzes with the German mind and soul generally,<sup>8</sup> other spectators were inclined to regard the craze for waltzes and the extended carnival season with the numerous balls as striking testimony to a hedonistic strain in the Viennese psyche, further associating the city with Paris.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the waltz seems to have retained in some circles, in modified form, the stigma ironically applied in Lord Byron's satiric poem "The Waltz," as a "lewd grasp and lawless contact" (*Poetical Works*, 149). The majority of guests, however, took the immense popularity of the dance in a more innocuous spirit rather as an expression of the musicality and convivial spirit of both sexes in the city on the Danube.<sup>10</sup>

It was before the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that a chief mediator between Central Europe and North America, Bayard Taylor, responded almost enthusiastically to "the thousand wonders of this great capital – this German Paris – this connecting link between the civilization of Europe and the barbaric magnificence of the East" (*Views A-Foot*, 194) when he reached the city following the tracks of his mentor Willis. Taylor's extremely favorable impressions of the city, where he saw Johann Strauss as the presiding genius, "the world's waltz king, whose magic tones can set the heels of half Christendom in motion" (202) fostered a notion and established a line of thought adopted by quite a few American visitors in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their reports from Vienna seem to bear out the argument offered by James Buzard in his studies of 19<sup>th</sup>-century travel literature focusing on Europe.<sup>11</sup> He notes a readiness, among authors of American travel books, to depict distinctive sites and societies very different from home and freed from the ordinary pressures of existence, removed from the domination of economic necessities and from the trivia of quotidian phenomena. This applies also to Vienna,

<sup>8</sup> Cf. below Harriet Trowbridge Allen's report on the Viennese scene in 1859.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. below John Russell's exposure of the immorality of Viennese society (note 28).

<sup>10</sup> Two generations later John L. Stoddard in the section on *Vienna* of his well-illustrated multi-volume coffee table book *Lectures*, vol.6 (1898), which also dwelt on the by then conventional juxtaposition of the Viennese and the North Germans, lauded the dance as "the poetry of motion," adding that "all the Viennese are gifted poets in this respect" (153).

<sup>11</sup> See Buzard, *The Beaten Track* and "A Continent of Pictures."

whose American visitors increasingly do not project negative characteristics on the place and the people, but repeatedly describe their encounters with “the unified aesthetic essence of the place,” and provide what resembles a “magical synthesis of [...] impressions” in Buzard’s terms (“A Continent,” 33). A process of romanticizing the city is put in motion, which culminates in the presentation of Vienna as the ‘Mecca of Music,’ a designation it receives in the year of the World Exhibition of 1873 even before the operettas by Johann Strauss, Jr., *Fledermaus* (1874), *Gypsy Baron* (1885), further consolidated the image.

The regular appearance of musical bands in the Volksgarten or Prater was a phenomenon which no visitor could ignore and which formed a dominant component of the complex image of Vienna as a city of epicurean delights already in the 1850s. Even writers critical of political repression after the events of 1848, like P. Goodwin, who in his rejection of Viennese bureaucracy and of police interference (*Putnam’s Magazine*, July 1853) gives free rein to his pro-Hungarian sentiments, recognize the “universal addiction to music among the Viennese,” in whose city there is “an unbroken succession of sweet sounds” (66).

Similarly, Charles Loring Brace in his *Home-life in Germany* of the same year offers a longish description of people’s recreation in the Prater, to him a most brilliant spectacle in a colorful multi-ethnic city.<sup>12</sup> His generalizing comments on the pleasure-loving Viennese and on the strategy of the Austrian “paternal government,” who like to see its “good-natured subjects” “absorbed in show and pleasure” possibly echo Mrs. Trollope’s remarks.<sup>13</sup> As a young democratic enthusiast, who during his journey through Hungary had been suspected of serving as a courier for Kossuth, at that time a prominent political refugee in the United States, and who was therefore incarcerated for several weeks, Brace’s view of this Viennese absorption with pleasure was naturally much more ambivalent than that of conservative Mrs. Trollope’s.<sup>14</sup> Yet his political convictions

<sup>12</sup> Though Brace seems to have become quite knowledgeable about German culture, it is curious that he should mistranslate “Wurstlprater” as “Sausage park” (*Home-life in Germany*, 387)!

<sup>13</sup> Cf. “Theatres, and wine, and women will drive all impertinent political questionings out of their heads.” Brace, *Home-life*, 388.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the narrative of these experiences in *The Life of Charles Loring Brace*, 128-48, and in his successful volume *Hungary in 1851* (1852).

seem not to have marred his fundamental acceptance of the Viennese delight in “theatres, wine, women,” which he contrasted with the social habits in “cold North Germany” (398).<sup>15</sup> It is plausible to assume that his image of the Viennese lifestyle was also shaped by the views held by the Viennese themselves, with a variant of the local autostereotype encapsulated in the popular ballad “Der liebe Augustin” affecting foreign opinion on the Viennese and the Austrians generally.

By that time there was, indeed, a general readiness to differentiate between northern and southern Germans/Austrians, a contrast which was often, at least indirectly, related to the climatic hypothesis. It resurfaced in the frequent juxtaposition of Vienna and of south German cities and the Prussian capital of Berlin both in travelogues and in fiction.

The social life and mentality of the Viennese was correspondingly alluded to, for example, in John Lothrop Motley’s semi-autobiographical early fiction entitled *Morton’s Hope, Or The Memoirs of a Provincial* (1839), where the eponymous figure, Uncas Morton, responds to an invitation by a friend to proceed from Prague to Vienna by expressing his skepticism about this destination. “You are still urgent for me to join you in Vienna - What the deuce should I do in Vienna? You tell me of your gaiety and the beauty of the women, of your carnival frolics, and all the attractions of the gay world” (2:77).<sup>16</sup> It is true, earlier in this turbulent *roman à clef* (intriguing for its portrait of the youthful Otto von Bismarck as Otto von Rabenmark) set partly in Göttingen, the protagonist, removed from his familiar straight-laced surroundings in New England, finds the Germans at a “*thé dansant*” in the university town generally not dull but describes them even as “the most mercurial of the nations of earth.” Responding to “... a glorious overture of Mozart’s [which] rose and floated through the vaulted saloon” intuned by a “band of music stationed in the gallery” he tends to think that all of Germany “is, indeed, a Paradise of Music” and confesses: “I felt the influence of those godlike strains upon every fibre of my soul. [...] I could not deny

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<sup>15</sup> It was not coincidental that Brace came to contrast the *joie-de-vivre* of the Viennese and their public institutions like the Prater with the lifestyle and comparable establishments in Prussia, which he had come to know during his extended visit to Germany and then to Austria-Hungary in 1850-51.

<sup>16</sup> On this relatively rare publication cf. O. W. Long, *Literary Pioneers*, 212-224.

that Germany was that land of dancing as well as of music.” (2:18-19) In the decades after this youthful, and not totally earnest effusion, however, the diplomat and prominent historian Motley was, in his private correspondence, to leave no doubt as to the true home of music and dancing in Central Europe. In his letters from his post as American ambassador to Vienna before and after Sadowa, he even suggested that the preoccupation of Austrian aristocrats with questions of etiquette and social amusements may have contributed to their defeat on the battlefield in 1866.<sup>17</sup>

There were other earlier witnesses to the differences in the outward appearance and in the manners between the Viennese and the Prussians. Motley’s impression was anticipated by more than a decade by James Johnston Pettigrew who drew a comparison between the inhabitants of the two capital cities. The fact that other places and cultures are never assessed from a neutral position, but are normally observed and evaluated from an ethnocentric position, with the sense of one’s own collective identity determining the evaluation of the other ‘culture,’ becomes apparent when one contrasts Henry E. Dwight’s early testimony with the impressions of this promising young Cavalier from the Carolinas. While Dwight did not conceal his close affinity to Protestant northern Germany, its university culture and lively spirit of inquiry, other young Americans who had attended the universities in Berlin and Göttingen, which had become regular destinations for American graduates eager to pursue academic work, were less certain of the superiority in other respects of the centers of intellectual pursuit in the north.

A spokesman of Southern society like the future officer and war hero in the Confederate Army, Pettigrew realized with pleasure similarities and parallels which existed between the Viennese and his own fellow-countrymen from the American South, in North and South Carolina, where he belonged to one of the leading families. In a letter to his sister written in Berlin on November 10, 1850, he extols Vienna, which he calls

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Correspondence of John Lothrop Motley* (2:246): “In Austria, birth is everything.” Cf. earlier, condescendingly, about the limited range of topics discussed in a Vienna salon (2:116-117) and his comment on the fact that true genius is not admitted into the *crème* of good society in Vienna (2:124-125).

... truly the most agreeable city of Germany, and I suspect surpassed as a place of residency by none in Europe except Paris. The Austrians remind me most forcibly of our Southern people. [...] They are open and hospitable, forming in this respect quite the reverse of the North Germans and particularly the Berliners, who are proverbially rather deficient in this respect and are much more like the Yankees.<sup>18</sup>

Personal experience seems to have supported this statement of a close rapport between Southerners and the Viennese, but, on a more general level, this comment in a private letter illustrates the natural search for affinities, and the fundamental inclination to relate experiences back to one's own region and the collective identity of one's own group.

This preference of the scion of a distinguished family of plantation owners, of course, did not undermine the meanwhile well-established pre-eminence of German universities and the attraction of Göttingen, Berlin and Heidelberg also for students from South Carolina until the Civil War blocked the transatlantic route for them and prevented them from commencing the Grand Tour.

Observers who were less well acquainted with Central Europe than Pettigrew were prone to overlook significant differences in the societies in the heart of continent, as e.g. Harriet Trowbridge Allen, who in her *Travels in Europe and the East* testified to the resemblance between Vienna and Paris. “[D]riving about the city [...] I almost fancied myself again in Paris, the well-dressed crowds in the streets and the fine shops recalling the sights on the Parisian boulevards” (255). A performance by the Strauss band in the Volksgarten, however, still struck her as “peculiarly German in its character, a combination of gaiety and sadness, which lends to it its charm” (259). She referred to “those wild waltzes,” with their “undercurrent of melancholy which awakens at times a combination of feelings difficult to define” (260).

While certain fundamental differences between the imperial city and its northern rival (with its militaristic aura quickly noted by visitors), which was gradually transformed into what Mark Twain was to call “the German Chicago” (= Berlin), escaped only a superficial glance, by the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Vienna had already attained a position of preeminence as the “Mecca of music.” Some travel writers suggested a quasi-religious aura surrounding concerts

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<sup>18</sup> Correspondence, Pettigrew Family Papers, UNC Southern Historical Collection (#592).

there especially of Strauss's musical band.<sup>19</sup> That such an atmosphere is regularly evoked in travelogues and that the musical life of Vienna even determines the shape of fictional plots was, no doubt, originally due to the achievements of the classical Viennese composers. Their presence had immensely enhanced the reputation of the city and had attracted the attention of Anglo-Saxon music lovers, who now found themselves often under the spell of Strauss (or Lanner), who came to embody the spirit of Vienna.

The readiness with which (Anglophone) travel and fiction writers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century resorted to such idealizations of the city and its society is arguably not primarily due to the statistical frequency of musical events in Viennese streets, parks and public buildings, and to the superior status granted to musicians, but as Buzard in his general study of travelogues has suggested (on the basis of other material), to the inclination of authors to depart from autoptic experience by rendering harmonized images of foreign settings.<sup>20</sup> By focusing on selected privileged aspects and excluding the trivia of everyday life, they tried to cater to "romantic" expectations of their readers and to satisfy their desire for the exotic by presenting tableaux removed from the quotidian and mundane.

Even authors, who had not moved beyond the well-traveled routes in Western Europe and had not made it to the Habsburg capital, were thus able to draw on this facet from the common stock of stereotypes and employ the atmosphere surrounding "this German Paris," even before the operettas by Johann Strauss jr. had further consolidated the image of Vienna as a "perfect heaven for the music lover" and an eldorado of sophisticated epicurean pleasures. Louisa May Alcott, for example, who had no autoptic experience of Vienna, could draw on this image when making disappointed Laurie in the sequel to *Little Women* (1869) go to the imperial city, where he begins to counteract his emotional frustrations after his rejection by Jo March by attempts at musical compositions as if the atmosphere of that city necessitated an activity characteristic of this stage on his journey. He

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Lady Blanche Murphy's description of such a concert played in a light pavillion, "standing like a shrine in the midst of a sea of attentive worshippers." This scene is rendered in the Vienna section of "Wanderings," rptd. in *The Galaxy* 16 (July 1873), esp. 118. More factually Lady Blanche referred to the large number of musicians, and the high standard of musical performances in Vienna.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Buzard, "A Continent," 32-34.

tries his hand, aptly first at a requiem and then at an opera, until taking his measure from the musical geniuses of the Viennese past, especially Mozart. He is then healed of his grand ambitions and tears up his music sheets (*Good Wives*, ch. 18).

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, travel writers were more inclined to stress the quasi-mediterranean rather than the German aspects of Vienna's architecture and culture, further highlighting its Italian and its Parisian links and parallels. Austria's defeat in the war of 1866, the loss of its political role within Germany, and the Franco-Prussian War impressed on Anglo-Saxon observers the clear distinction between the northern Germans and the Austrians. The latter were said to be "more like the Italians and French in their dispositions and modes of life, as well as in their vivacity and impetuosity" (Fulton, *Europe Viewed*, 46).<sup>21</sup>

It was in the year of the Viennese World Exposition in 1873 that the complex image of the "musical capital of the world" was finally consolidated in half a dozen longish essays, which, while ostensibly concerned with the grand economic event of the year, through various concealed cross-references and borrowings, illustrate the "constructivist" and traditional dimension of the stereotyping process.<sup>22</sup> They also suggest that like other heterostereotypes of cities and nations the emerging image of Vienna fulfilled certain imaginative needs on the part of the American readership which were not satisfied at home.<sup>23</sup> The climate of opinion in the Gilded Age and the era of the Robber Barons was, no doubt, a factor prompting the growing wave of Americans on the Grand Tour eagerly looking for culture abroad, and contributed to the motivation for the expatriation

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<sup>21</sup> The author of an article reprinted from *Blackwood's Magazine* in the *Ecclectic Magazine* 81 (1873), diagnosed that the Viennese and the Austrians generally combine "Southern sensibility and sprightliness with a good deal of German impassibility and phlegm; [...] they blended most happily in the Austrian nature" (732).

<sup>22</sup> It is natural that six years after the World Exhibition in Paris its successor Vienna "the Beautiful" should be compared with its predecessor. It is, indeed, seen as "the only city of Europe which attempts to rival Paris" (Fulton, 25). Fulton, who had published familiar letters also on the city of Vienna, offered the most detailed account, which included many comparisons with other places.

<sup>23</sup> On these needs as elements in the attempted appropriation of the "alien"/"alterity" cf. Udo Hebel, "Amerika ist keine Wüste, kein Paradies" (1993), and Buzard, "A Continent."

of writers, some of whom came to appreciate the attractions of Vienna.

In a well-informed essay in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* the versatile American expatriate Moncure D. Conway<sup>24</sup> tried to remedy the alleged neglect Vienna had suffered.<sup>25</sup> To him the visitor to Vienna can confidently expect in this "Mecca of Musicians" to find "himself floating about, as it were, in an ethereal musical sea." While generously using superlatives in his assessment of "the most perfect opera in the world," "the most perfect symphonies" (842) and dwelling, predictably, on the leading composers of the past, Mozart and Beethoven, he discovers exquisite pleasures in the contemporary musical scene.<sup>26</sup> Anticipating a question by a puzzled reader and prospective tourist about the continuing presence of the presiding genius (Johann) Strauss, Conway reassures him by referring to several conductors of that name from the musical dynasty. A significant phrase encapsulates a dominant facet of the meanwhile established stereotype, which culminates in the statement that "here the Strauss principle in nature lives" (844).

While the venerable "theory of climate" was still occasionally drawn upon in the accounts of the characteristics of the Viennese ("here [o]ne meets, too, the politeness characteristic of Southern nations" [836]), some travel writers also noted related, less desirable phenomena in the city, especially the prevalent laxness of morals. Explicitly furnishing a comparison between Paris and Vienna in this respect, C.C. Fulton asserted that "no other city in the world, not even Paris, can rival the metropolis of Austria in sensuality and immorality" (93).<sup>27</sup> Unlike what he found in Prussia, Fulton diagnosed

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<sup>24</sup> Originally a Methodist minister and after his temporary association with the Transcendentalists a preacher and long-time resident of London, Conway (1832-1907; cf. the entry in *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 1:28-29) furnished essays and vignettes of several European cities, e.g. Paris, Munich, Essen. Cf. als Siegfried Neuweiler, *Das internationale Thema*, 73-75, 85-86.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. his claim that "considering its antiquity, size and importance [Vienna] has been the least written about of any city in the world" (831).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Conway's assertion: "Let no one imagine that he has enjoyed every musical sensation until, fresh from a bright day's voyage on the noblest river in Europe, he has listened to *The beautiful blue Danube*, as rendered by the orchestra of Strauss" (844).

<sup>27</sup> Significantly, Fulton achieves redundancy by underlining several times the difference between the north Germans and the Austrians, echoing in identical phrases his assessment of this contrast as originally outlined in his column in *The Baltimore*



“a lack of virtue among a large class of the women” (46), with numerous illegitimate children and unmarried mothers in Vienna, thus confirming his impression that it was a city “of very loose virtue in all grades of life” (41).<sup>28</sup> He was, apparently much less kindly disposed and prejudiced in favor of the Viennese than the English diplomat Sir Horace Rumbold,<sup>29</sup> who, after the turn of the century, still went into raptures when recapturing his experiences in the 1850s and 1860s. His nostalgic reminiscences may, of course, have been influenced by the consolidation of the harmonious image of Vienna enhanced in Johann Strauss’ light operas and the sophisticated pleasures in the “metropolis of music,” which were to culminate in Richard Strauss’ *Der Rosenkavalier* (first produced in 1911).

Significantly enough, Conway’s essay mentioned earlier also contains a comparative remark on the diversity of ethnic groups in Vienna, something that apparently set the city apart from many

*American*, based on his impressions of Austria from May to July 1873, and then slightly revised for book publication.

<sup>28</sup> Fulton’s condemnation of the immorality of the Viennese had been anticipated by the diatribe contained in John Russell’s account of his *A Tour in Germany, and Some of the Southern Provinces of the Austrian Empire, in the Years 1820, 1821, 1822*. Russell appears shocked by the general conduct of women, even of the upper classes, who mingle with coquettes and common prostitutes at balls and in the numerous theaters in a city totally given to entertainment. Cf. *A Tour in Germany* (2:279 ff.). The intense disapproval shown by this English traveler had reactivated, it seems, the negative image of the indiscretions and liberties in the imperial city offered by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu more than 100 years earlier, which had in turn elicited, two generations later, an explicit correction by the Scottish physician, travel writer and novelist Dr. John Moore (cf. Zacharasiewicz, “Das Bild Wiens und der Wiener,” 249).

<sup>29</sup> Then Rumbold had consorted in Viennese ballrooms with young ladies and nostalgically praised “all these Mizzies, and Resies, and Tonies, bless their hearts [...] the most charming of partners.” Horace Rumbold, *Recollections of a Diplomatist*, 2 vols, 1902-03, esp. 1:265 ff., 240. That the total dedication of young Viennese women to the pleasures of waltzing was not necessarily the reflection of amoral hedonism seems implied in Anthony Trollope’s Viennese story “Lotta Schmidt” (1866), where a poor but gifted elderly musician and conductor of orchestras can defeat a handsome and professionally successful younger rival, who is also much more accomplished on the dance floor. There are no clues as to the sources of this story, which may be partly based on material Anthony’s mother had received from or found in Vienna, and partly on recent newspaper reports on the construction of the significant sculptures on the Heldenplatz. Considering the fact that Anthony Trollope probably never visited Vienna, it is remarkable that the versimilitude of the setting surpasses its reproduction in Mrs. Trollope’s own Viennese novel, published more than a quarter of a century earlier.

another metropolis. London and New York presumably had not yet received those waves of immigrants who were shortly to transform the American cityscape in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and so Vienna can be described as an ideal point of observation for an ethnologist. Of course, Bayard Taylor had already referred to this intriguing aspect of the capital of the monarchy, and a dozen years before the World Exposition Andrew Archibald Paton, a British geographer, had registered the ethnic differences in the costumes and lifestyles of the inhabitants of Vienna and had bragged about his skill at diagnosing the inner qualities, virtues and vices of these peoples and ethnic groups, which allegedly remained unchanged in the multicultural metropolis. It is too tempting to quote from his remarks, which show a stupendous self-confidence:

... the characteristics of various nationalities remain in Vienna in considerable strength, and do not seem likely soon to disappear by any process of attrition. There goes the German – honest, goodnatured, and laborious; the Hungarian – proud, insolent, lazy, hospitable, generous, and sincere; and the plausible Slav – his eye, twinkling with the prospect of seizing, by a knowledge of human nature, what others attain by slower means [...] The Hungarian's errand in Vienna is to spend money: The Italian's to make it [...] Of all men living in Vienna, the Bohemians carry off the palm for acuteness and ingenuity.<sup>30</sup>

Some of the travelers visiting Vienna in those years, like the Brothers Goncourt (1860) were ready to attribute the special sensual magnetism of Viennese women to the blending of national and racial features in this “*ville de plaisir*.”<sup>31</sup>

The diversity of the ethnic groups in the city and their representatives in Parliament were later also to catch the attention of an eminent American writer whom Viennese society lionized during the eighteen months he spent in the city: Samuel Clemens. While Viennese journalists and the public at large were eagerly looking forward to a literary portrait of the city from his pen, Mark Twain was to disseminate the news of the conflict over language laws in the

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<sup>30</sup> Paton, *Researches on the Danube and the Adriatique* (1861), Vol. 2, 220-222.

<sup>31</sup> E. and J. de Goncourt, *Journal, Memoires de la vie littéraire 1851-1863*, Vol. 4. The sensual magnetism of Viennese women is said to be clearly superior to that of the “Allemandes de Berlin” in this “*ville de plaisir*,” which transformed the women “depuis la fille de boutique jusqu’à l’Impératrice [into] images de volupté.”

Reichsrat of the provinces of the Austrian part of the Dual Monarchy in “Stirring Times in Austria,”<sup>32</sup> a text which was apt to spread overseas the notion of the precarious state of cohesion of the multicultural country.

While this essay showed undesirable problems in the heart of Europe, more than a dozen years later a now little-known, but well-informed book of a connoisseur of continental European theatrical life, Joseph Percival Pollard, *Masks and Minstrels of New Germany* (1911), devoted many pages to an analysis of the vitality of the theater in German-speaking countries and the reflection of Viennese society on the stage, which was vastly superior in his eyes to the state-of-affairs in genteel America. In praising European ‘avantgarde’ dramatists in this book published before his untimely death, Pollard tried to defeat the American champions of restraint and advocates of gentility. After dwelling on Berlin and Munich he provided a very detailed account of the richness, the scope and the quality of *fin-de-siècle* drama in Vienna and presented its exponents and representatives as truly ‘modern.’

The restlessness for the desire of erotic satisfaction hinted at in a few earlier travelogues as well as in accounts associated with H. L. Mencken<sup>33</sup> and massively documented in Arthur Schnitzler’s diaries was glossed over in Dorothy Gerard’s *The City of Enticement* (1911) of the same year. It encapsulated the charm and appeal Vienna had had for visitors, some of whom readily put down their roots in the city. The romance contains, perhaps, the most characteristic glorification of the metropolis with its sophisticated social elite and its graceful living. In its stylized presentation of the environment it merely furnishes some subdued touches of local color and renders the

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<sup>32</sup> See Carl Dolmetsch, *Our Famous Guest: Mark Twain in Vienna* (1992) esp. 72-78 about the report “Stirring Times in Austria,” first published in *Harper’s Monthly* (1898) and rptd. in *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg and other Stories and Essays* (1900).

<sup>33</sup> In the section on Vienna in the survey of nightspots and nocturnal revelry in the European cities of Vienna, Munich, Berlin, London and Paris produced by H.L. Mencken, George Jean Nathan & W.H. Wright, *Europe After 8:15* (1914), the author of this piece significantly maintains that “Gaiety in Vienna is an end, not a means. It is born in the blood of the people”(41). He continues by affirming that “[f]rom an Anglo-Saxon point of view Vienna is perhaps the most degenerate city in the world” (46) before relating its “nachtvergügungen” to the Parisian model: “The Viennese are a hybrid and imitative people. They have annexed characteristics distinctly French” (51).

picturesque multi-ethnic composition of the metropolis, mirroring the national and ethnic strata of the Empire.<sup>34</sup> The *joie-de-vivre* and the musical culture manifest in concerts and at balls captivating the imagination of Gerard's heroine, the attractive Englishwoman Val, who finally wins the highly eligible aristocrat Baron Wallersdorf, reflect the meanwhile traditional stereotype of the sophisticated culture in the imperial city. The portrayal of the enjoyment of an Apollinian nature largely omitted the Dionysian dimension, but also the more mundane manifestation of erotic appeal, which by that time had already been directly and graphically rendered in contemporary drama, for example, in the scandalous and even macabre erotic round dance of Schnitzler's *Reigen* (1903).

While Anglo-Saxon visitors continued to cherish such clichés and Hollywood was later to perpetuate the image of a city in which people danced in the streets, American readers were also alerted to the less salubrious and seamy side of life. It was revealed in a critical assessment which laid bare the hidden abyss explored and documented through the "Viennese art" of psychoanalysis, and which once more significantly drew on earlier models of thought, such as the climate theory. This face of Viennese culture and its literary manifestation is demonstrated by an intriguing and well-informed survey of the specific German development of the music hall, "*die Überbrettel*," and the daring plays produced and staged in Berlin, Munich, and finally in Vienna after the 1890s, Joseph Percival Pollard's *Masks and Minstrels of New Germany*.

The title of *this* essay is, of course, drawn and expanded from Pollard's book, which documents his thorough knowledge of theatrical practice and illustrates his ability to differentiate. What makes his book particularly interesting is that on the eve of World War I, in the year of the first production of the *Rosenkavalier*, Pollard extolled the sophisticated depiction of a complex and problematical society. He argued that the plays produced there offered a more truthful account and a more persuasive analysis of man's true nature, especially in Arthur Schnitzler's plays, which for him encapsulated Vienna's "essence," than dramatists did elsewhere. What Pollard attributed to Schnitzler and playwrights like Hermann Bahr and Hugo v. Hofmannsthal, and indirectly also to the theater audiences, was a

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. the detailed discussion of this romance and its context in my analysis of the image of Vienna (1986), 250-254.

mature awareness of the intricacies and complexities of human nature, an “urbanity” which is so much superior, it is implied, to American philistinism or flat “genteel” idealism. Thus Viennese society functions as a foil, a *counter-image* to American civilization. In Schnitzler’s plays, he argues, individuals are forgetful of the future and seek immediate satisfaction. “Schnitzler invented the type [of ‘das süsse Mädels’]. It is she who recurs in all his pages. To enjoy the moment, that is all she asks. She has all the qualities of a Viennese waltz: (‘Sentimental gaiety, smiling mischievous melancholy’)” (275). His plays embody “the wit and the inconstancy, the politeness and the unscrupulousness, of the Viennese soul” (274).

Vienna again appears as the “Paris of Germany,” though the accent has moved from the fairly innocuous atmosphere of light operettas and the universal abandonment to the spirit of the waltz to the keen analysis of “the allure of licentiousness” (277), furnished by “the disenchanting wisdom of the practicing physician” (279). These are sweeping generalizations concerning Viennese society, of course, but some of the contemporary *Weltanschauung* and prominent features of the then current Viennese autostereotype are presumably captured in Pollard’s book.

The collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the Great War, which reduced Vienna to the capital of a small country uncertain of its future, did not stop the arrival of American visitors, and, in fact, the dramatic inflation in the German-speaking countries enabled many expatriate Americans and tourists to move there and reside there comfortably and cheaply. Among the visitors were many *medical graduates*, whose predecessors had in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century discovered that both Berlin and Vienna were excellent places for postgraduate work in their profession.<sup>35</sup> The high quality of research and hospital organization continued to attract them until the eve of World War II, when the emigration of many of the leading physicians resulted in a brain-drain which destroyed the unique ambience of Viennese healthcare institutions.

Among those coming to Vienna was William Carlos Williams, a leading new voice in popular American poetry, whose response to the city shows that musical life in Vienna continued to appeal to the medics who had chosen Vienna for advanced courses in their

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<sup>35</sup> See Thomas Neville Bonner, *American Doctors and German Universities: A Chapter in Intellectual Relations 1870-1914* (1963), esp. 69-106.

profession. The pseudo-autobiographical novel *A Voyage to Pagany* (1928), based on his visit to Europe during his sabbatical in 1924, shows that the association between private emotions like love and Vienna had already become quite close. Thus a romantic encounter appears as an appropriate event during a visit to the city. Williams, who spent a “valuable month studying at the famous university” (*The Autobiography*, 208) in Vienna as he had done before the war in Leipzig, padded out his less dramatic experiences by making his semi-autobiographical figure (Dev Evans) in the book a bachelor (and not a married man with two kids as he himself was in reality) and by making him encounter and have a passionate love affair with a charming (expatriate) American lady in Vienna (Miss Grace Black). He attends the Opera and concerts with her, visits the Spanish Riding School, walks along the Danube and in the Prater and proposes to her, without success, in true romantic fashion. Inverting the Canadian novelist Hugh MacLennan’s dictum in his well-known essay “Boy Meets Girl in Winnipeg,”<sup>36</sup> in which the Canadian describes his disappointment with the reception of his novel *Barometer Rising* (1941) in the USA and accounts for its failure to truly interest American filmmakers as this novel is set in provincial Halifax and not in a more romantic city, one might say “Boy Meets Girl in Vienna,” and that is fine.

Love thus seems to be appropriate to the setting, and while some of Williams’ experiences from other milieus are telescoped in his book, the introduction of the love affair is fostered by the presumptive aura and the existing stereotype of the place. Early in his book Williams, however, also refers to the atmosphere of sadness in Vienna resulting from the poverty of the people and the feeling of desolation engendered in the urban landscape. Irrespective of the sophisticated pleasures enjoyed by his protagonist in the theaters and concert halls the medic offers a striking phrase: Williams’ narrator calls Vienna a “veritable city of the sick – rich in the knowledge of its chief men as it is overflowing with clinical material” (143).

One wonders if this remark possibly suggests one root of the future association of the city with sickness and death, and the melancholy aura surrounding it in quite a few post-Second World War books of fiction. Is it not justified to speculate if the sheer number of

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<sup>36</sup> The essay was reprinted in Hugh MacLennan, *Scotchman’s Return and Other Essays* (1960).

medics, their institutions and their competence in Vienna may account for the establishment of the close link between the city and diseases and death? To refer to a potentially parallel case: Is there any truth in the assumption that the prominence of the Bethlehem / Bedlam hospital for lunatics in London suggested to foreign observers in the early modern age the natural frequency of such distempers in the English nation, and mental and psychic illness as a national disease of the English?<sup>37</sup>

The third term coupled through alliteration to the other terms “Masks and Minstrels” in the title of this essay, “melancholy,” already implied in Pollard’s vision of Viennese society, is inevitably fairly prominent in documents of the period between the wars, a time of need and even destitution. Both in autostereotypes and heterostereotypes of the Viennese and of Austrians generally “melancholy” seems to be included as a characteristic quality of the people in that period. One could, of course, not fail to register the tension between the sad reality with the severe economic crises of the twenties and thirties, and the political instability and the yearnings of the people. Several American visitors who were later to emerge as major writers noted the attempts of the Viennese to overcome the severe restrictions in their lives through the fine arts and aesthetic experiences. One also noted a nostalgia for the glories of the past and a world of beauty, and resignation resulting from an awareness of the absence of former greatness, the transience of power.

Thomas Wolfe’s private letters to Aline Bernstein, like the entries in his *Notebooks*, mirror his response to the sadness pervading the city; he notices a feeling of nostalgia, which is prompted by an awareness of the loss of former glory and power and which is enhanced by the autumnal weather during his second visit to Vienna. Wolfe is touched by the desire of the people to escape into a dreamworld. Attending some of the concerts during the centennial anniversary of Schubert’s death in front of the town hall, he is deeply moved and believes to have grasped the essence of the city and its people, with Schubert, no longer Johann Strauss serving in this capacity, “as a great symbol for these people. He is Vienna

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. George Cheyne, *The English Malady or, A Treatise of Nervous Diseases of All Kinds* (1733) and Günther Blaicher’s essays on the development of national stereotypes concerning England, especially “Zur Entstehung und Verbreitung nationaler Stereotypen in und über England” (1977).

incarnated" (*My Other Loneliness*, 279-280).<sup>38</sup> Wolfe's sensitive and emotional reaction to the mood of the crowd attentive to Schubert's songs sung by the participants in the *Deutsches Sangerfest* underlines the melancholy aspect of the city in decline.

But Vienna also served as an observation point for several American foreign correspondents who had chosen Vienna as their headquarters for covering Central and Southeastern Europe, and the city inspired them to draw sketches of the environment and the people which did not avoid stereotypes.

One of these journalists was John Gunther, who spent six years in Vienna reporting on the political troubles of the 1930s for a Chicago newspaper. When he was invited by the publishing house of Harper to produce a non-fiction book explaining to a large American readership what had happened in Europe, Gunther offered a distillation of his experience on the spot in *Inside Europe*.<sup>39</sup> His history book with its personalized focus on the political leaders was an instantaneous success. It is arguable that this success was also partly due to Gunther's skillful use of national stereotypes, his reliance on concise and necessarily simplistic characterizations. In marginal glosses accompanying the folding map of Europe included in an update of *Inside Europe* in 1940 he offers the following succinct description and shorthand entry for Austria:

AUSTRIA. Before the German coup in 1938, the pleasantest country in Europe, where Schuschnigg ruled in Dollfuss's seat, where half a dozen private armies became one public army, where the people were absorbed by serious things like Mozart, walks in the Wienerwald, and beer.

It seems as if in his desire to pigeonhole the nations of Europe for a middle-brow readership the foreign correspondent had been ready to completely ignore the tragic and costly confrontations leading up to

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. also Wolfe's entries on his impressions in Vienna in 1928 in his journals, see *The Notebooks of Thomas Wolfe* (1970), vol. I, 208 and 247.

<sup>39</sup> The immense success of the first edition of 1935 and the dramatic changes in the map of Europe called for several revised editions. See my *Images of Germany in American Literature* (2007), 117-118.



the civil war in Austria, which he had observed in Vienna, and thus he perpetuated the cliché of the Epicurean spirit on the Danube.<sup>40</sup>

Quite a few of these journalists secretly yearned for literary fame and eagerly collected material for fiction. The fledgling authors did not fail to notice the nostalgia of the Viennese for the past, and in their accounts in newspapers covering the political scene they enlivened their reports with personal glimpses gained in coffee houses, at concerts, in theaters and in the opera. In their reminiscences some of them, for instance William Shirer, frankly admit that they were supposed to furnish their readers with the romantic material to be expected of the metropolis, “the music capital of the world” (Shirer, *Twentieth-Century Journey*, 432).<sup>41</sup> Considering the tumultuous events which made Vienna and Austria such stormy settings in the 1920s and 30s, the foreign correspondents resident in Vienna, perhaps inevitably, produced chronicles rather than “character novels” as their protagonists are largely mere observers. Gunther and his compatriots in the 1930s may have responded to the notion of the total dedication of the Viennese to the pleasures of existence and their surrender to music as disseminated by innumerable motion pictures produced in Hollywood. Both the continuing magnetism of the city and the winds of change, which fundamentally altered its harmonious 19<sup>th</sup>-century image and replaced its presiding spirit, are manifest in a book by the prominent American radical writer Joseph Freeman. His ambitious novel *Never Call Retreat* (published in 1943) chronicles the transformation of the sophisticated “German Paris” and crossroads of several cultures into the haunt of political extremists. The narrative frame of the bulky novel already bears witness to the historical currents which were to substitute the father of psychoanalysis for Mozart or Johann Strauss as the “genius of the city.” When the protagonist of the book, Paul August Schuman, undergoes psychiatric treatment in New York, the therapeutic reenactment of the stages of his life corresponds to a practice by that time already identified with

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<sup>40</sup> Gunther was later to publish a fictionalized account of his experiences in Vienna to which he gave the significant title *The Lost City* (1964).

<sup>41</sup> William L. Shirer, who was foreign correspondent for *The Chicago Tribune* and spent several years in Vienna (1929-32), also stresses a feature of Viennese society which struck foreign observers: the *Gemütlichkeit* of the people, which is explained as a blending of “gaiety, frivolity, easy-goingness, carelessness, laziness” (434), and interprets the behavior of the Viennese as the result of a learning process of how to combine “a minimum of work with a maximum of pleasure.”

Sigmund Freud, to whom many American visitors had paid obeisance, and from whose expertise Hilda Doolittle had greatly benefitted.<sup>42</sup> Paul Schuman's recollections of his family, his school friends, his experiences in the Great War, and his return to Vienna, however, are congruous with the traditional image of the city. It is not coincidental that Paul's father Arthur turns out to have been a leading drama critic and close associate of the Vienna cultural elite, of Hermann Bahr and Arthur Schnitzler, and that his beautiful mother Anna was a former opera singer. Their sophisticated social and artistic lives are vividly rendered, as are the careers of various other Viennese characters who come to represent, perhaps too neatly and clearly, social types and juxtaposed segments of society. Though the tension that is engendered by depicting the violent political events in the inter-war Vienna tends to conceal this fact, a (stereotyped) pattern in the arrangement of characters emerges on close scrutiny. This fact is not unrelated to the plausible assumption that Joseph Freeman's acquaintance with Vienna and Viennese society was, at most, very limited, and perhaps based merely on his reading and on the public events covered by John Gunther, William Shirer and their ilk.<sup>43</sup>

The priorities of the author, a prominent Marxist critic and activist, and co-founder of *New Masses* with Michael Gold, and later of *The Partisan Review*, are suggested in elements of the plot. Paul's father, Arthur Schuman, abandons his respected role as a leading drama critic and embraces radical social reforms. The patterned grouping of Paul's friends and acquaintances offers Freeman opportunities to air diverse political views and ideas which had been described by all correspondents in Austria.<sup>44</sup> The individual portraits are also in tune with literary stereotypes, as becomes apparent in the

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<sup>42</sup> Another of Sigmund Freud's visitors was Thornton Wilder, to whom Freud suggested, in 1935, in the course of a curious conversation that he would make an excellent husband for Freud's daughter Anna.

<sup>43</sup> There is no evidence in reference works or in Daniel Aaron's study of Freeman's contribution in *Writers on the Left* (1965) or Garry Robert McConnell's unpublished thesis "Joseph Freeman: A Personal Odyssey from Romance to Revolution" (1984) that Freeman actually visited Vienna before 1945, though he may have briefly done so during his short career as foreign correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* 1920-21, or while he was spending several months in Germany in 1927 after his return from a year in the Soviet Union.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Paul's friends Oskar von Teplitz, the son of a count, Theodor Hoffmann, the son of a labor leader, and Siegfried Gross, the son of a Jewish lecturer at Vienna University.

case of Helga, Paul's first, but fickle love, who uses her good looks to full advantage and becomes an actress before acquiring a series of affluent husbands. At least once Helga's behavior is related to the "Thaïs," the "eternal courtesan of the metropolis" (69). Considering the lack of evidence of Joseph Freeman's actual acquaintance with Vienna and his known year-long residence in Paris, the temporary transfer of the scene to Paris, called for by the plot and allowing Paul Schuman to complete his historical thesis at the Sorbonne, and the comparison of the Viennese and the Parisians (103) are only natural strategies.

The literary dimension and, presumably, origin of Freeman's detailed and vivid account of the development of Vienna since the early years of the century is skillfully hidden by the author. His reliance on literary stereotypes is self-consciously justified in the longish self-introduction by Paul, now the ex-inmate of a concentration camp, on the couch of his New York psychiatrist, to whom he lists the traits generally attributed to the Viennese by outside observers, also quoting Hermann Bahr and Hermann Broch at the same time (20, 63). While seemingly distancing himself from such clichés, Freeman's protagonist can at the outset rehearse some facets of the stereotype of Vienna. He admits being an amateur musician himself ("... carrying entire musical scores in [his] head" [19]); he has, like all true Austrians, absorbed "the characteristics of many peoples," and knows what makes life worthwhile: "making love, listening to the *Blue Danube* and devouring *Schlagobers*." Appropriately, he refers to the role of the Viennese as experts "in the art of living whose gospel [is] *carpe diem!*" (19).

The conformity to stereotype notions in the vivid depiction of the predictable behavior of these figures can be explained by the plausible assumption that Freeman's acquaintance with Vienna and Viennese society was, at most, extremely limited, and probably merely based on his reading of non-fictional works, like the ones mentioned before, and *not* the result of autoptic experience. Such an experience, of course, was important for the author of a book and of a film script which offered a much darker vision of this urban environment. The melancholy mood in *The Third Man* is a reflection of Graham Greene's first visit to the city in February 1948, when the dilapidated state of the buildings and the omnipresence of rubble following the devastations of the war, evoked a gloomy atmosphere,

which the author and his associates (Carol Reed, and the cast including Orson Welles) memorably captured in the film. The melancholy tone, the shadows which had settled on the city and the glimpses chosen to convey the uncanny atmosphere of a morbid cityscape, especially the cemetery, and “the wet, brooding labyrinths of ruined and occupied Vienna” (*The Third Man, Screenplay* 5) populated by criminals, black marketeers and other shady figures were to inspire quite a few other post-World War II accounts of Vienna: the gloomy aura was to re-emerge especially in John Irving’s popular fiction, which, of course, located signs of misery and decay in the city and consolidated an image of unmitigated decadence, which in turn came to serve as a pre-text for more recent fabulations. The mood evoked determines the features of the cityscape and the experiences of the characters in *The World According to Garp* (1978) where the protagonist is confronted with and initiated into the secret union of Eros and Thanatos.

All around Garp, now, the city looked ripe with dying. The teeming parks and gardens reeked of decay to him, and the subject of the great painters in the great museums was always death. There were always cripples and old people riding the No38 Strassenbahn out to Grinzinger Allee, and the heady flowers planted along the pruned paths of the courtyard in the Rudolfinerhaus reminded Garp only of funeral parlors. He recalled the pensions he and Jenny had stayed in when they first arrived over a year ago: the faded and unmatched wallpaper, the dusty bric-a-brac, the chipped china, the hinges crying for oil. ‘In the life of man,’ wrote Marcus Aurelius, ‘his time is but a moment [...] his body a prey of worms [...]’ (116)

On the basis of the evidence provided so far (one recalls W. C. Williams) one might, indeed, have added another element to the triptych of the title of this essay, ‘medics’, for medical doctors from North America frequently visited Vienna and took part in special courses designed for them. So one may aptly round off this rapid survey with a reference to the Southern writer Walker Percy, who died in 1990. In his last novel, *The Thanatos Syndrome* (1987) Viennese physicians appear as sophisticated art and music lovers but also as morally corrupt, in fact as the henchmen of the Nazi regime, willing to extirpate life “devoid of value.” In his confessional narrative in the novel *Father Rinaldo Smith* shows them as individuals whose hearts had been hardened and almost inexplicably dehumanized by the Nazi

regime, so that they became involved in the death machine and practiced euthanasia and paed euthanasia on a large scale.<sup>45</sup>

While Percy thus acknowledges a horrible historical reality,<sup>46</sup> which has been more than a dark spot on the image of Austria, he also alludes to positive connotations of Vienna and exploits the close association with music. In his existential view of man, however, the superficiality of the *joie de vivre* and *carpe diem* mentality suggested by “strains of Wienerblut” and the memory of “happy old Austria” is exposed in the pre-text to *The Thanatos Syndrome, Love in the Ruins*,<sup>47</sup> but the association is significantly there. Percy’s use of this stereotype indicates once again the fairly obvious fact that the bifurcation of the image of Vienna already apparent before the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has continued. American writers go on exploiting both chief variants of the heterostereotype and to allow their imagination to be inspired by the cluster of phenomena and traits usually attributed to Vienna.

This bifurcation can be related to similar uses of apparently incompatible versions of individual cities and places in literature. Authors in Elizabethan England, for instance, dealt in such fashion with Italy, and with Venice in particular, which functions both as an ideal setting and romanticized environment and as an Eldorado for criminals and all imaginable perversities.

Of course, political and cultural events may temporarily favor the application and use of one of the two contrasted variants. The way in which Austria was represented in American newspapers, not only national but also regional, in 2000, after the formation of the Austrian government including the right-wing Freedom Party, in cartoons and syndicated columns, would suggest a preference for an extremely

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<sup>45</sup> See Percy, *The Thanatos Syndrome* (1987), “Father Smith’s Confession,” 239-51 and “Father Smith’s Footnote,” 252-257.

<sup>46</sup> See Fredric Wertham, *A Sign for Cain: An Exploration of Human Violence* (1966), esp. chapter 9, “The Geranium in the Window, The ‘Euthanasia’ Murders,” 153-191, esp. 184-185.

<sup>47</sup> See *Love in the Ruins* (1977), 71-84, where the protagonist, Thomas More talks to Dr. George ‘Dusty’ Rhoades, the successful surgeon and father of nubile Lola, who encourages Tom to marry his daughter against a background of “Viennese Waltz Favourites,” esp. 74. Also see above, the chapter on “Stereotypes in Walker Percy’s Fiction.”

negative, gloomy picture.<sup>48</sup> But authors of fiction may also fall back on earlier, well-established stereotypes as disseminated in glossy magazines until the eve of the “Waldheim-affair”<sup>49</sup> and use them as presumably necessary nuclei for the free play of the imagination.

We shall see whether masks, music, especially Mozart, and medics associated with the Austrian metropolis will in American fabulations be temporarily replaced by macabre and melancholy stories of miserable individuals or even mobs marching, misled by malicious millennialists and malignant malcontents.

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. Günter Bischof, “‘Experiencing a Nasty Fall from Grace...’? Austria’s Image in the US [...]” (2000), esp. 10.

<sup>49</sup> Briefly before the presidential election of 1986 the *National Geographic*, in a long essay, described Austria’s recent history as a European success story, that of a “neutral nation thriving on its post-War social and economic achievements.” See J. J. Putnam, “Those Eternal Austrians.”

## Chapter 17: La joie-de-vivre et l'ombre des tombeaux: Vienna and Austria in Canadian Literature

An underlying assumption of imagologists is the conviction, arrived at through years of reading travelogues and fiction, that the images presented of other countries, in fiction and non-fiction alike, are *not* primarily a reflection of the individual experience of a writer, but intricately related to their socio-cultural context and to literary traditions. Moreover, such images do not merely mirror the quality of bilateral relationships in the political, economic, military and cultural spheres, but fulfill multiple functions inside the culture in which they originate. While imagological investigations of such phenomena have benefited from the dramatically increased interest in this new branch of literary scholarship since the skepticism originally expressed by René Wellek almost 50 years ago, it has become a commonplace that descriptions of foreign places are normally undertaken from an ethnocentric position, and that their evaluation, often very critical, is shaped by this. Studies of travelogues,<sup>1</sup> however, have documented the complementary fact that the desire to discover abroad the altogether *other*, the exotic, which stands out against the everyday and commonplace, has played a major role in such encounters, which have resulted in the transformation and idealization of distant cities and countries into positive counter-images of one's own "ordinary" environment.

The Canadian perspectives on European cities and regions were, no doubt, for a long time shaped by the awareness of the colonial stature of the country and its "marginality." Canadian observers, conscious of their peripheral position, were also inclined to relate the impressions of other European capitals and provinces to the appearance of the metropolises of the founding nations of Canada (London and Paris), which long provided the yardsticks by which to measure other urban centers.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. James Buzard *The Beaten Track* (1993) and "A Continent" (1993).

As the regions of Central Europe, Vienna and its surroundings in particular, lay outside the route of the Grand Tour of ordinary British (and French) travelers and were only gradually included after 1830, there were also only few colonials from British North America who visited the city on the Danube. It was included among the stages of the route of roving American newspapermen, like Nathaniel Parker Willis, who was the first to pay tribute to the *joie-de-vivre* of the Viennese and seems to have inaugurated an image of their city as a “perfect heaven for the music lover.”<sup>2</sup> On his way he noted and admired the mountain in the heart of Graz, enjoyed the view from its summit, but praised the metropolis on the Danube with its convivial atmosphere and its musical pleasures, as the “German Paris.” There is little doubt that the popular travel books produced by Bayard Taylor, Willis’ disciple, who became an important cultural mediator between the United States and Central Europe, also appealed to a Canadian readership in his *Views A-Foot* (1846).

In the years between Willis’ “First Impressions of Europe,” and Taylor’s *Views A-Foot*, Anna Brownell Jameson included graphic impressions of her stay in Austria, in her early travelogue on Upper Canada, entitled *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* (1838). Her primary strategy to cope with the melancholy scene of the wintry landscape of Toronto, then “a fourth, or fifth rate provincial town” (65) where she had few social contacts, while she attempted to bring about a resolution of her marital problems with her husband, was her reading primarily of German books, some of which she began to translate. In her diary entries she also dwells on her close friendship with several actresses in Vienna, especially Antoinette Adamberger, later Madame Arneth, who had been the fiancée of the young poet Theodor Körner. She also expresses her interest in Franz Grillparzer’s plays and her appreciation of the poetry of Nikolaus Lenau. Numerous references scattered over the text provide evidence of her familiarity with the literary and cultural scene in Vienna and with landscapes of other Austrian regions. She had stayed in Vienna as part of the protective strategy used when her intimate friend Otilie von Goethe,

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. his “First Impressions of Europe” in *The New York Mirror* January 11, 1834, 220. His reports were soon reprinted in book form as *Pencilings By the Way* (1835). For the earlier negative image of Vienna as a place of excessive eating and drinking cf. also the preceding chapter “Masks, Minstrels and Melancholy” in this volume, adapted from earlier articles published in 1995 and 2003.



the widow of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's son August, gave birth to an illegitimate son, after they had found shelter in Vienna for a while.

In the same year that Jameson's book appeared in London, the children of the Loyalists who had settled in Canada were also able to read Mrs. Frances Trollope's favorable account of the paternalistic arrangements in the monarchy under Chancellor Metternich in her *Vienna and the Austrians* (1838). Earlier, they may have enjoyed the exposure of *The Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832) by this formidable critic of the society in the republic to the south. Jameson and Trollope's books may have functioned as counterpoints to Mme de Staël's re-evaluation of German culture in *De l'Allemagne* (1813), in which the capital of the Habsburg monarchy had been presented in a slightly condescending tone. The impression that the Viennese were completely dedicated to musical performances was shared by many North American visitors to the city who crossed the Atlantic in order to visit the various World Exhibitions and who also attended the less-than-successful one in Vienna in 1873. Vienna, no doubt, had by that time acquired the reputation as the 'Mecca of Music,' with Johann Strauss as the presiding spirit and *genius loci*. This was put most memorably in an essay by Moncure Conway, an American journalist who had moved to London and celebrated the imperial city as "the metropolis of music. The visitor there finds himself floating about, as it were, in an ethereal musical sea." ("Vienna," 842)

It may be argued that for the citizens of the new Confederation in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as well as for the transatlantic travelers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the central part of continental Europe generated three or four types of images, as Sam Solecki has claimed in an essay (1995). For early writers Europe continued as such to be "a synecdochic sign" for Britain (147). For another group Europe came to serve as "the locus of memory, a past abandoned," (147) a region "nostalgically remembered" (148) as they had emigrated from there. Another group of authors seemed to "engage Europe directly," contrasting its cultural sites with the limited resources in the cultural sphere of their own country; finally there was arguably a group of authors to whom Europe simply represented another subject, not a theme they must urgently confront directly.

While this schema may indeed be too neat, as Sam Solecki has admitted (148), several authors, directly or indirectly, belong to the

second category or group because they or their parents had returned across the Atlantic to benefit from the cultural institutions and services in Europe which their ancestors had left. Thus, like its northern rival Berlin, Vienna in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century became the goal of an increasing number of physicians from the New World.<sup>3</sup> The growing reputation of the General Hospital in Vienna, the quality of its research programs and its courses specifically geared to the needs of the transatlantic graduates and offered in various medical disciplines also appealed to citizens of the Dominion of Canada. That this practice continued long after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is reflected in the period between the wars in the lives and in the fiction of several prominent Canadian writers.

Among the Canadians who chose postgraduate courses at the University of Vienna was Hugh MacLennan's father, Dr. Samuel MacLennan, who profited from professional training in Vienna in 1912, and also later (in 1935), when he learned new operating techniques there from the prominent Viennese physician Dr. Neumann (Cameron, *Hugh MacLennan*, 7, 120). One can assume that Dr. Sam MacLennan must have told his son about his pre-World War I sojourn in Vienna before Hugh became a Rhodes Scholar in Oxford and intended to improve his German by regularly staying in Germany during his vacations. He did this eventually with the Holtzmann family in Freiburg and later came to use the impressions gained during his several months there, in his first (and still unpublished) novel *So All Their Praises* (1933). The exact nature of Hugh's acquaintances and links with Austria, however, still represents a puzzle. While the substantial holdings of Hugh MacLennan's letters to his family during his student years in Oxford, with his repeated visits to Germany and his close contacts with his hosts there, document his observation of the political turmoil in Germany and the rise of Nazism, his surviving correspondence, held at McGill University, does not provide evidence of a visit to the Alpine setting of his second political novel. Yet *A Man Should Rejoice*, his second (and equally unpublished) novel (1934-36/7)), deserves closer attention as this chronicle of private and public disappointments delineates a Utopian community established by leftists from several countries in an imaginary model village in Styria called Lorbeerstein, which is successfully run by a Socialist co-

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<sup>3</sup> On Vienna's appeal to medical graduates from North America, cf. also the preceding chapter.

operative in the time leading up to the Civil War in Austria.<sup>4</sup> The protagonist of this novel, David Culver, is a young painter and the son of an unscrupulous entrepreneur in Pennsylvania and a Russian-born mother, who also shares some features with the novelist. He feels at ease at Lorbeerstein (which is said to be on a railway line not too far from Bruck) during a vacation following his studies in chemistry at Princeton. The local produce from Lorbeerstein's collectivized small farms regularly sold in Graz provides the economic basis for its social experiments and relocation projects, which during the following years lead to the establishment of an enormous white, multifunctional edifice there, the Mozarthof. In the course of the novel, David becomes a witness of the collapse of this venture, when the Social Democrats are defeated and their revolution is suppressed by the Fascists in power.

While brief references in the manuscript of the novel to buildings, streets and various districts of Vienna may have been the fruit of the account by MacLennan's father, the protagonist-narrator's detailed description of the utopian village in Styria on the river Mur poses the question of the extent of MacLennan's autoptic knowledge of the region. On David's first visit to Lorbeerstein he encounters there his future love and wife Anne Lovelace, the daughter of an American expatriate, with whom he shares idyllic weeks in the harmonious community. When he meets her again several years later in New York during times of social crisis and his involvement in political agitation, she becomes his wife and helps him to cope with his depression in the aftermath of a long prison sentence he has served for his activities. A return to Lorbeerstein becomes their goal, and David anticipates with great relief the artistic task of painting pictures for the big apartment complex built there for families from the Viennese slums. The narrator relates Anne's praise of the best-known landmark of the Styrian capital (with a Wordsworthian echo) on their way to Lorbeerstein, before describing their idyllic stay in this utopia.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The following quotes from "A Man Should Rejoice" are from Ms. 466 among the Hugh MacLennan Papers at McGill, which contains several versions with numerous holograph corrections and revisions. For the description of David's first encounter with Lorbeerstein see chapters 29-31.

<sup>5</sup> The quotes below are primarily taken from the first manuscript version, C. 3 Files 1-4, where many pages are not numbered and where there are many holograph revisions, while the second version begins with File 5. [Quoted with kind permission of the Curator of Rare Books and Special Collections at McGill.]

We spent that night in Graz [...] We woke early that next morning and Anne was very excited; she said how lovely the Schlossberg was in the early sunshine and that the Acropolis could not look more splendid. [...] (Ms. first version C3 File 3, 418)<sup>6</sup>

Here [in Lorbeerstein] in the Mur valley, surrounded by a gracious countryside and seeing every day men who were trying to make a more abundant happiness for themselves and others, Anne and I lived in the cottage on the hillside looking straight down to the river and across it to a narrow valley where farmers grew wheat and potatoes and garden vegetables. All that summer the land mellowed in the sunshine, and we ourselves grew richer with it. (Ms. first version, File 3, 448)<sup>7</sup>

Yet this time the idyllic existence “on an island in middle Europe, in a village so small it was only a red dot on the map in a dictator’s office, a kernel of sanity and gentleness alive still on a doomed continent” (Ms. first version, 451) is of short duration, for the dark clouds of political oppression lower. Though David enjoys a week’s skiing trip “near Semmering” and has the satisfaction of opening an exhibition of his paintings in Vienna, the curtain is soon to fall on this utopia. Warned of the imminent outbreak of violence by Socialist friends in Vienna and after reading about political unrest and the beginnings of the civil war in Linz, he retreats to Lorbeerstein but violence catches up with him there.<sup>8</sup> Private tragedy strikes when Anne Lovelace has a miscarriage, and is later fatally wounded in a bomb attack by the Fascists.

While the details of the fratricidal confrontation reported in the novel should be further investigated by a historian to assess their conformity to the historical facts, the presentation of the landscape despite the many place names given, sometimes inaccurately (cf. note 8), remains fairly general, and suggests a relatively limited familiarity of the author with the region. MacLennan’s narrator also shows an apparent readiness to fall back on stereotypical characterizations of the

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. 2<sup>nd</sup> version C3 File 7, 342.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 352, which cuts the reference to the collective effort for happiness.

<sup>8</sup> In Lorbeerstein he hears later about fighting in the suburbs of Graz, the municipality of Goestling [sic], and in Bruck, and rumors about Nazis in Judenberg [sic] and Donauwitz [sic] having joined the Socialists in their struggle against the government (ms. 1<sup>st</sup> version, C3 File 4, 527, 2<sup>nd</sup> version, C3 File 7 415) “which overnight had become Fascist” (Ms. C3 File 4, 522).

Austrians (“The Austrians are the only people I know who can really conspire to be happy” (Ms. 1<sup>st</sup> version, 76) or later, “...the folk had that wonderfully easy, untidy method of being happy” (Ms. 1<sup>st</sup> version, 445)<sup>9</sup>, which seems in tune with pat characterizations of the Austrians in contemporary popular histories like John Gunther’s *Inside Europe*, where, the recent tragic events in the small republic notwithstanding, its people are described as “absorbed by serious things like Mozart, walks in the Wienerwald and beer.”<sup>10</sup> In view of the absence of substantial evidence for MacLennan’s actual visit to the region, one feels inclined to assume that the author drafted the picture of David’s idyllic but precarious existence in Lorbeerstein with little or no autoptic experience, with his reference to “the map in the dictator’s office” perhaps giving a clue to his working method. It also seems possible that MacLennan transferred impressions he had collected as the guest of the Holtzmann family in the southwest of Germany to Austria, and that for the presentation of the political scene he relied on the extensive reports by foreign correspondents covering events in the heart of Europe. Austria had, indeed, become a key observation point for newspapermen reporting in North America on the political panorama and drama in Europe, with correspondents from the Midwest, especially Chicago, demonstrating their familiarity with the region.<sup>11</sup> Chicago was where Hugh MacLennan’s future wife Dorothy Duncan grew up, and her interest in political reforms also affected the author’s political opinions, which shifted during his studies at Princeton from the conservative position of his father to that of a leftist. MacLennan thus, with some delay, came to embrace ideas which had appealed to his slightly older fellow students at Oxford, from where W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender, Louis MacNiece and others had keenly watched events in Austria, never failing to express their support for the Social Democrats, their reform projects, and eventually lamenting the suppression of the opposition in the Austrian Civil War of 1934. Spender’s poem *Vienna* may, in fact, have served as an additional source of inspiration and a pre-text for Hugh MacLennan’s fictional treatment of Austrian affairs from a transatlantic perspective.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. the revised version in C3 File 7, 349: “[T]he people of the country...”

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the marginal glosses of the various countries and peoples of Europe in the fold-in map accompanying *Inside Europe* (1940) and comments in the preceding chapter.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Zacharasiewicz, *Images of Germany in American Literature* (2007) 116-119.

The possibility that MacLennan may have written his relatively detailed fictional account of the situation in Austria and Styria without having actually visited the area is less surprising when one considers contemporary practice. The American Marxist writer Joseph Freeman, for instance, in his novel *Never Call Retreat*, published in 1943, offered without ever having visited the city and the country a fictional panorama of Vienna and Austria's social and cultural life from the perspective of a refugee from a concentration camp delivered on the couch of a New York psychoanalyst.<sup>12</sup> The above-mentioned reports by American foreign correspondents,<sup>13</sup> may have functioned as sufficiently detailed potential sources for North American writers of fiction.

While MacLennan was thus inspired by his keen political concerns to use current reports by foreign correspondents and fuse them with conventional facets of the heterostereotype of the Austrians, Ethel Wilson's treatment of Vienna and Austria seems to have been more straightforward. Her use of the traditional notion of the Viennese *joie-de-vivre* and her presentation of the city as an eldorado of music were nourished by her own memory of her stay in the city in 1930 in the company of her husband Wallace. Residing close to the theaters in its eighth district she enjoyed its musical life, often in the company of the wife of a colleague of her husband, who was also doing postgraduate medical work in the city.<sup>14</sup> Wilson's experience is reflected in the story entitled 'We Have to Sit Opposite,' first published in 1945 and later included in her collection *Mrs. Golightly and Other Stories* (1961).<sup>15</sup>

Its opening section nostalgically recaptures the exquisite pleasure two ladies, Mrs. Lucy Forrester and Mrs. Montrose, derived from visiting Viennese sites of high culture, the Kunsthistorische Museum and the Albertina Gallery, but also from the less

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<sup>12</sup> A monograph on Freeman by Gary R. MacConnell (1984) at least does not offer any hint that such a visit actually took place although it might have been possible in connection with Freeman's eager interest in the fortunes of the left and his journey to the Soviet Union during his work as a journalist in Paris.

<sup>13</sup> They included reports by Dorothy Thompson, Sinclair Lewis' second wife, who also entertained their friends from abroad in Vienna and on the Semmering,

<sup>14</sup> Wallace Wilson's career probably benefitted from this sojourn; it culminated in his election to the Presidency of the Canadian Medical Association.

<sup>15</sup> The story was reprinted in *Canadian Short Fiction from Myth to Modern*, ed. W. H. New (1986). The quotation below is from this reprint.

sophisticated, but competing temptation of acquiring new costumes and hats in Viennese shops. A more mundane aspect of Viennese life is also evoked in their memories of the intense delight of a relaxing bask in the sun, enjoying Viennese coffee and music while sitting in the open air under chestnut trees:

After each day's enchanting pursuits and disappointments, Mrs. Montrose and Mrs. Forrester hastened in a fatigued state to the café where they had arranged to meet their husbands who by this time had finished their daily sessions with Dr. Bauer and Dr. Hirsch.

This was perhaps the best part of the day, to sit together happily in the sunshine, toying with the good Viennese coffee or a glass of wine, gazing and being gazed upon, and giving up their senses to the music that flowed under the chestnut trees. (Ah Vienna, they thought, Vienna, Vienna.)

No, perhaps the evenings had been the best time when after their frugal pension dinner they hastened out to hear opera or symphony or wild atavistic gypsy music. (141)

These idyllic impressions, which are partly rendered by the authorial voice and partly in *free indirect discourse / style indirect libre*, which takes us close to the minds of the two ladies, also include references to the professional work of their husbands in the clinics of prominent professors of medicine. It is significant that at this point the author names and thus pays tribute to two Viennese physicians recognized at the time as experts, just like Professor Neumann, from whose expertise Dr. Sam MacLennan benefited.<sup>16</sup>

What is particularly intriguing about this story for the imagologist is that the positive heterostereotypes of Austria and Vienna are juxtaposed with the negative image of Germany. In fact, the relaxed, happy mood of the ladies, who are on their way to meet their husbands in Munich after spending another week in Salzburg, is quickly shattered by their confrontation with a German textile merchant, businessman and factory owner, who is frustrated by difficulties in his export trade with trousers to North America. His rough interventions annoy and irritate them. After failing to establish

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<sup>16</sup> For information on the reputation of these internationally renowned medical authorities, Dr. Julius Bauer and Dr. Oskar Hirsch, who attracted many North American doctors to their special courses, I am indebted to Dozent Dr. Manfred Skopec, Department for the History of Medicine, University of Vienna.

harmony, they try eventually to parry his insolent questions by making up stories.<sup>17</sup>

After having terminated all communication with the hectoring man and his family, Mrs. Forrester reflects on the serious dimension of this total failure in true communication. She draws inferences from the macho behavior of the German and reflects on the danger resulting from the potential domination of such a collective mentality. This disagreeable scene furnishes an ominous sign for the future, a future, one can assume, that the author of the story had already seen when she put the finishing touches to this story. She airs the possibility that the behavior of the German individual may be symptomatic. In this way she supports and confirms a stereotype, by that time almost universally employed, that of the unpleasant, officious, bossy German.

Ethel Wilson composed still another text in which the city of Vienna figures and in which its dire transformation is presented as an indisputable fact: an unpublished poem entitled 'Vienna, Spring 1938'.<sup>18</sup> In its seven stanzas it offers, instead of the rosy memories and the mellow tone of the short story, a grim reality. It contrasts the birds in Viennese gardens and parks, who sing blithely, and the chestnut trees, which will soon be in bloom, with the "Vienna people," who are walking, "soberly walking, with their fears and anxieties, often hidden inside "the gray, unspeaking mansions." Wilson's poetic voice also refers to tragedies, to suicides and requested mercy killings. Rhetorical questions identify the victims, who have anticipated cruelties and who have avoided a worse fate by taking their own lives: "Jews" and those cherishing "intellectual freedom." The concluding stanza refers briefly to the breakfast of the "Führer," allegedly a vegetarian, who is termed an "eater of men and of nations."

There is reason to assume that this poem was inspired by Wilson's contacts with refugees from Austria whom she had met in the summer of 1938, while on a visit with her husband to attend medical conferences in Britain and Scandinavia, with a stopover in

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<sup>17</sup> They claim, among others, that Canadians keep bears as pets, thus for a later reader, ironically, attributing a habit to their fellow countrymen which decades later John Irving seems to have used as a cliché in connection with the Viennese. Note the frequency with which trained bears appear in his best-selling fiction *The World According to Garp* (1978) and in *The Hotel New Hampshire* (1984).

<sup>18</sup> This draft and the letters referred to below are contained in the substantial holdings in the Ethel Wilson Collection in Special Collections at UBC Vancouver; permission to quote has been granted.



Amsterdam. Several letters reflect Ethel's enjoyment of this journey largely made in airplanes together with her husband, but also suggest that there were discussions of Hitler's policies at the professional meetings of physicians, and probably alarming news about the transformation of Vienna. Thus the future use of the traditional stereotype of Viennese *joie-de-vivre*, seemingly confirmed by her own experience, was ruled out.

Before dark shadows had closed in and news of the political realities precluded for the foreseeable future a renewed recourse of Canadian writers to the cherished notion of the Viennese lifestyle, other observers from North America had already noted the (partial) eclipse of the alleged *joie-de-vivre* of the Viennese and had focused on the prominence in the city of signs of decline, of graves and monuments to the dead. Such were the impressions of a young francophone journalist, Jean Bruchési, who concluded his account of his tour of Central and Southeastern Europe in the capital on the Danube with a report on 'l'ombre des tombeaux' (*Aux marches de l'Europe* (1932)).<sup>19</sup>

A permanent break with the traditional association of Vienna with music and spontaneous gaiety is signaled in the two novels of an emigrant writer who became a pioneer of the study of Canadian literature in his adopted country, Henry Kreisel. After painful experiences in his native city after the *Anschluss*, his emigration to Britain and internment as an enemy alien in the UK and then in Canada, he broke with his native tongue even before his studies at the University of Toronto. But he returned in his imagination to the Vienna of his youth in the 1930s in his fictionalization of family stories in *The Rich Man* (1948), where he depicted the disappointment of the members of the Grossman family with Jacob, their allegedly rich uncle from Toronto returned for a visit to the Old World. The fairly straightforward narrative furnishes opportunities to correct cliché expectations concerning Vienna. The friends and acquaintances of his protagonist had speculated before his leaving Toronto that people would waltz and dance in the streets of Vienna. But on his arrival during the taxi ride to his mother's house in the second district the newcomer quickly becomes disillusioned, realizing that beyond

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<sup>19</sup> On Bruchési's account generally cf. the essay by P. Savard, 1995. On Vienna see Bruchési's last chapter ('L'ombre des Habsbourgs,' 305-315): "Vienne [...] aujourd'hui, une ville qui manque d'air et d'horizon" (313).

the broad boulevards Vienna does not at all correspond to the image “which innumerable motion pictures had prepared him to expect.”<sup>20</sup> Through conversations with his relatives in 1935 Jacob also learns of the political troubles in Austria and witnesses the political oppression of the Socialists by the regime, though not any wide-spread anti-Semitism. An incident in the Prater, where Jacob and his two nephews are taunted by a tough anti-Semitic lad (117-118), may be read as an ominous sign but in retrospect Kreisel explained that it was in response to the advice of his publishers that, when revising the text, he added a premonition of the destructive storm brewing.<sup>21</sup>

In his second novel, *The Betrayal* (1964)<sup>22</sup>, Kreisel chose a story from the aftermath of the Holocaust in which Vienna again functions as one major setting. In the confessional narrative of Theodore Stappler, the son of a prominent ‘Aryan’ Viennese surgeon and a Jewish mother who was to fall victim to the persecution, a picture of the city is evoked, first through the ironical use of the stereotypical phrase: “Beautiful Vienna! Wine, women and song!” (65). In narrating the story of the tragic failure of getting himself and his mother out of Nazi Germany (Joseph Held, who was paid to smuggle them across the border, betrayed them in order to save himself and his family), Stappler draws a graphic picture of an old café (Café Sturm) in an obscure section of Vienna (71), where the transaction was negotiated. He also visualizes a dinner scene when his distinguished father received two respectful Canadian physicians from Toronto who were eager to study surgery under him (148), in tune with established professional practice. While the double act of betrayal, which haunts the protagonist and has fed his desire for revenge on the traitor, was perpetrated in Saarbrücken and not in Vienna, a postscript, set eight years after the tragic resolution in Edmonton, recovers further impressions of Vienna, where Stappler returned afterwards. He found it (213-218) to be still full of ruins, but

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<sup>20</sup> Jacob, whose family had in the meantime moved from his native Galicia to Vienna, is faced with abundant manifestations of poverty and mass unemployment and recognizes that music in the streets of the city is prompted not by spontaneous gaiety, but by destitution: “There was music in the streets, but no one danced. The waltz these street musicians were playing lacked all luster and joyfulness.” (50). References to the text of the novel are to the reprint in the New Canadian Library (1985).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Kreisel’s correspondence with his editor at McLelland & Stewart, S. Hutchinson, rpt. in *Another Country*, Neumann ed.

<sup>22</sup> Quotations in the text are from the reprint in the New Canadian Library (1984).

also the home of individuals who as mentors helped him to find a way out of the *cul-de-sac* and suggested a worthwhile mission in life.<sup>23</sup>

Though long-standing favorable stereotypes of the city and its people are thus exploded, in his reminiscences entitled "Vienna Remembered" the author projected a more complex image, acknowledging the fact that "before the annexation people lived in Vienna together in reasonable harmony most of the time." Yet the devastation which followed the *anschluss* transformed the city in his imagination: "it is a city of light, but the light is always extinguished and darkness engulfs the city" (57).

While the personal experience of writers like Kreisel changed the traditional image of Vienna and Austria, some Canadian authors continue to respond to its conventional facets as a Mecca of high art and still employ it as the ideal setting for such pursuits and the encounter of international friends converging on its historical treasures. Carl Weiselberger (1900-1970), who shared Kreisel's experience of expatriation and exile, following his internment as an enemy alien in the province of Quebec, began working as a journalist and art and music critic in Ottawa. Here he attained a respected position as a chief mediator in explaining Canada to Central Europeans and vice versa, the latter especially in a regular column in *The Ottawa Citizen*. In one of his most instructive columns he challenges several traditional notions of his native city of Vienna, centered on its "gay" atmosphere. Like Kreisel's visitor in *The Rich Man* he is inclined to ascribe the alleged *joie-de-vivre* of the Viennese to "a friendly mistake nurtured by Hollywood movies with too much Danube-blue and too gaudily arranged waltzes by Strauss and Lehar."<sup>24</sup> He diagnoses, instead, a sad and melancholy tone and claims "nostalgic resignation, self-pity [and] sarcasm" as typical features of Vienna, where he also locates an inclination towards suicide.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Kreisel himself explained in an essay entitled "Vienna Remembered" (in *Another Country*, 50-58) that, in making a former teacher of Stappler, Zeitelberger, "a man of great compassion and deep humanity," function as a guide, he paid tribute to a high school teacher in Vienna after the *Anschluss* who acted honorably and humanely and protected his young Jewish pupil Heinrich Kreisel (56).

<sup>24</sup> "Who Says It's 'Gay' Vienna?" *Ottawa Citizen*, April 11, 1953. Cf. also Walter E. Riedel, "An Austrian in Ottawa. Carl Weiselberger's Canadian Experience" (1984).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. the recently published dissertation on these exiled writers by Eugen Banauch, *Fluid Exile* (2009).

Vienna has thus continued to offer itself as a site for experiences of high culture and as the arena for oversensitive types of artists characteristic of the *fin-de-siècle*, encapsulated in its literature and represented in “morbid, bored, playfully weary heroes like Schnitzler’s Anatol” (Ibid.). Several decades after these remarks in Weiselberger’s essay, Jack Hodgins in his short novel *The Honorary Patron* (1987), depicting the meetings of the protagonist Geoffrey Crane, a professor of Art History, with friends from Hungary and Italy in Vienna, used the museum of the Upper Belvedere as a shrine of pilgrimage. While the novel harks back to the tradition of the Jamesian art novel and has Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice* among its acknowledged pre-texts, its author indirectly acknowledges that the exquisite art collection and the majestic panorama from the height of the historic palace and the formal garden provide a proper ambience and stimulus for reflections on high art, the art of living and on death.

Other Canadian writers, however, have exploited the more recent fictionalized image of Vienna as the proper ambience for morbid stories, evoking an atmosphere of unmitigated decadence. The atmosphere evoked in the brief descriptions of the city is redolent of the morbid aura exploited in *The Third Man* and the many thrillers and espionage stories which had followed over the next decades in the wake of this tremendously successful film and Graham Greene’s book. Among these works of fiction several novels by the American popular author John Irving figure prominently, for in five novels to date Irving, who spent almost two years in the city and is thus familiar with its various landmarks and its map, has used a fictionalized image of Vienna. In the roughly three million paperback copies sold of *The World According to Garp* Irving has mediated the reductive stereotype of a degenerate, moribund city,<sup>26</sup> an appropriate setting for the melancholy meditations on death by Marcus Aurelius and the encounter of Irving’s eponymous protagonist with Eros and Thanatos. It seems safe to argue that this novel with its evocation of a city preoccupied with death served as a major pre-text for Aritha Van Herk’s recent novel *Restlessness* (1998) with its listing of macabre places and institutions in Vienna.

Van Herk’s *tour-de-force* inverts the motif of Sheherazade and presents the reader with a would-be suicide, who has found a male

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. *The World According to Garp*: “All around Garp, now, the city looked ripe with dying [...]” (116). Cf. the extensive quote in the preceding chapter.

helper for her self-destructive project of terminating her extreme despondency. In her reminiscences of her long quest for an ideal setting for her exitus, the unnamed first-person narrator dwells lovingly on the macabre charms of the city of Vienna. This extensive digression<sup>27</sup>, which helps to delay the final act of the would-be assassin Derrick Atman, makes Vienna appear as an ideal location for her project, easily superior to potential competitors tested by the experienced traveler – Trieste, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Amsterdam etc. Reference is made to Vienna's acres of cemeteries, the Capuchin Vault housing the coffins of the Habsburgs, the artistic celebration of death in the sculptures of the Pestsäule in the Graben and many other monuments to transience and man's morbid preoccupation with death. The piling up of details evoking an atmosphere reeking of death, which makes the city into a counter-image of the pragmatic contemporary world of Calgary, where, ironically, the speaker's desire is finally to be consummated, undermines through its very excess its own assertion and shifts the resulting image from the sphere of fictional representation to the realm of postmodernist playfulness.<sup>28</sup>

It remains to be seen *which* of the clusters of facets employed by Canadian writers in their fictional renditions of this particular region in the heart of Europe will be more productive in the future. The dramatic increase in confidence by Canadian writers of other than European origin, who seem at ease in their adopted new home, and in their prolific fictional work look back to their South Asian or Caribbean heritage (Staines 32-34), may again reduce the significance of the Central European region in their narratives. It is also to be hoped that Vienna will not be mis-constructed as a hotbed of nativist agitation and narrow-minded and anachronistic nationalism as fictionalized images may, indeed, shape general notions of distant places. Be that as it may, in the course of the gradual development of a distinct Canadian identity Vienna has served not only as a popular destination for fledgling musicians and post-graduate medical students, but has also (temporarily) provided a cherished model of sophisticated *joie-de-vivre* and (later) furnished a nucleus for the play of the imagination with morbid signs of decadence, decay and death.

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<sup>27</sup> This long passage was earlier published separately as a set piece in *Writing Away*, Rooke ed., 326-34.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. the ironic exploitation of clusters of stereotypes of Germans in Walter Abish's novel *How German Is It?* (1979).

## **Images of the English and Scots Abroad**

- **Charme à l' Anglaise – On the Image of the Restless Worldly-Wise from England in the Tableau of Nationalities**
  - **The Rise of Cultural Nationalism in the New World: The Scottish Element and Example**

## Chapter 18: Charme à l' Anglaise – On the Image of the Restless Worldly-Wise from England in the Tableau of Nationalities

In his analysis of the characteristics of the “German” (“Teutschen”) on the Tableau of Nationalities (VT) Franz K. Stanzel discusses the contrasted qualities of the Englishman, who, conspicuously, resides in the center of the Tableau.<sup>1</sup> The entries in the first three lines of VT, which characterize the Englishman as displaying “handsome” (E1) (“Wohl Gestalten”) manners, possessing a “charming” (E2) (“Lieb=reiche”) nature and a “pleasant” (E3) (“Ammuthige”) mind, suggest an exceptional position for the English among the Teutonic races. In the rubric “qualities” (“Anzeügung deren Eigenschaften”) he is ambiguously characterized as “womanly” (E4) (“Weiblich”). This falls within the semantic field of the qualities attributed to the English. The author strikingly emphasizes the charm of the English, thus introducing an element which, in contrast to other comparable juxtapositions of nations, is largely absent from VT and the earlier engraving by Leopold (LS). The Tableau omits any reference to the characteristics of the females of the various nations as well as the otherwise known information about the typical behavior of males of various nationalities toward women. In view of the semantic field one can assume that the quality “womanly” (E4) (“weiblich”) ascribed to the Englishman is free of negative connotations – contrary to the

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<sup>1</sup> Stanzel refers to this contrast in his monograph *Europäer: Ein imagologischer Essay*, and in his article on the German in *Europäischer Völkerspigel*. In this essay the following abbreviations are used: E refers to the column “Englishman”, the Roman numeral gives the line in this column. “VT” for “Völkertafel” refers to the large Tableau of Nationalities, while “LS” denotes the earlier engraving which served as a source for the larger canvas.

attribute “tender” (TG4) (“Zärt-lich”) in connection with the “Turk or Greek” (“Tirk oder Griech”).<sup>2</sup>

This preferential treatment of the Englishman makes one curious about the motives of the author. It is therefore natural to search in the then current ethnographic and cosmographic texts which the author may have used for information on the characteristics of peoples to find clues for the origin of this privileging of the “Angli.”

Older historical and cosmographic texts after Sebastian Münster’s *Cosmography* (1544)<sup>3</sup> indeed refer to the oft-quoted episode in the Rome of Pope Gregor I, popularized by the Venerable Bede. It describes the attractive outward appearance of young Anglo-Saxons in Rome and considers this as the impetus for proselytizing these prospective “Angeli.” During the 16<sup>th</sup> century there emerged rather flattering assertions about the English, who are described in Latin as a “gens procera statura, venusta et candida facie” (“a nation of tall people with handsome white faces”). These characteristics appeared in texts accompanying the maps in atlases such as the magnificently illustrated *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* of Abraham Ortelius (1570). The various editions of Münster’s *Cosmographia* repeatedly celebrate the beautiful figures especially of English ladies. Yet this is only a slightly extended repetition of what Sebastian Franck’s *Weltbuch* (1534) reports and what dates back to Joannes Boemus’ *Omnium Gentium Mores, Leges, et Ritus* (1520), which had appeared half a century earlier than the atlas of Ortelius.

Early cosmographies since Boemus mentioned the typical polite form of greeting with bared heads, bended knees and a kiss, which may have influenced the opening triad of attributes of the Englishman in the Tableau of Nationalities. Even after 1700 the privileges of English ladies were a recurrent element in such national schemata as the *Neuvermehrter Curieuser Antiquarius* by P. L. Berckenmeyer (1709),<sup>4</sup> which may have been consulted by the author of VT.

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<sup>2</sup> To identify the denotations and connotations of words used, *Grimms Wörterbuch* has been consulted. “Zärt-lich” predominantly denotes weakness, softness, effeminacy, a denotation which fades only in the Age of Sensibility in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>3</sup> Münster’s *Cosmography* stressed the handsomeness of the English, especially of the women. Cf. ed. 1598, 56.

<sup>4</sup> Berckenmeyer, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (1731), 210, speaks of the exceptional beauty of the English women, which accounts for the high respect and veneration in which they are held. England is said to be a “paradise for women,” a phrase that recurs in many 17<sup>th</sup>-century travel books and compendia.



Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim had developed a contrasting pattern of the four most important European nations that was often quoted or adapted. Berckenmeyer added the English to the four leading nations of Europe. He described them as “handsome” (9) (“ansehnlich”) as far as their “height” (“Leibesgrösse”) was concerned; in “military enterprises” (“Unternehmen”) they acted “like a lion” (“wie ein Löw”), in matrimony, however, they are described as “servile” (“knechtisch”) possibly because their women (“Weiber”) are queens (“Königinnen”) and enjoy full liberties (“allzu frey”). The strong role of females in English society may well explain the attribution of the characteristics of the ‘fair sex’ to the English nation as a whole in the Tableau.

The relatively favorable image in the Tableau of an amiable person, whose clothes, cut after the French fashion (E6) (“auf Französischart”), were almost identical with those of the Frenchman, now conspicuously contrasts not only with the ancient stereotype of the perfidious Albion, a stereotype that was later revived by Napoleon himself;<sup>5</sup> it also contrasts significantly with the autostereotype which became popular in 18<sup>th</sup>-century England and was first seen in John Arbuthnot’s satirical-political allegory *The History of John Bull* (1712). John Bull represented the type of the landed gentry but soon came to stand for the English nation as a whole, and was never to be confused with the French. The candid, blustering John Bull in his rough shell is courageous and frank but also gullible. He has nothing in common with the amiable Englishman of the Tableau, despite a certain fickleness ascribed to the Englishman on VT. This weakness of the Englishman sticks out in the attribute “restless” (E7) (“Unruhig”) in the category vices (“Untugent”).

The above-mentioned facets of the image of the Englishman in the first lines of the Tableau would probably not have been present if a broader German readership had been familiar with John Bull. Of course, there was a significant delay in the reception of this autostereotype generated in literature. Soon after the production of LS and VT the number of reports by German travelers to England rose rapidly. However, they did not refer to John Bull but (in spite of incidental criticism of English weaknesses such as the notorious lack of ‘courtoisie’ of the English towards strangers) generally spoke about

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Günther Blaicher, “Zur Entstehung und Verbreitung nationaler Stereotypen in und über England” (1977), 549-574.

the engaging outward appearance of the English of both sexes. The *Memoires* of the adventurer Karl Ludwig von Pöllnitz (1734) marked the beginning of a flood of books on England. His text echoed the trend-setting *Lettres sur les Anglois [et les François]* by the Swiss writer Beat Ludwig von Muralt (1725). There is no evidence that the conspicuously favorable evaluation of the Englishman in the *Tableau of Nationalities* was composed with the author's knowledge of these travel letters, which drew on impressions gained in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, and probably also without any knowledge of Pöllnitz' memoirs.<sup>6</sup>

The deferred reception of Muralt's impressions of England makes it impossible to assume that it offered an important early impetus to the development of Anglophile trends in 18<sup>th</sup>-century German culture, and that it may serve as a possible explanation for the positive image of the Englishman in LS and VT. Yet it seems probable that the author knew another Anglophile book, namely the German text entitled *Acta Philosophorum* by Christoph August Heumann. In his handbook, which was published in installments from 1715 onwards, Heumann, a future professor at Göttingen,<sup>7</sup> discussed the diverse talents of the European peoples by drawing on ancient lore borrowed from treatises on national psychologies and typologies and in doing so assigned the place of honor to the English. It is remarkable that Heumann, like English physicians in the period, such as Richard Blackmore trusted completely in the theory of climate (639).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Earlier writers had often remarked that the English were arrogant and unfriendly towards strangers. Pöllnitz softened this conventional feature of the English, stressed their sense of liberty, and praised the charm of the English ladies. It was only after the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that his *Memoires* were followed by travelogues composed by C. A. G. Göde, Karl Philipp Moritz, and Johann Wilhelm von Archenholtz (1785). On the importance of England for German travelers and the development of German literature cf. W. B. Robson-Scott, *German Travellers in England, 1400-1800* (1953), and John Alexander Kelly in *England and the Englishman in German Literature of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* (1921). More recently, Michael Maurer has studied the evolution of Anglophilia in Germany in *Aufklärung und Anglophilie in Deutschland* (1987).

<sup>7</sup> Following his own studies in Jena and abroad, Heumann belonged to the circle of the founding professors of this university, which was to gain a prominent position in Europe.

<sup>8</sup> It is to be noted that Heumann also acknowledges the importance of social and sociological facts. The disrespect for German talents expressed by some French authors is the result, he suggests, of their ignoring the differences between the various provinces and the social environments of individuals. It seems impossible to infer from the limited perspective of a farm laborer milking cows or a swineherd the

Heumann explicitly refers to the air in each country as a formative influence on national genius, and acknowledges the pre-eminence of the English among the peoples in the temperate zone of Europe endowed with superior intellectual talent.

Before he began to teach in Göttingen, Heumann had undertaken extensive travels through Europe and had probably also visited England. The ruler in the province in which Heumann resided, Georg Ludwig, had ascended the throne of the United Kingdom as George I in 1714. Heumann dealt in the installments of *Gründliche Nachrichten* with the question of the talents of the different nations and asked about their respective natural skills for “philosophy” by which was understood the natural sciences. After describing four countries, i.e. Germany, France, Italy and England, as the seats of “philosophiae sobriae” (637), he distinguishes between these countries and is inclined to grant the most favored status to the English. A causal connection is explicitly established between their natural capabilities and the perfect, moderate climate of England.<sup>9</sup> Returning to this issue Heumann again emphasizes that the English are a privileged nation.

That the English have good reason to be proud of their primacy, i.e. that one can find the best ingenia philosophica with them, has been conceded above in our description of the air in England. This is not disputed even by foreigners. We have to grant that the English nation surpasses the French in terms of intellectual capacity, and that it does not lag behind the Italian nor any other nation in terms of profound thinking.<sup>10</sup>

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intellectual capacities of the Germans in general: “Wenn also ein Frantzose von einem Kühmelcker aus der Schweitz / oder von einem Sautreiber aus Bayern / auf alle Teutschen fort argumentiret / so begehret er einen nicht geringen Fehltritt / und er muß sich sein höhnisches Maul durch die Exempel so vieler Teutschen Philosophorum [...] stopffen lassen” (639).

<sup>9</sup> Here Heumann refers explicitly to John Barclay, who, in *Icon Animorum*, had praised the “summa aëris indulgentia” in England.

<sup>10</sup> Author’s free translation; cf. “Daß aber die Engelländer Ursach haben, sich vor anderen Völckern etwas einzubilden, das ist, daß die schönsten ingenia philosophica bey ihnen anzutreffen sind, haben wir schon oben zugestanden, da wir die Engelländische Luft beschrieben haben. Es sind auch die Ausländer selbst nicht in Abrede. Von der Engelländischen Nation muß man gestehen, daß ... sie dennoch [die Frantzösische] an Verstande unzweifelich übertrifft, dieser aber [=der Italiänischen] so wenig als einer anderen an tieffem Nachsinnen etwas zu vor giebet” (Heumann, 653-654).

This statement of the polyhistor Heumann, who had meanwhile made his home in Hannover, corresponds to the attribute “worldly wise” (E5) on the Tableau. According to *Grimms Wörterbuch*, this term is synonymous with “philosophus” and probably means learnedness in connection with worldly issues (and not yet “prudence” in the sense of *prudentialia*).<sup>11</sup> Hermann’s eulogy arguably refers to the leading role of England in the natural sciences, based on the achievements of Francis Bacon and the Royal Society, and in the “New Philosophy” of the 17<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>12</sup> which is also asserted in the following decades in Johann Georg Walch’s *Philosophisches Lexicon* as well as in Johann Heinrich Zedler’s *Universal-Lexicon*.<sup>13</sup>

In Zedler’s encyclopedia (1731) the Englishman is ideally placed between the French and the northerners, and their special competence in natural science is inferred from the complexion of their ‘humor’:

They are not as fiery as the French and not as cold as the northerners. This humor is suitable for the acquisition of various sciences. They are very skillful as artisans and in the free arts[?] as their very useful inventions demonstrate and they are also so active in experimental physics that they have contributed more to its progress and perfection than other nations.<sup>14</sup>

Walch is also certain about their preeminence in this sphere.

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Grimms Wörterbuch* s. v. “welt-weis.”

<sup>12</sup> Here Heumann also criticizes the otherwise greatly respected John Barclay, who had, in his opinion, not been informed enough about the new science as practiced and developed in England (654-655).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Zedler, vol. 8, s. v. “England,” and Walch, *Philosophisches Lexicon* (1726), in the following quoted from its 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (1733).

<sup>14</sup> Author’s free translation; cf. “... [inmassen] sie nicht so feurig sind, als die Frantzen, und auch nicht so kalt, wie die Nordischen Völcker; [...] Dieser Humeur schicket sich überdiß vortreflich zu Erlernung allerley Wissenschaftten. [...] Zu Handwercken und allerley freyen Künsten sind sie sehr geschickt, wie es ihre nützliche Erfindungen sattsam an den Tag legen. Auf die Physicam experimentalem sind sie so sehr beflissen, daß sie mehr, als einige andere Nation, zu deren Vollkommenheit beygetragen haben” (Zedler, s. v. “England”, column 1211).

They show a special natural aptitude to profound thought and are inclined to reflection so that the world owes to them much in terms of the progress in natural philosophy, especially in physics.<sup>15</sup>

While in the first third of the VT column on the English there are no negative characteristics less favorable points are missing, which were later collected in the figure of John Bull as in a prism, both in critical discourse in England and abroad, the question obtrudes about the meaning of the alleged liking of the English for “Wohl-lust,” which puzzles the observer. In his essay on the Tableau of Nationalities Alois Eder speculates that this may be a reference to “voluptuousness” as the chief vice of the English, and argues that the permissiveness in low literature in English and the moral swamp of a city like London, the first European metropolis, may have contributed to this ascription.<sup>16</sup> The semantic development of the lemma “Wohl-lust” does not, however, permit its simple interpretation as “luxuria;” according to the dictionaries the term at that time simply denoted the pleasures of an agreeable life, “amoenitas” or “deliciae,” and did not have clear negative connotations. Such a reading is also supported by the series of copper engravings which probably originated in the 1730s in Augsburg [LES].<sup>17</sup> Their Latin entries take their departure from the list of qualities in the Tableau of Nationalities and expand the entry for the English by the following characteristics: “Amant delicias.” A further supplement concerning the English also provides information on their behavior towards their wives, to whom they are said to offer “profanas omnes delicias.”

Yet we may concede a kernel of truth in Eder’s claim as the reproach of English “luxuria” was, indeed, articulated in Germany, though there was no hint at the “Restoration rakes” and the promiscuity of Defoe’s *Moll Flanders*. This weakness of theirs is

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<sup>15</sup> Author’s free translation; cf. “[Sie] sind zu tieffsinnigen Sachen von Natur geschickt, und daher zur Philosophie und andern Wissenschaften, darinnen ein Nachdencken nöthig ist, aufgelegt, denen man auch in der Ausbesserung der Philosophie, sonderlich der Physic vieles schuldig ist” (Walch, s. v. “Naturell der Völker,” column 1881).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Alois Eder, “Lieben den Adel und erkennen für ihren Herrn einen Erwählten” (1979), esp. 243.

<sup>17</sup> On this series, which was also produced in Augsburg, probably ten years after the death of the engraver of the original copperplate, see Dirk Rupnow, “*Laconicum Europae Speculum*. Stereotype ohne Schimpf und Vorurteil?” *Europäischer Völkerspigel*, 75-95.

mentioned, in particular, in the earlier *Consultatio de principatu inter provincias Europae* by Thomas Lansius, a teacher at the “Collegium Illustre.” This book, which appeared in Tübingen in 1613, was especially important for the transmission of national stereotypes in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup> In Daniel von Wensin’s “Oratio Contra Britanniam” included in this book, the charge of “luxuria” against the English plays an important role, with evidence being provided by the conduct of Henry VIII.<sup>19</sup> This comparatively isolated piece of evidence for this English vice does not suffice, however, to interpret the entry in the Tableau negatively or even ambivalently in light of the predominantly positive or neutral denotation of the other entries on VT.<sup>20</sup>

On the debit side of the account, contemporary compendia, as well as the author of the text of the Tableau of Nationalities, noted the apparently indisputable political and religious fickleness of the Englishman. There was hardly any doubt about this feature well into the 18<sup>th</sup> century, since the persistent memories of the political upheavals on the island in the 17<sup>th</sup> century had not yet yielded to the long-term perception of an obviously conservative country where change came only gradually. According to VT the characteristic vice of the English was their being “restless” (“Unruhig” E7), and their acceptance of “now one, then another” (“bald den, bald jene[n]” E13) as their ruler. Also in their worship they were changeable “like the moon” (“Verenderlich Wie der Mond” E12). This diagnosis corresponds to the findings in Walch’s *Philosophisches Lexicon* and

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<sup>18</sup> Lansius initiated and supervised the rhetorical exercises of the sons of Protestant European princes and aristocrats at this institution, established by the dukes of Württemberg. They resulted in a compendium of contemporary lore comprising a storehouse of national stereotypes shared by European intellectuals in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Cf. chapter 5 in this volume.

<sup>19</sup> The speaker puts a rhetorical question in his oration: “Quae natio Anglicam in hac perversae et aversae Veneris palaestra exuperat?” (Lansius, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1620, 529). In the older thesauri, which were used in schools to train the young pupils in composition, there are more references to the “Britani” than to the “Angli,” which is not a coincidence, considering the fact that most of the adjectives entered in these thesauri were borrowed from ancient ethnographic descriptions. There was, it is true, a list of negative qualities ascribed to the Angli in Julius Caesar Scaliger’s *Poetices libri septem* (1561).

<sup>20</sup> Other reports concerning the polyandry of ancient Britons certainly did not affect the argument or the image of the Englishman.

in Berckenmeyer's earlier *Curieuser Antiquarius*.<sup>21</sup> This critical approach was, however, moderated by Berckenmeyer, since he locates the English somewhere in between the French and the Spanish, and not between the French and the northerners:

The English are characterized by a temperament which fits in between French levity and Spanish gradeur ("grandezza").<sup>22</sup>

The author of the text of VT in his description of England and its fertility adheres to the knowledge mediated through atlases and compendia as early as Münster's *Cosmographia*, where the fauna and flora of the island were already described as rich, whilst Zedler's *Universal-Lexicon* stressed the particular productivity of the country:

As far as food is concerned, hardly any other country is better furnished with grain and pastures, especially for sheep.<sup>23</sup>

There are, however, also less favorable aspects of this nation blessed in its climate, and the author of the Tableau found enough sources providing information on an endemic ailment caused by its humid air. The English suffer from consumption ("[sie leiden] an Der Schwindsucht" E9); he concurred, for instance, with Berckenmeyer, who had claimed that consumption was hereditary or, at least, more common there than in other countries.<sup>24</sup>

In the lower half of the column the author of the Tableau attributes to the English in the rubric "war virtues" ("Krigs Tugente") the role of a naval hero ("Ein[es] See Held[en]" E11), which naturally recovers the collective memory of the island's naval victories. After the War of the Spanish Succession the English nation rose in the early Imperialistic phase quickly to being a leading sea power. Precisely at

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<sup>21</sup> Walch 1733, column 1882, refers explicitly to the regicides, and Berckenmeyer (209) uses the proverbial phrase calling the English King "Rex Diabolorum" because of the rebellious nature of the English.

<sup>22</sup> Author's translation of Berckenmeyer's text: "Die Engelländer sind von solchem Temperament, daß sie zwischen der Frantzosen Leichtsinigkeit, und der Spanischen Grandezza gleichsam das Mittel treffen" (209).

<sup>23</sup> Author's translation of Zedler's entry: "Die Nahrung anlangend, so wird schwerlich ein Land besser mit Korn und Weide, sonderlich für Schaaf, versehen seyn" (column 1210).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. "Dem Königreich Engelland ist die Schwindsucht gleichsam erblich, oder doch zum wenigsten häufiger als in andern Ländern." (Berckenmeyer, 206).

the time of the presumptive adaptation of Leopold's engraving for VT and for the later series of Augsburg copperplate engravings (LES), James Thomson, the author of the *Seasons*, had given to his country a second anthem in "Rule Britannia." What is more, the literary subjects of English (didactic) poems of the period also reflect the increasing importance of the mercantile marine and of the navy.<sup>25</sup> It is no coincidence that in the engraving in the LES series dedicated to England the national fleet is depicted in addition to an allegorical young female figure, namely "Confidentia," who presents the English monarch with the model of a ship, thereby highlighting the faith in transatlantic journeys and enterprises. At the same time the monarch is given a map showing both Americas; a native and the allegorical figure of "Abundantia" are presented, offering fruits of the colonies of the growing British Empire. The text in the copperplate series goes beyond the original category "war virtues" ("In Virtute Bellica:" "Archithalassus" in LES)<sup>26</sup> and praises in the rubric "Aptitudo illorum ad negotia, artes et res gerendas," the competence of the English on the high seas and in the sciences.<sup>27</sup> It is not surprising that the Englishman is said in the Tableau to end his life "in water" (E17).

In the penultimate line of the column devoted to the Englishman s.v. "comparison with animals" ("Vergleichung Mit denen Thiren") the Englishman is associated with a horse (E16), and not with the emblematic lion, which appears in the penumbra of the sovereign found in the pertinent engraving in the series LES as well as on other copper plates. The association with the horse can arguably be explained with the Englishman's rivalry with the German. In the column "German" (T16) the lion is used (not, as one would expect, the imperial eagle) because the Tableau of Nationalities employs only mammals as national symbols. The association between the Englishman and the horse draws on travelogues and on the lore extracted from them. In these texts it is noted that "the English horses and dogs are very famous," which is obviously an addition to common

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<sup>25</sup> Among the poems celebrating the power of the British navy are Edward Young's *Imperium Pelagi* (1729), and later John Dyer's *The Fleece* (1757), which anticipates the potential benefits of British commerce, which can, for example, provide warm garments for the peoples in the polar zones.

<sup>26</sup> Rupnow provides a contemporary German translation of the phrase "Helden zur See."

<sup>27</sup> LES extolls their skills: "Ad artem nauticam et omnem scientiam per totum mundum iam famosissimi."



knowledge since the early cosmographies (cf. Zedler, column 1211). There were in the 17<sup>th</sup> century proverbs referring to the excessive demands placed on their horses by the English, behavior regarded as a violation of animal welfare.<sup>28</sup>

The idea that the Englishman passes his time applying himself to work was not directly taken from popular compendia of the time. Such an opinion was pronounced only one century later by Heinrich Heine. While pouring scorn over the island nation in his *Englische Fragmente* (1828),<sup>29</sup> he polemically sketches an image of John Bull, who is said to work day and night to acquire goods and property. It can be assumed that the author of the Tableau in his presentation of the Englishman as 'hardworking' relied on the storehouse of stereotypes based on the theory of climate. Then it was quite common to ascribe to the northerners a certain zeal for work and manual skills.<sup>30</sup>

Thus the analysis of the column "Englishman" in VT projects a fairly inhomogeneous image. This is, however, not uncommon for stereotyped national characters and is also the case with other nations on the Tableau. The physiognomy of the Englishman includes, as we have seen, an attractive outward appearance and special intellectual gifts (fostered by his favorable environment), but also political and religious instability and special inclination to work. These attributes, which are not easily compatible, suggest that the composite picture of the Englishman derives more than those of other nations from distinct social types. The copper engraving of the *Laconicum Series* resolves these obvious discrepancies in a tableau with a courtly atmosphere. In it, the contrast between the world of the economy and the workplace, on the one hand, and the elegant court, on the other, are reconciled

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<sup>28</sup> The "Oratio contra Britanniam" in Lansius' *Consultatio* cited above repeats the proverbial phrase "Angliam foeminarum paradisum, servorum purgatorium et equorum infernum esse" (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1620), 526.

<sup>29</sup> The German text of the "English Fragments" can be found in *Sämtliche Schriften in 12 Bänden*, vol. 3. Cf. the pertinent accusation on 539. An analysis of Heine's Anglophobia, which is also mirrored in the opening passage of his essay "Shakespeares Mädchen und Frauen", is explored by Renate Schusky, "Heine, England und die Engländer" in M. L. Spickermann, *'Der curieuse Passagier'* (1983), 139-148.

<sup>30</sup> Charron in *De la sagesse*, often reprinted in its French original and in various translations, in his second table cast northerners as "ouvriers artisans." On Charron, see also the chapter "The Theory of Climate and the Tableau of European Nationalities" in this volume.

since signs of activities advancing the growth of the empire are included with the British Navy guaranteeing its expansion.<sup>31</sup> The harmonized image in this later engraving omits explicit references to the fickleness and unreliability of the English. LES generally excludes everything from the text of the earlier *Tableau of Nationalities* which overtly depicted the weaknesses and deficiencies of individual nations, which would now run counter to the desired eulogy.

Thus the text of the VT comprises, in a cruder manner than the later series of engravings (with its added iconographic and verbal embellishments), the features and attributes of different social elements within English society. Views circulating in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Germany and partly recently introduced as positive perspectives on the English were borrowed from various sources and combined, as was generally the case, with other entries in the *Tableau*. In doing so the author of the text obeyed the laws of this tabulation though he seems here to have been less affected by the system than in his design of other national columns. It is fairly probable that the then recently established dynastic bonds between Britain and the Electorate of Hannover were a factor in the ascription of positive traits to the English. Despite obvious inconsistencies, the column on the Englishman thus anticipates the distinct anglophile tendencies in Germany manifest in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and may be regarded as an early significant illustration of this trend. It is evident that notions included in contemporary compendia, which were influenced by the theory of climate, contributed their share to this (fundamentally positive) portrait.

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<sup>31</sup> The complex program of these engravings includes the representation of the tributes brought by the representatives of the meanwhile numerous colonies in the various parts of the world.

## **Chapter 19: The Rise of Cultural Nationalism in the New World: The Scottish Element and Example**

One of the questions which have engaged the attention of historians and literary scholars for some while, but which is still insufficiently answered, concerns the multiple factors which determined or influenced the emergence of a fairly well-defined autostereotype of the Americans<sup>1</sup> and later the repeated efforts of Canadian nationalists to arrive at an identity. This paper confronts this complex question and explores the importance of the Scottish element in this development in the New World between about 1770 and the 1840s or 1860s. Our investigation profits from general research in the social sciences concerning attitudes to foreigners and minority groups and uses the terminology and the frames of reference supplied by social psychology. Thus the terms autostereotype and heterostereotype are employed denoting the images held by members of a group of themselves and of outsiders or foreigners respectively. We survey texts in which images of Scotland, the Scots and of Scottish culture and literature in particular are included, not in order to give an inventory, which could never be exhaustive, but in an attempt to assess the contribution of particular notions of ethnic and national characters to the emerging sense of identity, the autostereotype, of a new nation. An analysis of the numerous references might help us to discover their function in the rise of cultural nationalism in the New World.

It is well known that the achievement of political independence did not immediately furnish the new American nation with a sense of cultural identity, though the feeling of solidarity which had developed and had been tested during the long years of the Revolutionary War fostered a sense of distinctiveness. The prolonged conflict with the mother country had prompted the expression of intense feelings of animosity, for instance in Philip Freneau's disparaging remarks on the English,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the discussion of the transfer of British stereotypes to America and the complicating factors during the first sixty years of the New Republic in Zacharasiewicz, "National Stereotypes in Literature in the English Language: A Review of Research," rpt. in this volume.

under which term the Scots are possibly subsumed, in his *Pilgrim* essays.<sup>2</sup> Still, inherited views and perspectives were only gradually abandoned so that Benjamin Latrobe was justified in claiming in his journal in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century that “nine tenths of our American ideals and prejudices are English”.<sup>3</sup> The long military confrontation and the painful expulsion of scores of thousands of Loyalists, however, paved the way towards a common sense of identity, which was to be dramatically strengthened by the events of the War of 1812. After the Revolutionary War this later development was foreshadowed in the polemics of some of the conservative Connecticut Wits but also by enlightened liberals like Thomas Jefferson, who warned against an imitation of European manners and praised autochthonous virtues.<sup>4</sup> Yet in the debate over the Constitution and the tug-of-war during the Napoleonic Wars politicians and political journalists could not avoid alluding to the contrasting patterns of English and French societies and the spokesmen of the different camps were ready to regard them as models and examples.<sup>5</sup> Representatives of these foreign nations also appear on the early American stage, which is known for its exploitation of a favorite resource of the dramatic genre, the inclusion of foreigners, who quite frequently appear (on the American stage) as fools or rascals, thus serving as foils to the admirable, upright native heroes. Royall Tyler’s *The Contrast* exploits this potential in the opposition between Colonel Manly and Dimple, the Europeanized fop and rascal, and introduces in Jonathan the type of the ‘Stage Yankee,’ which came to represent one

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Pilgrim* November 1781 and January 1782, where Freneau fell back upon epithets associated with the ancient Britons, calling the inhabitants of the British Isles “barbarous, cruel, inhospitable, unsociable” (Freneau, *Prose*, 47).

<sup>3</sup> Quoted after T. A. Riese, *Das englische Erbe in der amerikanischen Literatur* (1958), 13.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Thomas Jefferson’s admonition to John Bannister to avoid “luxury and dissipation” and to Mr. Bellini, September 30, and October 10, 1785. Cf. *The Papers of Jefferson*, ed. Julian Boyd (1952).

<sup>5</sup> While Jefferson in and after the struggle between the Federalists and the “Democratic Republicans” demanded a “divorce from both nations,” the versatile projector Elkanah Watson, who had come to know the French in Benjamin Franklin’s company and was at first shocked by some aspects of French life, took a more positive view of the American dilemma. The following remark of the efficient businessman Watson highlights a characteristic of the use of stereotypes in discourse, the tendency towards the use of polar opposites: “[O]ur alliance and intercourse with France may enable us, as a nation, to shake off ... the English sternness and formality of manner, retaining, however, sufficient of their gravity to produce, with French ease and elegance, a happy compound of national character and manners, yet to be modeled.” *Men and Times of the Revolution* (1956), 88-89.

dominant variant of the autostereotype in drama.<sup>6</sup> Other early plays presented foreign figures with so much bias that tempers rose high in the theater audiences. So deeply divided were opinions at that time that theatrical scandals were not uncommon.<sup>7</sup> Yet there are also distinct examples of the transfer of British heterostereotypes to America: early American drama had inherited from its British models the use of the stage Irishman (Paddy/Teague) whose appearance was apt regularly to entertain the audience, appealing to their sense of superiority. This feeling was confirmed when developments in Ireland prompted mass Irish immigration to the US and stimulated abrasive caricatures in the various media. It is interesting in our present context that the Scottish counterpart of this stage figure, Sawney, seems not to have been given a comparable part on the American stage. While J.O. Bartley, for instance, has established the presence of the stereotype of the “wily” and of the “mean Scot” in 18<sup>th</sup> century English plays,<sup>8</sup> the impact of this theatrical cliché seems to have been very limited in America. Of course, there were satirical and unflattering references to “North Britons,” which partly may have echoed the polemics and satires of English political journalists and writers like John Wilkes and Charles Churchill (*The Prophecy of Famine*, 1763). St. George Tucker’s later satiric verse in *The Probationary Odes of Jonathon Pindar* (1796) under the title “Scotch Economy. A Tale” stresses the meanness of a “dirty Sawney” and associates “economy” used pejoratively with them:

A Scotchman who had travel’d half a year  
 In the same shirt, still tolerably clean,  
 As Sawney thought, but that is not so clear, —  
 Crept naked into bed the sheets between ....<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> On Royall Tyler’s important contribution to the emergence of this variant of the autostereotype cf. Jürgen Wolter, *Die Suche nach nationaler Identität: Entwicklungstendenzen des amerikanischen Dramas vor dem Bürgerkrieg* (1983), esp. 62-65; on the numerous stage characters descended from Jonathan cf. 74-133.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the reference to the divided sympathies of the audience in American theaters in Dunlap’s *History of the American Theater* (1832), 111; and Kent G. Gallagher, *The Foreigner in Early American Drama: A Study in Attitudes* (1966), esp. 44 and 146.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. J. O. Bartley, “The Development of the Stock Character,” in *Modern Languages Review* 38 (1943), 279-288, esp. 284; and Edward D. Synder, “The Wild Irish: A Study of Some English Satires Against the Irish, Scots, and Welsh,” in *Modern Philology* 17 (1920), 147-185.

<sup>9</sup> St. George Tucker, *The Probationary Odes of Jonathon Pindar, Esq., A Cousin of Peter’s*, 69.

Here and elsewhere the Scots seem to be blamed for an inclination apparently manifest in the advocacy of a commercial civilization by Scottish intellectuals, notably by Adam Smith. Yet we can safely assume that negative views of the Scots frequent in revolutionary America, though not on the stage, have to be attributed to the high proportion of Loyalists among the Scottish settlers, who had come over in large numbers after 1760.<sup>10</sup> A journal from the Revolutionary War by Nicholas Cresswell reflects this negative view and sets about correcting it.<sup>11</sup> Considering the jealousy of the efficiency of Scottish merchants in Virginia and North Carolina documented in historical studies by I.C.C. Graham and G. Donaldson, it must have been comforting for a friend of the Caledonians to encounter the remarkably positive evaluation of the prospects of Scottish immigrants provided by Crèvecoeur, who in his famous letter "Who is an American?" in *Letters from an American Farmer* juxtaposed the success of "an honest Scotch Hebridean" and that of his compatriots generally and the dismal failure of Irish settlers: "The Scotch, on the contrary, are all industrious and saving; they want nothing more than a field to exert themselves in, and they are commonly sure of succeeding ...."<sup>12</sup> We encounter again in this juxtaposition an example of the antithetical structure so closely allied with the use of stereotypes in literature. But Crèvecoeur's tribute was to be fairly isolated in that period when many writers gave expression to anti-Scottish feeling. It is presumably well known that Jefferson in his draft of the Declaration of Independence specifically referred to "Scotch and foreign mercenaries," whom he thus distinguished clearly from soldiers "of our

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Ian Charles Cargill Graham, *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America 1707-1783* (1965, rpt. 1972), 130-134 and 150-153; and Gordon Donaldson, *The Scots Overseas* (1966), 57ff.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. "To these gentlemen I am under infinite obligations for their great care of me in my sickness when I first arrived in this country. These are all Scotchmen, to which nation I had a particular dislike, owing to the prejudice of my education. I was taught to look upon them as a set of men divested of common humanity, ungenerous and unprincipled. I have always found them the reverse of all this, and I most heartily condemn this pernicious system of education by which we are taught to look upon the inhabitants of a different nation, language or complexion, as a set of beings far inferior to our own. This is a most illiberal and confined sentiment ...." Thornley S. (ed.), *Journal of Nicholas Cresswell* (1924), 205.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (1981), 85-88. Crèvecoeur later puts the question: "What is the reason that the Scots are in general more religious, more faithful, more honest and industrious than the Irish?"

common [English] blood” in his enumeration of the king’s “injuries and usurpations,” the autocratic, cruel measures taken in collusion with Parliament.<sup>13</sup> It is true the Continental Congress omitted this specific negative allusion to the Scots but animosity towards them must have been fairly widespread.

Wholesale identification of the Scots with Loyalists is also suggested by the title of John Trumbull’s mock-epic *M’Fingal*, which ends with the Tory squire being tarred and feathered.<sup>14</sup> The title, of course, alludes to and parodies James Macpherson’s famous Ossianic poem, which from its appearance in the early 1760s had divided critical readers first in Britain and then all over Europe. It was to remain a major point of reference in all discussions of primitive culture and poetry in particular, and of the feasibility of great national epics depicting the past, of heroic characters and sublime scenes of nature in America too. The enthusiasm for these texts, which purported to be translations of a third century original, also affected American thinkers like Thomas Jefferson; however, this fascination<sup>15</sup> naturally did not lessen the negative views of the politically unreliable Scottish settlers, against whom ill-feeling and suspicion persisted for some while. That the anti-Scottish sentiment was gradually diluted can perhaps be inferred from the relatively moderate satire offered in Hugh Henry Brackenridge’s *Modern Chivalry*, where Duncan, the substitute for the ignorant, yet crafty bogtrotter Teague O’Regan, was subjected to only mild ridicule.<sup>16</sup>

After the turn of the century, however, American commentators who were dissatisfied with and incensed by the negative accounts of

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Jefferson’s draft as contained in “Autobiography,” in *Writings*, ed. M. Peterson, (1984), 19-23: “At this very time too, they are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but Scotch and foreign mercenaries to invade and destroy us.”

<sup>14</sup> The first two cantos of *M’Fingal* appeared in 1775 and 1776, the complete work in 1782.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Frederic I. Carpenter, “The Vogue of Ossian in America: A Study in Taste,” *American Literature* 2 (1934), 405-417, esp. 407.

<sup>16</sup> Though the preoccupations and the religious fervor of the “North Briton” became the butt of satire from *Modern Chivalry*, part 1, vol. 4 onwards, Brackenridge’s authorial narrator later admitted that Duncan had remained in his hands “rather insipid.” Though Brackenridge extensively reproduced Duncan’s vernacular, he was clearly not so useful a tool and an object for the satiric jibes of the author as Teague had been. It is plausible to assume that by this time there was also less animosity towards and annoyance at the Scots for Brackenridge to capitalize on in his work. Cf. *Modern Chivalry*, ed. Claude M. Newlin (1968), esp. 255, 265, 405.

America by English travelers began to discover certain parallels between their treatment by the English and the lot of the Scots/North Britons. Both William Austin in his authentic *Letters from London* (1802) and Royall Tyler in his fictitious report of *The Yankee in London* (1809),<sup>17</sup> for instance, referred to English prejudices against the Scots. Later American observers who were aware of differences between the inhabitants of the various American regions noted some similarities to the Scots at home, too. Charles J. Ingersoll, for instance, the author of the fictitious letters of an Irish Jesuit (1810), diagnosed a resemblance in the role of the inhabitants of New England to that of the Scots in Britain, who similarly “leave home poor but well-instructed, . . . [but who are] shrewd and indefatigable” and so attain many of the most lucrative and influential situations in Britain (as New Englanders do in other parts of America).<sup>18</sup> A quarter of a century later Charles Joseph Latrobe in his *The Rambler in North America* was similarly to maintain the likeness and affinity between the New Englanders and the Scots, echoing and confirming the opinion that “the New Englanders have all the steadiness and prudence of the Scotch, with yet greater degree of ingenuity. Like the Scotch they foster education. . . .”<sup>19</sup>

In our context it is instructive that this traveller from abroad in the 1830s, who failed to discover a uniform national character in the US and stressed the regional factor, but regarded American pride in their country as quite natural considering its “gigantic resources, ... its magnificent rivers, and forests, and scenery,” on the one hand, and its “widely diffused education,” on the other, should relate this latter positive trait

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Austin, *Letters from London*, 45: “The English ... undervalue their own fellow-subjects as much as they do foreigners. A poor Scotchman, who has necessity to take the main road to England ... is thought to be very selfish if he comes to London to shun the curse of Scotland.” Cf. also Tyler, *The Yankee in London, being the first part of a series of letters* (1809), esp. *Letter XLIII*, esp. 161: “An Englishman never sees a foreigner without insensibly attaching to him his supposed national character. By the English the French are characterized as volatile, superficial, and cowardly; ... Even the Scotch, Welch, and Irish, although integrals of the empire, are subjects of this contemptuous character. The Scotch are poor, parsimonious, and craving; The Welch poor and proud. . . .”

<sup>18</sup> Ingersoll, *Inchiquin: The Jesuit's Letters* (1810), esp. *Letter VII*, 108 (note). Ingersoll, incidentally, in his discussion of the characteristic traits of modern nations, relies heavily on David Hume's essay “Of National Characters”, but he goes beyond Hume in his tendency towards generalization and his acceptance of the stability of national characters. In the tradition of travelers' reports Ingersoll stressed the regional differences in the US, and noted certain affinities between regional types and their European forebears.

<sup>19</sup> Latrobe, *The Rambler in North America* (1832-33), 2 vols. (1835), 61.



to Scottish education and culture. Neither he nor his “transatlantic acquaintances” could have forgotten the heyday of the Scottish Enlightenment and the cultural and literary potential of the nation concentrated in its universities and the “Athens of Britain” (Allan Ramsey), from where Scottish learning had been disseminated throughout Europe and America.<sup>20</sup>

The philosophies debated by the members of various clubs and intellectual societies in Scotland and set forth in countless treatises and essays also affected those American thinkers who in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and especially in the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, particularly after the War of 1812, demanded full cultural autonomy for the new nation.<sup>21</sup> Their search for national identity was in tune with the lively debate on national characters to which also many Scottish men of letters contributed. Despite his skepticism and his warnings against “undistinguishing judgments” and against reliance on common notions of individual nations and “national characters,” which “the vulgar are apt to carry ... to extremes,” David Hume, for instance, had shown a willingness to accept certain fixed assumptions about other nations. His attempt to “release man from the bondage of myth and prejudice” was apparently compatible with certain heterostereotypes and even the intrusion of clichés into his observations, particularly outside his major work, for instance in his letters.<sup>22</sup> Beyond this adherence to a habit of mind prevailing in the 18<sup>th</sup> century early American essayists and cultural nationalists could find in the works of Scottish thinkers and men of letters various ideas which were able to corroborate concepts furnished, for instance, by Johann Gottfried Herder, August Wilhelm Schlegel and Mme de Staël. It is true some of the Scottish rhetoricians still favored the universalist position and basically supported neo-classical tendencies in the Age of Sensibility, thus confirming the timeless models and indirectly discouraging indigenous innovations. Henry Home, Lord Kames, for instance, in his *Elements of Criticism* upheld the concept of a standard of taste common to all nations, and even Hugh Blair, who was

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. Nicholas Phillipson, “The Scottish Enlightenment,” *The Enlightenment in National Context*, eds. R. Porter and E. M. Teich (1981), 19-40.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Robert E. Spiller, ed., *The American Literary Revolution 1783-1837* (1967).

<sup>22</sup> That this intellectual leader of the Scottish Enlightenment was prone to accept or echo national stereotypes has been analyzed by Stanzel, “Schemata und Klischees der Völkerbeschreibung in David Humes Essay ‘Of National Characters,’” in *Festschrift für Helmut Papajewski* (1974), 363-383. Cf. also the discussion in the first chapter of this volume.

familiarized in America through partial reprints in various magazines after the Revolutionary War, gave only qualified support to such tendencies through his emphasis on the importance of external surroundings on poetic genius.<sup>23</sup> His championship of Macpherson's Ossianic poems in his influential *Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian* (1763), however, served to encourage American writers to rely on and fully exploit the magnificent landscape of their own country, and several undistinguished imitations in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century tried to emulate, partly in verse paraphrases, partly in independent verse, the "loftier sublimity" of Macpherson's texts commended by Hugh Blair.<sup>24</sup>

Among the Scottish men of letters Archibald Alison in his *Essays on the nature and principle of taste* (1790) also supplied ammunition for those who argued in favor of native subjects.<sup>25</sup> The "Scottish Connection" was also implied in the works of Mme de Staël, which reached American readers in the form of longish reviews and excerpts,<sup>26</sup> for instance, in the pages of *The Analectic Magazine* in 1813. Her persuasive demonstration of the relationship between physical environment and social structures, on the one hand, and culture and literature produced in individual countries on the other, in her *De la littérature considérée dans ces rapports avec les institutions*, gave additional force to the pleas of young American critics for cultural independence. Mme de Staël's trust in the authenticity of the Ossian fragments and her juxtaposition of the representatives of "northern" and "southern" genius in Ossian and Homer, her implicit preference for the "mysticism and metaphysical brooding" and the melancholy of the literature of the North were fit to consolidate Ossian's hold on the imagination of early critics in spite of the controversy over its authenticity. Together with de Staël's more general remarks these views bolstered the writers' confidence in the literary future of their own country. As a consequence, several of the Phi Beta Kappa orations at Harvard and patriotic essays in the pages of the *North American Review* stressed the total difference between the new nation and England and postulated an authentic and

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Spencer's magisterial *The Quest for Nationality: An American Literary Campaign* (1957), esp. 33-36, 90-94.

<sup>24</sup> On the implications of the influences of the climate in Blair's essay accompanying the Ossian poems cf. Frances Williard Hadley, "The Theory of Milieu in English Criticism from 1660 to 1801" (1925), esp. 160-161. For American imitations of the Ossianic texts cf. Carpenter, "The Vogue of Ossian," 409-410.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Spencer, 92-93.

<sup>26</sup> Cf., for instance, *Analectic Magazine*, Sept. 1813, 177-199, 315-323, etc.

original culture regrettably still wanting in America. Walter Channing in his vigorous essay "On American Language and Literature" (September 1815) took Germany as his model and example for his fellow countrymen when pleading for an original literature reflecting the unique and distinctive nature of life on the new continent.<sup>27</sup> Responding to Mme de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* Channing praised Germany for having avoided surrendering "to the foppery of France and the language of England, neither copying the government of one" nor "the mode of religion of the other" country. Thus the Germans had, in his opinion, managed to create a genuinely original literature and had developed "dazzling metaphysics" and enchanting poetry. Walter Channing's respect for a nation formerly despised and regarded as merely imitative coincided with the dramatically increased attraction of German universities where a growing number of young Americans had begun to imbibe ideas of the "grounding of a national literature" in the "character, energy and resources" of an individual country.<sup>28</sup> Although Channing fails to refer in his essay to the Ossianic poems, which were to fire the enthusiasm of David Henry Thoreau and were arguably to influence Whitman's free verse,<sup>29</sup> he does not ignore Scottish literature and culture altogether. He has reservations about the achievement of Walter Scott, who was in his opinion content to give "a mere translation of his national dialect .... [He] has most happily rendered native beauties of idiom, and even national peculiarities, by another language." He goes on to praise the "verses of Allan Ramsey and ... the far sweeter ones of Robert Burns. These authors are essentially original. They not only give us manners, which are but practical, intellectual operations, but give them us in the language that was made for them and which only can give them their true form and pressure."<sup>30</sup>

The fact that the inspiring German model familiar to the leading spirits and reformers of the universities in New England and the advocates of cultural autonomy was supplemented by the Scottish example<sup>31</sup> is also apparent in James Kirke Paulding's *Letters from the*

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. Spiller, 112-131.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. the comments in Long, *Literary Pioneers: Early American Explorers of European Culture* (1935, rpt. 1963). Cf. also Edward Everett, "Oration on the Peculiar Motives to Intellectual Exertion in America," in Spiller, 284-318, esp. 303.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Carpenter, "The Vogue of Ossian," 411-417.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Walter Channing in Spiller, 114.

<sup>31</sup> Edward Everett, for instance, in his distinguished oration in 1824 stressed the centrality of the national character, which, in turn, was strongly influenced by the climate, and

*South* (1817).<sup>32</sup> One must admit, of course, that Paulding harbored negative feelings against Walter Scott, whose earlier works he had subjected to satire in *The Lay of the Scottish Fiddle* (1813) and whose romances he was to dismiss for their alleged glorification of the feudal world and their flaunting of human passion. Paulding argued in favor of what he termed “rational fiction” and readily admitted in his essay “National Literature” included in *Salmagundi II* (1819–20)<sup>33</sup> that his country was quite deficient in “fairies, giants, and goblins” and that there was no instance of “second sight” (usually attributed to the Scots in the 18<sup>th</sup> century). While defending the deficiency of his own country in these kinds of “romantic” material Paulding was to praise Fielding’s art of fiction. His pointed allusion to the absence of the gift of “second sight” in his country and his wholesale rejection of Scott’s romances seem to imply a touch of anti-Scottish sentiment not totally unrelated to the role of Scottish quarterlies. They had been deeply involved in the controversies which alienated American observers and prompted virulent rejoinders to their notorious attacks by Paulding and his associates.<sup>34</sup> Considering this complicating factor with its negative effect on British/Scottish-American relations the reader may be at a loss how fully to account for a brief digression in Paulding’s *Letters from the South* (1817) with a short reference to the pastoral life in the Scottish Highlands, where “delightful songs and melting or inspiring airs, that thrilled to the heart” were composed. Paulding’s fictitious correspondent hopes that these songs

will stand their ground against that affected refinement which would engraft the enervating productions of emasculated Italy upon the manly and nervous race that people America. If we are to borrow our music and our song, let us imitate Scotland — whose poetry and music has a character of manly tenderness and incorruptible

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speculated on the impact of the peculiar features of the American continent on its future culture and literature. In his references to the spirit of the age, Mme de Staël and Ossian Everett responded to several elements in the contemporary debate.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Paulding, *Letters from the South. Written during an excursion in the summer of 1816*, vol. 2, 220-221.

<sup>33</sup> This essay has been rpt. by Spiller in *The American Literary Revolution*, 381-386. For a study of Paulding cf. the unpublished doctoral dissertation by Harold E. Hall, “James Kirke Paulding: A Pioneer in American Fiction” (1953).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Mesick, *The English Traveller in America 1785-1835* (1922), esp. ch. 10, 270-298 (“Famous Controversies”).

simplicity, that I would not exchange for all the emasculated poetry of Metastasio, or the effeminate strains of his contemporary musicians.<sup>35</sup>

Many contemporary documents demonstrate<sup>36</sup> that Paulding's dissatisfaction with Scott, which was largely due to his democratic reservations against Scott's championship of a chivalric age and fear of a virulent "feudal contagion," was not shared by other nationalist critics, whose appreciation of the "Great Unknown" seemed easily compatible with their own advocacy of a national literature.<sup>37</sup> In fact, Scott's example prompted their theoretical and practical choice of historical material from their own national past as an ideal subject for autochthonous literary endeavors. Though few of them would have gone so far as to anticipate Thomas Carlyle's remarks in his anonymous review of Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* (1838) about the representative character of Scott ("No Scotchman of his time was more entirely Scotch than Walter Scott: The good and the not so good which all Scotchmen inherit ran through every fibre of him"<sup>38</sup>), they were not unaware of the national roots of his art and the soil which had fertilized it. Thus his techniques, the presentation of his characters and the use of the natural setting were formative influences not only on James Fenimore Cooper, who in his treatment of the American Indians was arguably also indebted to Macpherson's "national epic poems,"<sup>39</sup> but on numerous other disciples, who tapped the resources of national history in their fiction.

Even the major New England historians, who were eager to recreate the past imaginatively, did not deny their literary training and emulated some of Scott's literary techniques in their voluminous histories of the conflicts in the New World (Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*; Bancroft, *History of the United States*; Parkman in his volumes on the various conflicts between the French and the English in North America and Motley in his histories of *The Dutch Republic* and *The*

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Paulding, *Letters from the South*, vol. 2, 220-223.

<sup>36</sup> For travelers' reports on Scott's popularity cf. Mesick, 218-219.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. E. T. Channing's review in *North American Review* 1818, rpt. in John O. Hayden, ed., *Walter Scott: The Critical Heritage* (1970), 148-164.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Hayden, *Walter Scott: The Critical Heritage*, 345-373, esp. 352-353.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Barrie Hayne, "Ossian, Scott and Cooper's Indians," in *Journal of American Studies* 3 (1969), 73-87. For Scott's influence on Cooper cf. George Dekker, *James Fenimore Cooper: The Novelist* (1967), 20-32.

*United Netherlands*).<sup>40</sup> More obvious is, of course, the debt of Southern writers to Walter Scott, whose formative influence on the authors of historical novels in Dixie is reflected in various orations and critical statements long before Mark Twain's notorious accusation of Walter Scott for having done "measureless harm" to the country, indeed, "more real and lasting harm, perhaps, than any other individual that ever wrote." Twain went on to claim that "Scott had so large a hand in making Southern character, as it existed before the War, that he is in great measure responsible for the War."<sup>41</sup> The special position and the model character of the literary productions of Scotland for Southern authors is, though somewhat obliquely, mirrored in an oration delivered at Athens, Georgia, seven years after Emerson's "Declaration of Cultural Independence" in *The American Scholar* (1837). While emphatically sharing such a nationalist viewpoint, William Gilmore Simms in his long essay-review of Alexander Meek's pamphlet based on this speech included quotations which related the desired progress of a genuine and authentic American intellectual culture and literature to its physical surroundings. He also referred to European analogies, giving special prominence to the Scottish example. By the time this oration and Simms' essay-review, both entitled "Americanism in Literature," were published (in 1844 and 1845) the immediate and the indirect impact of the environment on the literary productions and "the loftiest manifestations of mind" was commonplace. Still, the particulars of the argument deserve to be noted here as the demonstration of the "influence of the climate and the natural objects among which [the higher productions of mind] were developed" reaches a climax in the reference to the presence of the natural environment of Scotland in Ossian and in Scott's poetic and fictional works:

In all the higher productions of mind, ancient and modern, we can easily recognize the influence of the climate and natural objects among which they were developed. The sunsets of Italy coloured the songs of Tasso and Petrarch; . . . the sweet streamlets and sunny lakes of England smile upon you from the graceful verses of Spenser and Wordsworth; and the mist-robed hills of Scotland loom out in

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. David Levin, *History As Romantic Art: Bancroft, Prescott, Motley and Parkman* (1959, rpt. 1963), esp. 8-12, 234.

<sup>41</sup> Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*. Ch. 46, 416-421.

magnificence through the pages of Ossian, and the loftier visions of Marmion and Waverly. . . .<sup>42</sup>

Simms in his essay then goes on to cite Meek's survey of the "diverse manners, feelings, sentiments and modes of thought" apparent in the new nation, which promise to provide abundant material for future authors in regional varieties. It would seem that this confidence and the explicit reference to the literary potential of typical representatives of various ethnic groups derived partly from Cooper and early Cooper criticism and indirectly also from Walter Scott.<sup>43</sup>

Considering the crucial role of Scottish Loyalists in the settlement of the future Canadian provinces it is no surprise that American authors of historical romances who found encouragement in Walter Scott's example have numerous counterparts in Canada. The works of Cooper, Timothy Flint and the historical romances from the South have abundant parallels in Canada, as Elizabeth Waterston and Dennis Duffy have demonstrated.<sup>44</sup> Many imitators of Scott appeared on the scene from the 1820s onwards (Eliza Lanesford Cushing, John Richardson) until William Kirby's *The Golden Dog* (1877) and the romances by Charles G.D. Roberts were published. The immense popularity of Scott's work and the easy adoption of the techniques employed and the values ostensibly promoted by him seem to have been fostered by the fact that Scottish immigrants, who after all represented almost one sixth of the population of the provinces, were constantly reminded of home and their heritage. The "leap of Canadian authors into historical fiction" was facilitated by their awareness of the special relationship between

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<sup>42</sup> William Gilmore Simms, *Views and Reviews in American Literature, History and Fiction*, ed. C. Hugh Holman (rpt. 1962), 7-29. Cf. the discussion of this key passage above in the chapter on the theory of climate in North American texts.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Cooper's inclination to present typical characters as examined in Kay Seymour House, *Cooper's Americans*. (1965). Cf. W. H. Gardiner's contemporary review in *North American Review* 15 (1822) on the ideal material for the novelist, the great variety of "specific character ... in the United States" and his listing of the various types of character "the highminded, vain-glorious Virginian, living on his plantation in baronial estate ... the Connecticut pedlar ... the Dutch burgomaster yet sleeping in the blood of his descendants ...". The desirability of a close study of Scott's influence on the Old South is emphasized in by Michael O'Brien, "The Lineaments of Antebellum Southern Romanticism," *Journal of American Studies* 20 (1986), 2, 165-188.

<sup>44</sup> Elizabeth Waterston, "The Lowland Tradition in Canadian Literature," *The Scottish Tradition in Canada*, ed. W. Stanford Reid (1976), 203-231, esp. 211; and Dennis Duffy, *Gardens, Covenants, Exiles: Royalism in the Literature of Upper Canada/Ontario* (1982), passim.

themselves and Walter Scott's *dramatis personae*. The emerging autostereotype of the colonists in the Maritime provinces and in Upper Canada remained closely linked with that of the country of their origin, and their decisive role in politics and in the professions, the education system and publishing in particular, was a major factor in the perpetuation of this concept. The "doggedness and ingenuity" of Lowland characters populating Scott's fiction must have appealed to readers and writers alike and was emulated in their fiction. It is also well known that Robert Burns invited imitation and his themes and forms were easily transplanted to Eastern and later to Central and Western Canada.<sup>45</sup>

Though 20<sup>th</sup> century literary scholars and critics are inclined to admit that the "continuing closeness of physical and social forms"<sup>46</sup> in their new and in their native country made Scottish immigrant authors adhere to familiar and often genteel Scottish models and thus delayed their own search for and development of new vernacular literary forms until the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was a strain of "more robust realism," for instance, in Thomas McCulloch's *Letters of Mephibosheth Stepsure* (1821-23) and other earlier texts.<sup>47</sup> Even they, however, responded to Scottish models, for instance to John Galt's fictional work, which exerted considerable influence in Canada. While Canadian creative writers thus remained dependent on the Scottish legacy, the first attempts at a national criticism from the 1820s onwards were also made by critics for the most part born in Scotland and strongly conscious of the antecedents of the Scottish masters. The early documents of an incipient cultural nationalism antedating the debate over Confederation pay tribute to these achievements, though in their reflection on Canadian cultural projects and later on the genesis of an authentic national literature they underline, or at least pay lip service to the uniqueness of the material in their own young country.<sup>48</sup> In some of these early essays apparent

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. Waterston, 210.

<sup>46</sup> John P. Matthews, *Tradition in Exile: A Comparative Study of Social Influences on the Development of Australian and Canadian Poetry in the Nineteenth Century* (1962), 214.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. McCulloch, *The Stepsure Letters*, ed. Northrop Frye (1960).

<sup>48</sup> A selection of early national criticism in Canada is available in Carl Ballstadt, ed., *The Search for English-Canadian Literature: An Anthology of Critical Articles from the 19th and early 20th Centuries* (1975). A very early example is provided by David Chrisolme, who promoted the establishment of a literary association in Montreal and wrote an essay in the *Canadian Review and Literary and Historical Journal* in 1826. Cf. Ballstadt, ed., 5-9, esp. 8: "Our climate, soil, productions, scenery and inhabitants are so different from those of



commonplaces reflect the spread of notions propagated by organicist Romantic critics and their readiness to link the distinctiveness of a culture to the characteristics of the inhabitants of a particular country and its topography. In this context the lack of confidence resulting from the apparently uncongenial atmosphere of pioneer life “amid the rugged realism of this vigorously practical Canada” is counteracted by the analogy of the “ungenial Ayreshire of Mosgiel,” which “gave no greater promise of a crop of poetry from its bleak and exposed heights.”<sup>49</sup>

Encouragement of a similar kind was derived from the examples of the USA and of Germany in one of the speeches given by the eloquent spokesman for the Canadian Confederation Thomas D’Arcy McGee. In the years before his assassination in April 1868 the former activist of the “Young Ireland Movement,” who had returned to America and, after a career in journalism, had become one of the most persuasive proponents of a confederation of the British-American provinces, had rhetorically stressed the analogy of Germany, which had a century before been despised by French authors but had meanwhile secured a place in the “vanguard of every department of human thought.”<sup>50</sup> In his speech McGee reminded his listeners of the notorious quip by Sydney Smith: “Who reads an American book?” and the dramatic changes which had happened in the intervening thirty years [sic]. While he was willing to accept the plausibility of the question “Who reads a Canadian book?” admitting the scarcity of such products, he was still unwilling to grant the necessity of such a state of affairs. On the contrary, he stressed the need to overcome the handicaps of the present colonial situation, especially the inundation of the country with English and American publications.<sup>51</sup> McGee demanded books “calculated to our own meridian” and rejected the opinion that “Bostonian culture” was “the worship of the future, and the American democratic system ... the manifestly destined form of government for all the civilized world, new as well as old.”<sup>52</sup> It is obvious that McGee was particularly keen to draw a distinction between Canada and the emerging political, economic and cultural giant south of

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old countries, that every work on those subjects the result of study and observation on the spot would necessarily bear the impression of its origin. . . .”

<sup>49</sup> Daniel Wilson, *Canadian Journal of Science and Literature* 3 (1858), Ballstadt, 17.

<sup>50</sup> Thomas D’Arcy McGee, “The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion” (1867), Ballstadt, 91-98.

<sup>51</sup> McGee had argued for “protection for Canadian literature” in an earlier essay published in *The New Era*, April 24, 1858.

<sup>52</sup> Ballstadt, 93 and 95.

the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel and in this context his reference to the “Northern energy, and the quick apprehension of our young men” introduces a favorite idea of the early nationalists, the members of the “Canada First Movement,” which was founded in 1868 and tried to promote a sense of national purpose and identity. As early as 1858 McGee, who was to become a source of inspiration for these politicians and authors, had argued that in Canada there was a “glorious field upon which to work for the formation of our National literature.”<sup>53</sup> His eloquent praise of the “gorgeous coloring and the gloomy grandeur of the forest ... the grave mystery of the Red man, and the wild vivacity of the hunter of western prairies ... the ringing cadence of the waterfall” and the solemnity and beauty of the great rivers as ideal material for Canadian poets and writers echoes central concepts often associated with Scottish authors and literary productions. This connection is made more apparent by his explicit tribute to the fact that “northern latitudes like ours have ever been famed for the strength, variety and beauty of their literature.”

The consciousness of the advantages of the northern latitude and its climate for intellectual and literary activities pervades the patriotic effusions and orations of the members of the “Canada First Movement.” Their exuberant optimism amply demonstrated by the historian Carl Berger<sup>54</sup> was based on or supported by the assumption that this northern environment was particularly invigorating and favorable to physical and intellectual exertion. This argument was to reach a culmination in Robert Grant Haliburton’s *The Men of the North and Their Place in History*, which in 1869 fused inferences from environmentalism with a belief in permanent racial characteristics and virtues. Though there seem to have been few direct references to the Scottish parallel it was often implied when this model of thought was used and it was often referred to in political debates. Scotland, at any rate, functioned as a central illustration in the efforts of the indefatigable continentalist Goldwin Smith, originally Regius Professor of Modern History in Oxford and later, after his teaching career at Cornell University, a major political journalist and prolific essayist in Canada, who advocated a political union of Canada and the USA. His book *Canada and the Canadian Question*, published in

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<sup>53</sup> This and the following quotations from his early essay in *The New Era*, rpt. Ballstadt, 21-24, esp. 23-24.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Berger, “The True North, Strong and Free,” *Nationalism in Canada*, ed. Peter Russell (1966), 3-26; and *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (1970, rpt. 1976).

1891, but apparently dating back to the 1860s, contains a very pertinent discussion of the advantages Canada might derive from a union with the USA. The allegedly beneficial consequences of such a union would parallel the advantages Scotland had derived from its “reunion” with England, Goldwin Smith argues, and illustrates the economic and political profit of such a union.<sup>55</sup>

Goldwin Smith’s argument was, of course, vehemently rejected by Canadian nationalists, whose emphasis on the positive effects of the northern climate has, it seems, parallels in similar claims by Scottish writers from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards. One of the most widely read authorities on national characters and the effect of the “genius loci” in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Scotsman John Barclay in his *Mirror of Minds* (1614, English translation 1631)<sup>56</sup> had already praised his native country as a favorite haunt of the muses and patrons. Similarly the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Edinburgh physician Robert Sibbald had commended the “lively genius, courage and war-like temper” of the Scots. He had explained this phenomenon by reference not only to the *genius loci* but had also attributed it to the “frequent changes of the seasons, and the varied physiognomy of [their] country.”<sup>57</sup> It is fairly apparent that these Scottish writers were willing to modify the theory of climate in its rigorous zonal manifestation by stressing regional factors which could be said to alter the potentially less beneficial effects of northern latitudes, at least as assumed by the teachers of the theory of climate active in more southern countries. A shift in emphasis and an increase in self-confidence was to become apparent in Guy Miège’s *The Present State of Great-Britain* (1707), in which the colder and purer air in Scotland and the greater frequency of strong winds were regarded as subservient to the “clearness of their Understandings,” their “sharp Wits [and] good

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. Goldwin Smith, “Canada and the Canadian Question,” rpt. *The Canadian Century: English-Canadian Writing Since Confederation*, ed. A. J. M. Smith (1973), 40-50, esp. 41.

<sup>56</sup> John Barclay’s *Icon Animorum* was widely read throughout Europe and was a major source of references to national characters in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. For its remarks on the Scots cf. *The Mirrour of Mindes*, 128; on the “spirit appropriate to every region,” 54 and also see above in the chapters on the theory of climate.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Sibbald, *Scotia Illustrata sive Prodromus Historiae Naturalis ....* (1684), esp. 34-35: “... sunt quoque aptiores ad Disciplinas, quod in nuda et Montana Regione purior et subtilior sit Aër.” An English paraphrase of this passage is contained in Miège (see below).

judgements.”<sup>58</sup> This change in emphasis may, of course, also have been prompted by Miège’s readiness to respond to and cater to the needs for political propaganda at the time of the Act of the Union, which shaped Daniel Defoe’s essayistic and poetic attempts to counteract “national prejudices” against a “Union with Scotland” too.<sup>59</sup>

The bold hypothesis and philosophy of history contained in the slim book by Robert Grant Haliburton, the son of the humorist Thomas Chandler Haliburton, and the assertion of the potential superiority of Canadians over more southern nations combined the assumption of racial traits with a claim that such qualities are enhanced by the northern environment. Haliburton maintained that the Canadians were a northern race who had inherited from their Nordic-British/Scottish and also from their French ancestors (for French immigrants had mainly come from the north of France, it was argued, which had originally been settled by Teutonic tribes)<sup>60</sup> the virtues of Germanic peoples, whose talent accounted for Canadian “robustness,” “health” and “hardiness.”

We are the sons and heirs of those who have built up a new civilization, and though we have emigrated to the Western world, we have not left our native land behind, for we are still in the North ... and the cold north wind that rocked the cradle of our race, still blows through our forests, and breathes the spirit of liberty into our hearts, and lends strength and rigor to our limbs.<sup>61</sup>

Though Haliburton’s enthusiasm seems to be fired primarily by the great deeds and the literature of the genuine “Norsemen” (he quotes from the Edda and other Nordic documents), his account of an experience in a ruined abbey on the Tweed shows that the Scots have their role to play in his vision of the future. The return of a scion of a noble Scottish family from the New World with the surprise and the optimism it engenders locally reflects his sense of the enhancement of the positive inborn traits, the full potential of the Celtic, Teutonic and Scandinavian elements in

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<sup>58</sup> Guy Miège, *The Present State of Great-Britain and Ireland* (1707), 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (1716), pt. 2, 37. *The Present State* was an enlarged, revised version of the earlier *New State of England* (1691).

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Daniel Defoe, *Caledonia, a poem*, and his essay “At Removing National Prejudices Against the Union With Scotland.”

<sup>60</sup> That this belief was also widespread among 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Francophone Canadians has been documented by Pierre Savard. Cf. “Sur le mythe normand au Canada français,” *Études canadiennes/Canadian Studies* 12 (1986), 47-57.

<sup>61</sup> Haliburton, *The Men of the North*, 10.

Canada, which ought to be properly renamed “Norland.”<sup>62</sup> In his sweeping generalization, which seems to have been in tune with the general preference among 19<sup>th</sup>-century American historians for Teutonic races, Haliburton’s conviction that the environment will favorably influence the inborn virtues, preserving in Canadians the spirit of liberty and confirming their superiority over the nations of the south, plays an important role.

Fifteen years later a professor of clinical surgery in Montreal, William H. Hingston, was to offer statistical evidence for the value of the invigorating northern climate in Canada. He also included some remarks on the effect of the Canadian climate on ethnic groups and in this context he also stressed the fact that Scots do not easily change; noticing the tenacity of Scotchmen as settlers he remarked that their “national preferences do not suffer by transplantation.”<sup>63</sup>

That there was a clear Scottish connection when Canadian nationalists adopted the theory of climate, a model of thought ostensibly accounting for certain differences in character, and postulated an autonomous and distinctive culture for the new country is also borne out by Henry Thomas Buckle’s massive *History of Civilization in England* (1857 and 1861).<sup>64</sup> His comprehensive attempt at a scientific historiography and a philosophy of history with its abundant documentation antedated the comparatively threadbare rhetorical effort by Robert Grant Haliburton. Though the biased ruminations of the fairly insignificant member of the “Canada First Movement” Haliburton did not directly refer to Buckle’s ‘opus magnum’ and relied rather on rhetoric than scientific argument, Buckle’s general comments on “the influence exercised by physical laws over the organisation of society and over the character of individuals,” which stressed the effects of climate, food and soil, and his detailed discussion of the factors which shaped Scottish history after the 14<sup>th</sup> century could not have escaped Haliburton’s attention.

But it is obvious that the Scottish element manifest in such exaggerated claims and assertions in the debate over political and

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<sup>62</sup> Cf. Haliburton, 10 for the story of a visit to Scotland and the joy the appearance of a descendant of the “good lairds of Westoun” brought to the local people.

<sup>63</sup> Hingston, *The Climate of Canada and Its Relation to Life and Health* (1884), esp. 221.

<sup>64</sup> The bulk of vol. 2 of Henry Thomas Buckle’s *History of Civilization in England*, 2 vols. (1864), is devoted to the analysis of the forces which molded the history of Scotland.

cultural nationalism became more fruitful artistically in the fictional works of those Canadian authors who began to explore their Scottish heritage at least a generation later: Ralph Connor (*Glengarry School Days*, *The Man from Glengarry*),<sup>65</sup> Frederick Niven (*The Flying Years*, 1935), Andrew Macphail (*The Master's Wife*, 1939). It is also abundantly evident in the late Margaret Laurence's recapture of the molding power of the Scottish legacy in her native Neepawa = Manawaka, though the awareness of this heritage and the autostereotype derived from it is rather ambivalently presented and can impede the search for individual identity.<sup>66</sup>

But our concern in this imagological survey has been to demonstrate the importance of the Scottish element in the search for communal rather than individual identity and our examples are mainly intended to illustrate the catalytic function of Scottish literary texts for and the impact of the heterostereotype of the Scots on the emergence of a discourse involving poets, fiction-writers and essayists both in the United States and in Canada. As we have seen the presence of many Scottish immigrants ensured the resonance of this discourse.

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<sup>65</sup> The enormous popular success of Ralph Connor's books seems to have been partly due to his confrontation with the question of identity so important to English/Scottish Canadians. His protagonists and heroes can still solve this problem of individual and communal identity, thus supplying desirable models for the reading public. Cf. J. Lee Thompson and John H. Thompson, "Ralph Connor and the Canadian Identity," *Queen's Quarterly* (Spring 1972), 159-170.

<sup>66</sup> Cf., for instance, the problems created for Hagar by her pride and awareness of the Scottish legacy in *The Stone Angel* (1964) and the restrictive power of the tribal myth in the life of Vanessa, her father and her grandmother McLeod in *A Bird in the House*, Laurence's fictionalized autobiography. The ambiguity of the heritage is also apparent in Morag's search for identity, her acquisition and use of Scottish myths, partly conveyed to her by her foster father Christie Logan, her later return to her roots in Sutherland, Scotland, and also in her eventual return from Scotland to her native Manawaka (*The Diviners*, 1974).

## **Images of Jews in North American Culture**

- Stereotypes and Sense of Identity of Jewish Southerners
- Self Perception and Presentation of Jewish Immigrants in  
North American Discourse, 1900-1940

## Chapter 20: Stereotypes and Sense of Identity of Jewish Southerners

“I just realized a strange thing ... There are no Jews up here.”<sup>1</sup> Will Barrett in Walker Percy’s *Second Coming* communicates this assumption to his golf partner, Dr. Vance Battle, in the opening chapter of this sequel to *The Last Gentleman*. This remark about an apparent exodus of Jews from the North Carolina mountains and the state generally is the first of many references to a phenomenon that puzzles him and seems to him a sign of great importance. Dr. Battle, however, comes to regard this obsessive interest as a symptom of a hitherto mysterious ailment, which fades when it is eventually diagnosed and when proper medication has been prescribed.<sup>2</sup> Early in the book, however, the narrator’s voice assures the reader in an aside that Will’s observation is not true: “In fact, the Jewish community in that state, though small, is flourishing. There were at the last census some twenty-five synagogues and temples, ten thousand Jews with a median income of \$21,000 per family.”<sup>3</sup> When one tries to evaluate this narratorial intrusion, one needs to compare the statement with the statistics contained in relevant studies. The reference works consulted<sup>4</sup> indicate no such exodus and do not corroborate Will’s impression, but support the reliability of the authorial comment. Until 1970 North Carolina was one of those states which even gained Jewish inhabitants, though on a modest scale and not as dramatically as Florida. While looking for confirmation of the narrator’s comment or of Will Barrett’s notion, one becomes aware of the relative scarcity of empirical studies of this ethnic group in the region. Their fortunes have

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<sup>1</sup> Walker Percy, *The Second Coming* (1980).

<sup>2</sup> His concern with the Jews and their importance was, of course, to crop up again in Percy’s later novel *The Thanatos Syndrome* (1987), where Father Rinaldo Smith continues to see the Jews as a sign of God’s presence in the world.

<sup>3</sup> *The Second Coming*, 12.

<sup>4</sup> See Eli Evans, *The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South* (1973), 348-349 and *American Jewish Yearbook* (1987), 164-191.



apparently been overshadowed by the epic story of the fate of millions of Jewish immigrants in the urban ghettos in the North, the acculturation of the younger generation and their social, economic and cultural advancement.<sup>5</sup> That this is the case was brought home to me by a prominent scholar in the field of Southern literature in his comment on a paper I had written on ‘internal and external perspectives on Jewish immigrant experience’ in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> The scholar Louis D. Rubin maintained that critics had too often “confused Jewish American writing with New York City Jewish writing with maybe a nod toward Chicago and Cleveland,” and he stressed the need also to consider the experience of “Jews raised outside large cities with sizeable Orthodox Jewish populations,” and of Jews in other regions, such as in the South.<sup>7</sup> In view of scattered references in a large corpus of literary texts from the South and the somewhat guarded responses on the part of some residents in the region to questions about Jews it seems, indeed, appropriate briefly to explore the Jewish role in Southern society and to sketch their sense of identity. It also seems rewarding for a literary scholar to examine the image of Jewish-Americans in the eyes of Southern observers generally and fiction writers in particular.

The size of the Jewish population in the South has been variously estimated in the 1960s to 1980s with figures ranging from 250,000 to 800,000 depending on the fact whether the Jews who live in Miami are included or not. The first edition of *The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* calculates that there are no fewer than 785,000 Jews “currently dispersed throughout the South”<sup>8</sup> and the *American Jewish Yearbook* of 1987 gives an even larger number. What historical and sociological studies agree upon, however, is the extent to which the experiences of Jewish Americans in the South have depended on their immediate environment.<sup>9</sup> Whether they spent their childhood

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<sup>5</sup> See Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews 1870 - 1914* (1962), and Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (1976).

<sup>6</sup> See the following chapter on Jewish immigrants.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted from private correspondence. See below.

<sup>8</sup> Louis E. Schmier, in Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris, eds., *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* (1989), esp. s.v. “Jews” and “Jewish Religious Life.”

<sup>9</sup> See the essays in Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson, eds., *Jews in the South* (1973) and Eli Evans, who in his account of interviews with Jews from the various subregions of the South, includes about 140,000 Jews who lived in Miami in 1970. See

and adolescence in small towns among very few of their race or culture and exposed to gentile influence and pressures towards acculturation, or whether they resided in the industrial cities of the New South, or in the old traditional centers of Jewish settlement and culture, has shaped their attitudes towards themselves, their cultural heritage and the way in which they have been seen by their fellow-citizens. Their own sense of identity has been crucially affected by the degree of their rootedness and acceptance in the various communities. Sociological research has described the plight of the relatively isolated Jews and their families in the small towns of the South, in the communities of the Bible Belt, where they have mainly functioned as peddlers, storekeepers and merchants.<sup>10</sup> Various studies have documented their dilemmas especially in the small-town and rural South during nativist currents in the 1920s<sup>11</sup> and again during the Civil Rights movement. Historians have recorded the easier preservation of the Jewish identity in industrial cities like Greensboro or Charlotte, or Atlanta. They have also shown that a division persisted in larger cities between early Jewish settlers and 19<sup>th</sup>-century arrivals from Germany on the one hand and latecomers from Eastern Europe on the other hand, with the latter finding little favor among the established group as was the case in the North originally.<sup>12</sup>

While Jewish minority attitudes to their heritage and to the dominant culture have thus reflected certain differences between the various sub-regions and rural, small-town or urban milieus, there has been a (remarkable) similarity in the ways in which WASP leaders in the South, the various writers included, have seen and depicted American Jews. To discuss the dissemination of their fixed image in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the variations in the use of the stereotype seems a profitable, though difficult task for an imagologist

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also Arthur A. Goren, s.v. "Jews" in Stephan Thernstrom, et al., eds., *The Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (1980), 571-598.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Alfred Hero, "Southern Jews," in Dinnerstein and Palsson, 217-250.

<sup>11</sup> See Gerald L. Gold, "A Tale of Two Communities," in Moses Rischin, ed., *The Jews of North America* (1987), 224-234, which explores the decline of small-town Jewish communities in southwest Louisiana.

<sup>12</sup> See Mark H. Elovitz, *A Century of Jewish Life in Dixie: The Birmingham Experience* (1974); Isaac M. Fein, *The Making of an American Jewish Community: The History of Baltimore Jewry from 1773 to 1920* (1971), and Steven Hertzberg, *Strangers Within the Gate City: The Jews of Atlanta, 1845 - 1915* (1978).

and literary scholar. In an era in which studies of intertextuality are fashionable nobody can ignore the fact that the various authors were, of course, also exposed to literature in English in which Jewish stereotypes abounded. When going about their business as fiction writers and inventing “narrational characteristics”<sup>13</sup> for their figures, they also tapped the traditional fictional resource of the imagological allusion. Quite a few authors were ready to employ the fixed associations of ethnic groups and heterostereotypes available to them and familiar to their readers. From an analysis of Jewish characters in literary texts one may thus hope to learn something also about the autostereotype of the in-group in the South. No doubt individual factors influenced the attitudes of Southern writers when they resorted to the use of heterostereotypes of Jews. Yet a scrutiny of several of their texts may suggest some of the assumptions shared by authors and readers.

Due to the recurrence of Jewish characters in their fiction Thomas Wolfe and William Faulkner are obvious choices. Biographical research has, of course, established that both knew only relatively few Jewish families in their respective hometowns, in Asheville and Oxford. Both made contact with numerous Jews outside their sub-regions, as was the case with other Southern writers who after their formative experience at home completed their apprenticeship outside their immediate surroundings.

Thomas Wolfe’s case is particularly complex and illuminating; it deserves special scrutiny as it may mislead critics into ascribing violent anti-Semitism to Southerners. David Herbert Donald’s *Life of Thomas Wolfe* draws attention to the fact that there were only sixteen Jewish families in all of Buncombe county in 1906, yet Donald claims that they were readily “identifiable by their exotic names and their Sabbath observances” and maintains that “like most southerners at the time the Wolfes were anti-Semitic.”<sup>14</sup> This assumption is presumably intended to account for several isolated references to Jew-baiting in Altamont/Asheville referred to in *Look Homeward, Angel*.<sup>15</sup> Yet Paschal Reeves, who did the most

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<sup>13</sup> The term is quoted from Helmut Bonheim, “Characterization and the Short Story: Analysis by Narrative Modes” (1982), 175-187.

<sup>14</sup> David Herbert Donald, *Look Homeward: The Life of Thomas Wolfe* (1987), 21.

<sup>15</sup> *Look Homeward, Angel* (1929, rpt. 1957): see Ch. 9 78-80 and Ch. 17, 194-196.

thorough study of national characters in Wolfe,<sup>16</sup> claimed that the general attitude towards Jews in Asheville during Wolfe's boyhood was "benign" and correctly argued that Eugene Gant's anger at Edward Michalove was prompted rather by the mincing effeminacy of this schoolmate and not by his role as an outsider occasioned by his Jewish heritage. Reeves also pointed to the tradition of sympathy for Jews in North Carolina, which goes back to its Civil War governor Zebulon B. Vance, a native of the same area as Wolfe, who defended the Jews in a famous address probably given hundreds of times under the title "The Scattered Nation."<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, one cannot overlook the fact that while Wolfe was in his teens, a wave of anti-Semitism which had received fresh impetus through the Leo Frank affair in Georgia, moved through the South.<sup>18</sup> Still, the eruption of Wolfe's anti-Semitic feelings mirrored in his *Notebook* entries<sup>19</sup> and in *Of Time and the River* seems due rather to flaws in his own personality, his way of coping with new disconcerting experiences, and his inclination to verbal aggression and xenophobia than to a climate of violent anti-Semitism in the ethnically relatively homogeneous town in the foothills of the Smokies. It was significantly only during his residence in Boston and in New York that dormant stereotypes, which the renewed agitation of the Ku-Klux-Klan in the South had strengthened, were focused and that the young student, graduate and later college instructor faced with the difficult life in the metropolis began to project his frustrations (as a dramatist and writer) on the Jews as he had done earlier on the Boston Irish. Awakened prejudices were aggravated by his experience at New York University, where he was temporarily exposed to scores of Jewish students. He later fictionalized his experience there and his sense of being in a world "overrun with Jews" and of being engulfed in the corridors of the university by the "swarming, shrieking, shouting

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<sup>16</sup> See Paschal Reeves, *Thomas Wolfe's Albatross: Race and Nationality in America* (1968). On Wolfe's complex image of the Jews, see 39-85.

<sup>17</sup> See Zelig Adler, "Zebulon B. Vance and the 'Scattered Nation,'" 357-377.

<sup>18</sup> See Leonard Dinnerstein, "Atlanta in the Progressive Era: A Dreyfuss Affair in Georgia," in Dinnerstein and Palsson, 170-197.

<sup>19</sup> See R.S. Kennedy and P. Reeves, eds., *Notebooks of Thomas Wolfe*, 2 vols. (1970), vol. 1, 22-24, where Wolfe expresses his intense irritation at the alleged corruption of American culture, which has come "to fit the Jew like a glove, far better, indeed, than it fits the members of our own race."

tides of dark amber Jewish flesh.”<sup>20</sup> Donald has revealed the fact that Abe Jones, the eager student, who grills the inexperienced and insecure instructor with endless questions in *Of Time and the River* and provokes his animosity, is merely a thinly veiled portrait of Abe Smith, one of his male students who pestered him with obnoxious questions until his fury flared up. While Wolfe offered merciless caricature of Abe as a pushy young “gray-faced” man with an enormous “puttycolored nose that bulged,”<sup>21</sup> he was later to develop a certain liking and sympathy for Abe and their relationship became quite close and opened up a new world to Wolfe, which helped to modify his anti-Semitic prejudices, which had become virulent in the alien environment of the metropolis.<sup>22</sup> His image of the Jews was obviously also shaped by his later complex relationship with the short, vivacious, stage and costume designer of New York theaters, Aline Bernstein, almost 20 years his senior.<sup>23</sup> His later presentation of Jewish businessmen like Mr. Rosen (who is praised as a “lavish and opulent” person) and publishers like Mr. Hyman Rawng (who is caustically satirized)<sup>24</sup> does not reflect a specifically Southern heritage, or anti-Semitism in the Piedmont, but rather mirrors his inclination to fall into extremes and resort to stereotypes partly as props in his attempts to come to terms with life in the anonymous urban sphere.

William Faulkner’s native environment in Lafayette County seems also to have provided little direct foundation for some of his anti-Semitic character sketches, though Edward S. Shapiro exposes the manifestations of “Anti-Semitism Mississippi Style” in the public careers of Senator Theodore G. Bilbo and Congressman

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<sup>20</sup> See *Of Time and the River* (1935), 419 and Reeves, *Thomas Wolfe’s Albatross*, 39-49.

<sup>21</sup> See *Of Time and the River* (1935), 457, and David H. Donald on this complex relationship, 113-116.

<sup>22</sup> Abe Smith was even engaged by the author to type his manuscripts for *O Lost* and also for parts of his second novel. A surviving draft entitled “Passage to England” also shows that through Abe Wolfe gained access to a fairly exotic tenement home which enabled him to develop generalized comments on Jewish history, religion and culture. See Paschal, *Thomas Wolfe’s Albatross*, 44-49.

<sup>23</sup> See Wolfe’s ambivalent feelings towards his lover, to whom he was so deeply indebted for encouragement, financial assistance and culinary pleasures. See Suzan Stutman, ed., *My Other Loneliness: Letters of Thomas Wolfe and Aline Bernstein* (1983), 25.

<sup>24</sup> See Reeves, *Thomas Wolfe’s Albatross*, 52-56, 83-86.

John E. Rankin in the 1930s to 1950s.<sup>25</sup> Before the Populism or quasi Agrarianism of Bilbo and his ilk took its toll, Southerners in the Deep South had, of course, long been inclined to regard outsiders and all agents of change as highly suspect. As merchants and bankers Jews clearly counted among the forces menacing the originally stable agricultural Southern society, and consequently they met with some hostility. Related feelings had already erupted in dramatically growing Atlanta, where the consequences of the rapid economic change with the resulting insecurity and anxieties of uprooted rural Southerners had become strikingly evident in connection with the Leo Frank case, which negatively affected the status of Jews in the whole region.<sup>26</sup> The economic stagnation and the decline in the rural and small-town South were not infrequently blamed on conspiracies of urban Jews even prior to the American appearance of the notorious concoction of the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” (1920) and the new lease of life of the Ku-Klux-Klan after 1915, and especially from 1920 onwards.<sup>27</sup> That Faulkner was aware of the obsessive nature of this resentment emerges from the reiteration of Jason Compson’s jibes against the Jews in New York, who allegedly reap the profit of the cotton-farmer’s hard work:

‘Cotton is a speculator’s crop [...]. You think the man that sweats to put it into the ground gets a red cent more than a bare living,’ I says. ‘Let him make a big crop and it wont be worth picking; let him make a small crop and he wont have enough to gin. And what for? so a bunch of damm eastern jews, I’m not talking about men of the jewish religion,’ I says, ‘I’ve known some jews that were fine citizens. You might be one yourself,’ I says. ‘No,’ he says, ‘I’m an American.’ ‘No offense,’ I says. ‘I give every man his due, regardless of religion or anything else. I have nothing against jews as an individual,’ I says. ‘It’s just the race ...’<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Edward S. Shapiro, “Anti-Semitism Mississippi Style,” in David Gerber, *Anti-Semitism in American History* (1986), 129-151.

<sup>26</sup> See note 18.

<sup>27</sup> See John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of Nativism, 1860-1925* (1981), 280-298.

<sup>28</sup> William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (1946), 209.

That Faulkner, on the other hand, was ready to echo anti-Semitic attitudes without such qualification, has not escaped the notice of literary historians surveying the field. Ilse Duso Lind has explored with great vigor and dedication the intricacies of William Faulkner's relationships with Jews and their bearing on his fictional work.<sup>29</sup> She has provided plausible explanations for the discrepancy between his personal experience on the one hand (his acquaintance with a family of respected Jewish merchants in Oxford, the Friedmans, and later his close contacts with the affluent New Orleans family who sponsored *The Double Dealer*, the Friends) and seemingly racist references on the other hand. Thus one can read Faulkner's frequent designation of Julius Kauffman in *Mosquitoes* as "the Semitic man" and the attribution of unamiable or even disgusting traits, which were totally absent in the model (Julius Friend), and the somewhat puzzling denunciation of the former's grandfather, Julius Kauffman Sr., by his own grandson as a ruthlessly acquisitive Jew<sup>30</sup> as the reflection of an estrangement between Faulkner and the Friends and of the resentment of an impecunious artist conscious of his patrician heritage but now dependent on and averse to the patronage of affluent Jews. There is also little doubt that Faulkner's later story "Death Drag" in the inclusion of caricature employs the language of stereotype.

Among Faulkner's younger fellow-countrymen Shelby Foote, almost 20 years his junior, a long-time resident of his native Greenville and a close friend of Walker Percy, at least deserves the proverbial footnote. The superficial (re)semblance between Faulkner's strategy and Foote's transformation in a series of novels and a collection of stories<sup>31</sup> of his native Washington County in the Delta into the fictional Jordan county round Bristol is fairly obvious. So are the parallels between Faulkner's concern with the past and the legends and myths he had inherited and Foote's preoccupation

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<sup>29</sup> See her various essays: "Faulkner's Relationship to Jews: A Beginning," in D. Fowler and A. J. Abadie, eds., *New Directions in Faulkner Studies* (1984), 119-142, and "The Personalization of History: The Role of the Semitic Man and his Grandfather in *Mosquitoes*," in Javier Coy and Michel Gresset, eds., *Faulkner and History* (1986), 97-110, and "The Language of Stereotype in 'Death Drag'," in Lothar Hönnighausen, ed., *Faulkner's Discourse: An International Symposium* (1989), 127-131.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. William Faulkner, *Mosquitoes* (1927), 324-327.

<sup>31</sup> On Shelby Foote's novels *Tournament*, *Follow Me Down*, *Love in a Dry Season*, and the linked stories in *Jordan County*, see Helen White and Redding S. Sugg, *Shelby Foote* (1982).

with his own family history, the impact of the past and the fascination of heroic figures from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of course, Foote has admitted to other great models like Proust and also taps resources other than his master from Oxford, Mississippi, and he has gained a reputation as an accomplished historiographer through his Civil War trilogy.<sup>32</sup> The few critics who have so far dealt with his tightly constructed six novels and his stories have stressed his concern in his fiction with the forces of history and the thematic role of the failure of love and the failure of the civilization to understand itself. In these and other ways Shelby Foote may appear merely as a prototypical Southern writer. Yet he becomes unexpectedly relevant in our context through an episode which seems to have haunted him so that he used the material in two separate publications. This incident, which is included in chapter 2 of his first novel *Tournament* (1949), is said to have deeply affected Hugh Bart, the solitary and tragic hero upon whom Asa Bart focuses in this novel, which renders the rise and fall of this ruthless superman with a bent for grand gestures who acquired and lost a large plantation.<sup>33</sup> The case involved a storekeeper in Bristol, who was unable to pay back a loan given to him by a banker, who in order to maximize his profit deliberately worked towards the bankruptcy of his customer, whose property had to be sold. It is significant that the unfortunate merchant, who, as an immigrant, had found temporary success in Bristol and when bankruptcy threatened committed suicide in his helplessness, is named Abraham Wiston, and is described as a Jewish immigrant from Austria. Is it not more than a coincidence that Foote's maternal grandfather, Morris Rosenstock, had also come from Vienna, and had temporarily made his fortune in Mississippi only to lose it in the market failure of 1921.<sup>34</sup> Beyond an oblique reflection of his family history, Foote's choice of a Jewish storekeeper as the victim of a calculating banker, whose unscrupulousness so infuriated Hugh Bart, the proud owner of the plantation 'Solitaire,' that he terminated all dealings with him, appears on close inspection as a tribute to Shelby Foote's own otherwise unacknowledged Jewish heritage and the maternal grandfather he remembered from his

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<sup>32</sup> See the three parts of the *Civil War. A Narrative* (1958-74) and the earlier historical novel *Shiloh* (1952).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Foote, *Tournament* (1949), 55-65.

<sup>34</sup> See White and Sugg (1982), 24.



childhood.<sup>35</sup> By reversing the roles of the antagonists, by making a Jew the victim of the deal with an avaricious moneylender, he seems, in addition, to allude to the most persistent of clichés about the Jews, that of the Shylock figure. This connection was even more apparent in an earlier version of this episode as the text which contained it was entitled *The Merchant of Bristol*.<sup>36</sup> In the context of our interdisciplinary survey, however, the Rosenstock branch of Shelby Foote's family can thus appear as representing those small-town Jews who felt the pressures of complete assimilation. Their fortunes illustrate the lure of embracing a new, fully Southern identity, of which Shelby Foote seems to be a typical representative. Together with the high incidence of intermarriage this phenomenon resulted in a drop of almost 50% in the (small) Jewish population of the state of Mississippi after 1937.<sup>37</sup>

As we have now progressed in our discussion from the illustration of stereotypes to the sense of identity of Jewish Southerners, we turn to the prominent literary scholar I quoted at the very outset. He is himself of Jewish origin and a native of Charleston, which also gives us a chance to focus on the role of the old Jewish community in this city in the third historical sub-region of the South. Louis Rubin (for this was my correspondent) has himself fictionalized a formative period of his adolescence there in his novel *The Golden Weather* (1961). It is significant that he chose the centenary of the city's great historic moment to publish his look backward to a quarter of a century before, when the Fort Sumter celebrations were being prepared. His semi-autobiographical hero Omar Kohn lives through adventurous weeks in the year of his graduation from elementary school, takes his first steps towards full initiation, while he and a close WASP friend build the first boat of their own, and have the first intimations of passionate love and death.<sup>38</sup> Omar also receives encouragement to write and respond

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<sup>35</sup> See Foote's various interviews, especially "It's Worth a Grown Man's Time," in John Carr, ed., *Kite Flying and Other Irrational Acts: Conversations with 12 Southerners* (1972), 3-33. See also Foote's interview in John G. Jones, ed., *Talking with Mississippi Writers* (1982), 37-92. Foote's interviews have recently been collected by William C. Carter, ed., *Conversations with Shelby Foote* (1989).

<sup>36</sup> *The Merchant of Bristol* (1947) is admittedly a very rare book.

<sup>37</sup> See *American Jewish Yearbook* (1987), 167.

<sup>38</sup> Rubin has later maintained that although he drew heavily upon a remembered time and place in his early novel, "almost everything that actually happened in it was made up,

creatively to his experience and finally witnesses a terrible hurricane. The book is pervaded by a sense of place and registers the sights, sounds and smells in the environment, but also the intricate social patterns of the Southern city, which is surveyed from several vantage points. Through his hero the author has expressed the sense of tradition he imbibed during his strolls through the city and the sense of belonging to a community and region in which his forbears, at least on his father's side, had resided for generations. Neither his protagonist nor Rubin himself had any reason to feel a sense of alienation or separation from the dominant culture, but fully shared in the life of his peers in upper-class Charleston. There are very few moments in which his youthful eagerness to integrate emerges as clearly as when Omar is relieved not to be one of the alien-looking Orthodox Jews and when he seems reluctant to have his Christian friends as witnesses at a prize-giving ceremony in Sabbath School, and when he shows scruples about having his "separate religious and racial identity ... emphasized" in this fashion (*Golden Weather* 22). Later during the hurricane it occurs to him that unlike the Jews who are being persecuted in Europe "here [he is] no mere like with thick lips and a hook nose; [he] was a member of one of the Fine Old Jewish Families."<sup>39</sup> His temporary relief over his "difference" and the smug feeling of his superior social status are immediately qualified, it is true, by the memory of the Sabbath School hymn and his awareness that he does, indeed, belong to the "martyred race" and cannot deny his heritage. While the youth thus reaches a more balanced view, Omar's creator seems implicitly to hint at the shortcomings of an exaggerated desire to conform and the problems of social assumptions. Yet this insight does not call in question the experiencing self's willingness to assimilate without completely abandoning the riches of his cultural legacy. The awareness that his ancestors had participated in the vicissitudes of South Carolina for so long, is, to some extent and in spite of the ironic touch in the hurricane scene, also shared by Omar's author.

Considering the close and long-standing identification of his family and ethnic group, the assimilated and economically affluent Reform Jewish congregation of Charleston, with the Confederacy and

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invented out of the whole cloth." This statement is inserted at the beginning of part IV of his later novel *Surfaces of a Diamond* (1981), 189.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 81 and 263.

the South, Rubin, who has thought of himself primarily as a Charlestonian and a Southerner, has managed to become a moderate spokesman for the values of the culture of the region. This happened at a time when the question of desegregation put a particular strain on the Jews in the South, who seemed at times caught between Civil Rights activists and white conservatives. As a critic apparently fully at ease in this demanding role Rubin has elaborated on his experience as a typical Southerner in an article more readily accessible than the semi-autobiographical novel and its sequel *Surfaces of a Diamond*, in which he tried to figure out the development of his sense of identity and to understand the cultural factors which made him into himself.<sup>40</sup> Opening this essay with a tribute to a gas-electric train curiously named after a bug ruinous to the cotton crop, Rubin focuses on the transformation of the relatively small Southern city of his youth into the bustling economic center with subdivisions, sprawling shopping malls and the Navy Yard.<sup>41</sup> Reflecting on the loss this change meant to him personally he acknowledges the fact that this experience was “not in any way unique.” Thus the transmutation he is aware of becomes not an occasion for nostalgia but explicitly a clue to a formative influence on all Southern authors, whether they were foster sons of a senator, like Walker Percy, or grandsons of a German Jewish grocer in Florence, South Carolina, as he himself was. In stressing the shared experience of the awareness of change and the transience of the seemingly stable order, Rubin can once again affirm his integration in what he establishes as the continuing Southern tradition.<sup>42</sup>

Louis Rubin’s adolescence and youth as an assimilated Jew in the South primarily with gentile playmates and friends was, no doubt, different from that of the countless new arrivals who lived through conflicts and anxieties as they crowded into the tenements

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<sup>40</sup> In *Surfaces of a Diamond* Rubin shows how Omar Kohn, now three years more mature than the protagonist of *The Golden Weather*, becomes aware of the different lifestyle of the Richmond branch of the family, the East-European Jews on his maternal side. See esp. 190-192.

<sup>41</sup> “The Boll Weevil, the Iron Horse, and the End of the Line: Thoughts on Time and Change in Southern Literature and Life,” in L. D. Rubin, ed., *The American South: Portrait of a Culture* (1979), 371-398.

<sup>42</sup> Rubin professes his belief in human values in the face of the ravages of time and change also apparent in the transformed city of his youth by evoking a crucial scene in Walker Percy’s *The Last Gentleman*.

of the Lower East Side in New York yearning for acceptance. Louis Rubin and people like him were spared the generational tensions in Jewish families which had landed in the New World, which are sifted or at least reflected in the numerous other autobiographies published since about 1910. Rubin's fictionalized account of the collective experience of established and integrated Jewish families shows hardly any trace of a painful rift between allegiance to the cherished religious and secular traditions, which East European Jews had brought over from the "shtetl" and were able to preserve in their large enclaves in the ghettos of the northeast, and an eagerness swiftly to achieve economic and social advancement outside their community through complete Americanization.<sup>43</sup>

Rubin's immediate ethnic community had much earlier achieved its specific solution, full integration. His native city, which had for centuries accommodated a flourishing if numerically small Jewish community had been the scene of the rise of Reformed Judaism already in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>44</sup> As a consequence, though the debate over changes in the ritual gave rise to bitter dissension in the community, organ music and hymns were provided for services and thus the differences between Jewish and Christian religious ceremony reduced. Rubin's youthful figure Omar takes pride in these very innovations in the temple of the Reformed Congregation, which also included the use of English and other features, which seem to have worked towards a Jewish-Gentile accommodation.

The political integration of Jews had, of course, pre-dated moves towards a degree of religious conformity. South Carolina was, indeed, the first colony to grant full citizenship to Jews through a liberal constitution for which John Locke was partly responsible and possibly due to the presence of a large foreign element, the Huguenots. Though the full voting rights, which had been granted to the Jews as early as the 17<sup>th</sup> century, were later repealed or temporarily restricted, Jews soon gained the right to hold office and

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<sup>43</sup> Rubin's fictional autobiography differs markedly from the fictional responses written up north, ranging from Mary Antin to the fictional statements of disillusionment with the "American Dream," see Kurt Dittmar, "Jüdische Gettoliteratur," in Bernd Ostendorf, ed., *Amerikanische Gettoliteratur* (1983), 50-112, and the following chapter of this volume.

<sup>44</sup> In 1800, 500 of the 2,000 Jews in the US lived in Charleston, today there are about 3,000. See Barnett A. Elzas, *The Jews of South Carolina* (1905) and E. N. Evans, *The Provincials*, 49-60.

shared in the civic life of the prosperous community.<sup>45</sup> They were to show their full acculturation by becoming spokesmen of the South, while Charleston journalists were prominent among those who raised the voice of reason and spoke out in favor of the Jews when the economic and political difficulties during the Confederacy were blamed on the Jews generally and in particular on the most prominent Jewish-American politician, Judah P. Benjamin, who had himself been reared in Charleston.<sup>46</sup>

Louis Rubin's emphatic assertion of his integration in Southern society may be read as a conscious or unconscious rejoinder to the autobiography of another Louis or Ludwig, a prolific writer and critic, who had spent the formative years of his youth in the same city a generation earlier. The latter had taken pride in his seemingly complete assimilation to the Southern Christian culture, had attended the same schools and college there (1892-1903), only later to renounce his earlier assimilationist stance: Ludwig Lewisohn,<sup>47</sup> who is one of the Jewish authors whom Abe Jones misses in the reading list of Wolfe's autobiographical hero. Lewisohn's painful process of shedding an adopted identity admittedly took place in the North, where he had tried in vain to make a career in English departments and not in Charleston, but his autobiography of 1922, entitled *Up Stream*, included also a rejection of his earlier integration in the Southern city, renamed Queenshaven in his book. His autobiography likewise throws into relief the differences between the life of a Jew belonging to the gentry of the city and that of the single son of poor recent immigrants from Germany, who were not fully able to cope with American society but favored the acceptance of a new identity by their highly talented child, on whom all their hopes rested. Lewisohn's later revocation was colored by the rejection he experienced in the North, when the academic job market was closed to him as a Jew for years, and later

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<sup>45</sup> It was more than a mere coincidence that this tolerant city was the home of the first Jewish poetess of America, Penina Moise, who was born in Charleston in 1797, and Isaac Harby, an early American Jewish dramatist and essayist, also grew up in Charleston in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>46</sup> See E. N. Evans, *Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate* (1988) on the notorious order by General Grant banishing all Jews from the Department of Tennessee and anti-Semitism affecting the Richmond Jewish community (198-206 and 208-210).

<sup>47</sup> See Allen Guttman, *The Jewish Writer in America: Assimilation and the Crisis of Identity* (1971), 100-108.

in Ohio, where he experienced further discrimination and suffered from philistines and chauvinists during World War I. The young doctoral candidate, who had been deeply hurt by the notorious admission of a faculty chairman at Columbia that a Jew had no prospects in English departments, distinctly remembered occasions when he had been slighted or subtly snubbed even in the Southern community,<sup>48</sup> where as a recent convert he had exerted himself in Methodist Sunday school.<sup>49</sup>

That he had also in his first articles publicly adopted the Southern stance on the racial issue was later played down by him in his autobiography, which also reflects his readiness to ascribe ethnic character traits to others, except when he was himself the object of typecasting.<sup>50</sup> Lewisohn's later bitterness and disappointment at the lack of fairness with which he had been treated, at years of poverty and the difficulties he encountered, find full expression in his exposure of the hypocrisy and the 'colorless conformity' in America, both in the North and in the South. In the years when the nativist impulse reached its peak and the imposition of quotas marked its ascendancy Lewisohn thus articulated his complete disillusionment with American culture, which accounts for the sarcastic quality of the summary of his earlier attitudes and self. More than a dozen years after his optimistic departure from Charleston he debunked his attitude at the age of 15 in *Up Stream*, which significantly puts the focus on the narrating self, stressing the narrative distance and his dissociation from the immature, repressed youth of fundamentalist outlook. The chapter entitled "The Making of an American" puts his attitude in a nutshell "I was an American, a Southerner and a Christian" and ironically diagnoses his constitution in "The Making of an Anglo-American": "I was a Pan-Angle of the purest type."<sup>51</sup> His autobiography, which he later continued in a similar vein in *Mid-Channel*, ostensibly marked a step in his return to his earlier, deeper,

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<sup>48</sup> In *Up Stream: An American Chronicle* (1922), he refers to the fact that he had not been admitted to a Greek letter fraternity at college, 88-92. Cf. also above chapter 12.

<sup>49</sup> See his description in "The Making of an American" and the presentation of the further integration and the harsh disappointment in the following chapters on "The Making of an Anglo-American," and on "The American Discovers Exile" (Ibid., 56-59, 80-81 and 104-108).

<sup>50</sup> For a critical assessment see Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity* (1986), 194-206, especially 201 and 204.

<sup>51</sup> *Up Stream*, 77 and 87.

true self. That this progress was not a genuine return to an outdated orthodoxy, but born out of an act of defiance of external categorization, has been argued by Werner Sollors.<sup>52</sup> At all events the rejection of assimilation gets more impatient and polemical in his later novels. Accordingly a rediscovery of Judaism and eventually Zionism is attributed to various originally assimilated characters, for instance in *The Island Within*.<sup>53</sup>

His prolonged desperate attempts and his failure to realize his dreams in academia in the North had coincided with the staging of the optimistic vision articulated in Israel Zangwill's famous play *The Melting Pot*, which had envisaged a fruitful amalgamation and fusion of the various races and ethnic groups.<sup>54</sup> For the time being the facts in American society did not bear out the rhetoric of a David Quixano and a sizeable fraction of the autobiographies of Jewish immigrants in the North expressed disillusionment with American society corresponding to Lewisohn's accusation of "unveracity."<sup>55</sup> While some Jewish critics favored the preservation of the ethnic heritage inside the host culture, some shared his view of more radical remedies for his ethnic group, for example, through Zionism, though not necessarily of an orthodox religious kind.

The contrast between Rubin's complete integration and Lewisohn's Zionism and its promotion in his later fiction and expository writing<sup>56</sup> illustrates once again the range of possible attitudes by Jews who had spent formative years in the South to themselves and to the culture of the majority; as the example of Cynthia Ozick and the renaissance of orthodox religion and Judaism today can show us, such a return to the mainsprings of the ethnic civilization need not be prompted by lack of success in a society. On

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<sup>52</sup> Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity*, 202-207.

<sup>53</sup> See Guttman (103-106) on the experience of Arthur Levy, the chief protagonist in *The Island Within* (1928), a chronicle which to some extent traces the family history of the Lewisohns.

<sup>54</sup> The production of this play in 1909 and 1910 and its subsequent publication provided a welcome notion at a time of mass immigration, which increasingly mobilized nativist attempts to curb it.

<sup>55</sup> It is true the optimism expressed in the play had some foundation in contemporary politics as President Theodore Roosevelt, for instance, had made Oscar Straus the first Jewish member of his Cabinet when he appointed him Secretary of Commerce and Labor. Zangwill's dedication of *The Melting-Pot* to Roosevelt reflects the appreciation of his attitude. See the edition of 1925.

<sup>56</sup> See Lewisohn, *The Answer: The Jew and the World. Past, Present and Future* (1939).

the contrary, as Allen Guttman has suggested, the very success of Jews in their new host culture seems to have provoked a reaction and a countercurrent to complete assimilation, which is, though rarely seen, extant even in the South.

At the same time Lewisohn's radical solution to the dilemma of his ethnic group can take us back to where we started from: to the preoccupation of various of Percy's characters with the Jews, the role they play, their semiotic significance as a 'sign' in a secular world and their potential exodus from America. Of course, Walker Percy's motivation for this absorption with the question of the Jews is grounded in his religious convictions, the existentialist Christianity he professes, and is thus far removed from the quest of Lewisohn for identity and "peoplehood" "in self-created Galuth" in America.<sup>57</sup> In listening to the latter's voice we have lent an ear to a radical key in the polyphony of the numerically small ethnic group in the South.

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<sup>57</sup> See Guttman, 107.



## Chapter 21: Self Perception and Presentation of Jewish Immigrants in North American Discourse, 1900-1940

One of the first scenes in John Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer* (1925) confronts the reader with a "small, bearded, bandy-legged man in a derby hat" (10-11)<sup>1</sup> on the Lower East Side. In the chaotic, ugly world of dumbbell apartments, noisy and malodorous, he stares at an advertising card showing a "highbrowed cleanshaven distinguished face" with a "neatly trimmed moustache." He looks into the "dollar-proud eyes of King C. Gillette." While his wife and daughters are absent, the anonymous man takes up the scissors in front of a mirror and "clip[s] the long brown locks of his beard" and shaves himself. On their return, his daughters and his wife are shocked when they see his face "smooth as the face of King C. Gillette." Associations of success are linked to the mask-like face: "a face with a dollarbland smile." "Oyoy! Oyoy!" the wife laments and throws her apron over her head, and thus confirms the origin of the family in orthodox East European Jewry. The lament also reveals her helplessness, as a seemingly essential traditional element in the appearance of her husband has been sacrificed.

It is part of Dos Passos' narrative strategy in this synoptic novel that this figure now disappears from view,<sup>2</sup> and that the outward perspective consistently predominates, while the inner world of the characters is excluded. The feelings and wishes of at least the subsidiary characters in the book must be largely inferred from their actions and verbal utterances. The typical situation of the man and the symbolic nature of his act, marking his outward assimilation into American society, and the adoption of other cultural values are sufficiently apparent. What happened in many cases in, and on the borders, of the Jewish ghetto on the Lower East Side in New York,

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<sup>1</sup> John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer* (1925); this and all following quotations are taken from the Sentry Edition, Houghton Mifflin (1953).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Blanche Gelfant, *The American City Novel* (1954), 11, and Edward D. Lowry, "The Lively Art of *Manhattan Transfer*" (1969), 1628-1638.

which had received from the early 1880s of thousands of East European Jews,<sup>3</sup> is also presented in numerous literary testimonies of Jewish writers from the perspective of those involved in this transition. Every act of assimilation (in outward appearance) resulted from the desire not to be immediately recognized as a newcomer and greenhorn. Frequently it also indicated the desire for economic improvement, which for many remained, however, an empty hope. Not infrequently such acts also mirrored the crisis in identity which many immigrants from closely knit orthodox communities experienced. In his consideration of the culture of the *shtetl* Irving Howe<sup>4</sup> has stressed, like Kurt Dittmar in his detailed analysis of the literature rooted in the Jewish ghetto and the immigration from Tsarist Russia, that this also involved many Jews who had been affected by a process of secularization and not only orthodox Jews strictly observing their religious rites and practices. It is apparent that the wave of immigration also included emancipated Jewish intellectuals and individuals who were socialists or anarchists. There is no doubt that the culture shock which the newcomers experienced and tried to moderate by sticking together in the ghetto, which could offer them some support and backing in the process of acculturation, differed in intensity. For most of them the exposure to the New World, however, meant a central, key experience which therefore offered itself to the writers of the first generation of immigrants as a primary theme.

In the contemporary story set in the ghetto, a specific variant of the local color story, one rooted in an urban environment, was able to satisfy the relatively simple desire for entertainment of a broad reading public. This had gradually come to appreciate studies of seemingly exotic milieus, and appeared to relish the exposure of the poverty and misery in the slums. In contrast, the autobiographies and fictionalized biographies published by Jewish authors from about 1910, often drew on very personal experience, which was also a major reason for their impact. This was less true of Abraham Cahan's *The*

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews 1870-1914* (1962), and Arthur A. Goren's informative entry "Jews" in *The Harvard Encyclopedia of Ethnic Groups*, ed. Thernstrom (1980), 571-598. Before the Quota Laws restricted immigration, approximately 2.3 million Jewish immigrants entered the USA

<sup>4</sup> On the different backgrounds of Jewish immigrants cf. Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (1976), esp. 15-25 (ed. 1983), and Kurt Dittmar, "Jüdische Ghettoliteratur" in Berndt Ostendorf, ed., *Amerikanische Ghettoliteratur* (1983), 50-112, esp. 53.

*Rise of David Levinsky* (certainly less true than Louis Harap<sup>5</sup> has claimed), than of the numerous autobiographies of, above all, women writers such as Mary Antin and Elizabeth G. Stern, Rose Gallup Cohen or Marie Ganz. The autobiographic impulse and the exploration of the dilemma of immigrants also shaped the work of Anzia Yeziarska, who, like Cahan, is today a much discussed Jewish American writer of this era in contrast to earlier times, when Allen Guttman referred to her (correctly) as “almost completely forgotten” (Guttman, 33). The texts produced by these women writers again and again show us individuals experiencing cultural conflict, torn between their eager desire to assimilate and a continuing attempt not to abandon their cultural heritage completely. The very choice of the linguistic medium, English, and not Yiddish or even Hebrew, indicates the direction in which the search for identity developed for the vast majority of new Jewish arrivals.

This alone refutes the fears frequently expressed in American media in those years that Jewish immigrants would be difficult to integrate. The *Boston News* of 1860 wrote that “... the Jew never becomes a citizen, his posterity never amalgamates with the great mass of people.”<sup>6</sup> The beginning of the wave of immigration from Eastern Europe in the wake of Tsarist pogroms only served to strengthen the prejudices against the “unassimilable Jew”, and as early as the middle of the 1880s the Jews from Tsarist Poland were being branded as the least desirable immigrants. The American Jews descended from Central European immigrants distinguished themselves clearly from those newcomers and did not want to jeopardize their newly won status.<sup>7</sup> Apparently, the densely populated ghetto on the Lower East Side, where an area of about one and a half square miles was home to half a million people,<sup>8</sup> provided evidence enough for the cliché of the East European Jew incapable of assimilation and integration. A considerable part of early Jewish American fiction turns out to be literature engagé, (prompted by a defense against the serious reservations expressed against this ethnic

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Louis Harap, *The Image of the Jew in Literature* (1974), 518.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted after Michael N. Dobrowski, *The Tarnished Dream* (1979), 143.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Nathan Glazer, “The Jews,” in Higham, *Ethnic Leadership in America* (1978), 19-35.

<sup>8</sup> While this district continuously received new immigrants, Jewish Americans who had already progressed in the process of acculturation moved to other parts of New York or to other cities in the north or northeast of the USA

and cultural group), striving to correct this negative image. Only an attentive observer could fully appreciate how diverse and rich in distinct types the seemingly homogeneous Jewish neighborhood in New York was in reality and how different the individual solutions of the fundamental cultural conflict were in the individual lives. One such was Hutchins Hapgood. In *The Spirit of the Ghetto* he portrayed the district with its numerous facets with great sympathy and understanding. In his gallery of figures and types rendered from the position of an outsider the contrasted variants of the Jewish woman receive special consideration. The “orthodox Jewess,” whose life is said to be “absorbed in observing the religious law and in taking care of her numerous children,”<sup>9</sup> and who is content with her dependence on her husband and her inability to possess property, is juxtaposed with “the modern type” of woman, completely emancipated from traditional life styles, the proto-feminist and the socially critical intellectual. It is predominantly from this segment of society that the authors of the above-mentioned Jewish autobiographies stem. When they wanted to abandon the narrow boundaries of the extended family for the public space normally reserved for men, the traditional respect for school and education in Jewish culture furnished a pattern of behavior which helped to ease their abrupt breach with tradition.

The tension between the adherence to orthodox, religious and cultural paradigms, on the one hand, and their renunciation in favor of new patterns, on the other, is mirrored in the fiction produced by the first generation of immigrants in the conflict by various characters epitomized in the subtitle of Anzia Yezierska’s *Bread Givers* (1925): “A struggle between a father of the Old World and a daughter of the New”. In this fictionalized account of some of the author’s own experiences, the lives of Sara Smolinsky (who as a ten-year-old girl had to contribute to the support of her family by selling herring) and her father Reb Smolinsky are contrasted. He leaves it to his patiently suffering wife and daughters to earn their livelihood while he devotes himself to his reading of the Torah. Women were for the orthodox Rabbi merely “servants of men who read the Torah” (9-10). Sara, however, escapes from the prison house of the patriarchal family structure and with her iron will (her nickname is “Blut und Eisen,” 137) manages, through hard work and in face of opposition and lack

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<sup>9</sup> Hapgood, *The Spirit of the Ghetto* (1902), 72; for the opposite type of woman see 76-85.

of understanding, to attend school and eventually college.<sup>10</sup> Here she gains an academic degree and a teacher's qualification for her profession. The conflict graphically documented is the one between the generations, between rebellious children and their parents struggling to cling to traditional (ethnic) ways of living. It appears in Jewish American literature with striking frequency, as the apparent consequence of the relative flexibility and ability of the children to assimilate in the host society.<sup>11</sup> This conflict was to receive a more ambitious rendition in Henry Roth's accomplished modernist novel *Call It Sleep* (1934). There the conflict between an irascible and emotionally unstable father and his sensitive young son is rendered with psychoanalytic methods and reflects some aspects of the ethnic Jewish experience in the process of acculturation in the urban context of the ethnic neighborhood but with forays into the realms of other ethnic groups.

Like Sara's family, quite a few of the parents expected their children to observe traditional customs, manners and rituals pedantically. The scrupulous observance of prescribed rules could at times generate some comical situations, for instance, in Israel Zangwill's popular drama *The Melting-Pot*,<sup>12</sup> where old Mrs. Quixano, who speaks only Yiddish, expects her Irish maid Kathleen to be competent in the language, while Kathleen, who is unfamiliar with the subtleties of Jewish habits, initially gives free rein to her resentment at this. That the irony directed against the strict and literal fulfillment of ritual requirements is relatively mild in this important landmark in the literary and cultural history of Jewish immigration can be inferred from the fact that even Kathleen at the end of the play argues emphatically for their retention. The seeming antagonists at the beginning of the play move to the background as the conflict between the demand to retain the ethnic character and the wish to integrate the

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<sup>10</sup> Yeziarska surveyed her own life in an autobiography (*Red Ribbon on a White Horse*, 1950) which, while exhibiting some parallels to Sara's situation, omits crucial experiences and thus appears as a 'fabrication.' Cf. the exposure of this far-reaching process of fictionalization by her own daughter Mary V. Dearborn in Werner Sollors, ed., *The Invention of Ethnicity* (1989), 105-123.

<sup>11</sup> On the generational conflicts cf. Irving Malin, *Jews and Americans* (1965).

<sup>12</sup> The play was first produced in Washington in 1908 and printed in New York in 1909. The 1925 edition contains an afterword by the author and provides material on ethnic immigration as well as references to the fate of Daniel Melsa who was descended from Russian Jews and a genius as a violinist.

Jewish heritage in the grand melting pot is negotiated between Mendel Quixano and his nephew David.

In Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917), this conflict between the various opponents is primarily located in the psyche of one character, and the quasi-autobiographical form serves as the medium for an exemplary depiction of the personal dilemma of an uprooted former student of the Talmud. In his early work Cahan had illustrated the dangers of superficial assimilation in the fate of the rapidly Americanized Yekl, alias Jake Podkovnik, whilst in the story "The Imported Bridegroom" he had plausibly rendered similar aspects of the collective experience of Jewish immigrants. The latter story shows how another student of the Talmud, Shaya, whom Asriel Stroon, a Jewish American businessman nostalgically seeking his cultural and religious roots, has chosen as a husband for his emancipated daughter Flora, very quickly turns his back on orthodox beliefs and rituals. Thus "The Imported Bridegroom" illustrates by means of various characters and from an ironic perspective the problems of assimilation in its various stages. In this presentation Cahan employs humor based on painful ethnic experience, a fact which gains special significance in later Jewish American texts.<sup>13</sup> It is not yet evident in *The Rise of David Levinsky*. The choice of the autobiographical form, however, ensures (a degree of) immediacy, and a point of view which encourages the empathy of its readers whilst the author offers a panorama of the development of a whole branch of the economy. Levinsky's rise from very modest beginnings as a tailor trained on the shop-floor to being a successful businessman and eventually the respected owner of a garment factory, exemplifies the historical fact of the replacement by Russian immigrants of Jews from Central Europe as the dominant force in the garment industry.<sup>14</sup>

Arthur A. Goren has documented this shift in the ownership in the American textile industry between 1880 and 1913 when finally the majority of the 16,500 factories and workshops were in the hands of Jews who had come from Russia, with three quarters of the labor force

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<sup>13</sup> On the use of humor and irony at the expense of Jewish individuals and the whole group cf. the fiction of Daniel Fuchs from *Summer in Williamsburg* (1934) onwards. See also Guttman, *The Jewish Writer in America*, 45-47.

<sup>14</sup> A mortifying incident in the shop of his employer had given Levinsky, who lacked sufficient capital of his own, the idea to try to be independent. Cf. *The Rise of David Levinsky*, 187-188.

in this branch also recruited from this ethnic and cultural group.<sup>15</sup> The publication of an earlier version of this novel in a series of articles in *McClures's Magazine*, confirms the intention of the author to provide a documentary.<sup>16</sup> Levinsky's fate and fortunes are, however, also depicted and drawn as the lot of an individual character in whom a crisis of consciousness and identity of immigrants from the first generation can be grasped and vicariously experienced.

Levinsky's misery after the death of his mother in the ghetto of his native Antomir was only mitigated by the gifts of pious Jews. Newly arrived in America, the cutting of his sidelocks does not, however, immediately mark the total abandonment of the traditional observation of regulations of his orthodox youth as it did for the anonymous Jewish immigrant in John Dos Passos' *Manhattan Transfer*. The liberal Jew Mr. Even, who has provided new clothes for him after meeting him in the synagogue, assures him even at the barber's to whom he had taken him that "one may go without them [the sidelocks] and yet be a good Jew" (101). The subversion of the religious world view of the young man progresses rapidly. His convictions had first been shaken by the erotic aura of Matilda, the emancipated daughter of one of his benefactors in Antomir; the brutal reality of the ghetto, where he struggles as a peddler with his push cart among vulgar fellows and where he comes to know prostitutes, however, accelerates this process. Soon in these sorry surroundings the only aim that has remained as a substitute and an occasionally nostalgic reminder of the religious student and admirer of the spirituality of the paternal figure of Reb Sender, is his potential attendance of college. Like other fairly young Jewish immigrants who yearn for success and a deeper meaning in their lives (see Sara Smolinsky), Levinsky is ready to endure long abstinence in order to recover in night school something of that enthusiasm which had earlier been his gift. It is no coincidence that the first person narrator refers to that site of secular spirituality as "my temple;" "the red, churchlike structure on the southeast corner of Lexington Avenue and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street ... was the synagogue of my new life" (169). Yet external factors, the threat of the collapse of his modest business, compel him to abandon the realization of this educational goal.

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. Goren, "Jews," 582.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Dittmar, "Jüdische Gettoliteratur," 105-106.

This marks a turning point in the development of a protagonist and narrator. He is (otherwise) successful in the garment industry through his very skilful exploitation of opportunities in the market, and through the availability of very low cost workshops and the employment of a cheap labor force, and through his own persistence and doggedness. Several analyses among the recent studies on Cahan's *oeuvre* have justly come to regard the permanent abandonment (related in book eight of the novel under the title "The Destruction of my Temple," 185-215) of educational plans as a key to Levinsky's dissatisfaction with the present in spite of his external material success. No doubt, the personal bewilderment and confusions of his failure in love contribute to his profound perplexity at the end of the book. The aging bachelor finds only temporarily a point of orientation in his sensually appealing fiancée Fanny Kaplan, after his inevitable separation from the sensitive Dora, who was eager to learn, but already married. But it is all for naught. Levinsky terminates his engagement to Fanny in order to court the idealistic and strong-willed Anna Tevkin, who devotes herself to social criticism and the reform movement. That Miss Tevkin, whom he has met in the new holiday region of the Catskills, which affluent American Jews labeled the "Borschtsch Belt," is the daughter of a Hebrew poet Levinsky has admired from his early days, gives a special character to his courtship of her. His turning to the past, apparent in his relationship with Miss Tevkin's father, who has also emigrated to America, underlines the lack of meaning in Levinsky's present, which is clearly given expression at the end of the book.

Critical voices have tended to interpret this conclusion in Levinsky's autobiography not only as a projection of Cahan's uneasiness in the face of compromises he had to accept himself, compromises which turned the author from a social critic and incorruptible artist into an established journalist needing to satisfy a mass readership. They have also noted imperfections in the language and in the structure of the book. The nostalgic look backward at the end of the autobiography to the existence of the pious student of the Talmud has been described as being too abrupt and too little prepared for.<sup>17</sup> Yet, it is indisputable that the first person narrator, in spite of

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. esp. Harap, 524. Jules Chametzky in *From the Ghetto*, and Dittmar in "Jüdische Gettoliteratur," 109-110, however, accept the plausibility of Levinsky's nostalgic look backwards.



being proud at his success, experiences emptiness and loneliness, and that his radical adaptation to the conditions of the capitalist market have been achieved only at some cost. In contrast to William Dean Howells' Bostonian industrialist Silas Lapham, to whose fictional biography Cahan's book is linked through its very title, Levinsky is spared a serious ethical test in a financial and moral crisis, but he would probably not have passed this test. The way in which Levinsky, like Silas Lapham, permitted an early partner to leave the business which was running successfully, and how he uses the competence of the brilliant designer of patterns Chaikin later in his business, suggests that Levinsky is not very scrupulous. Cahan's protagonist is also compared with that of Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, another figure who makes good after very humble beginnings. Like Dreiser's protagonist Levinsky has not really found satisfaction and happiness at the climax of his economic success in American society, in whose narrative tradition Cahan's book is thus (well) integrated.<sup>18</sup> The inner perspective of Jewish American fate chosen reveals problems of surrendering to the ethics of success.

While the skilful entrepreneur in the garment industry in the era of the Robber Barons could take the rise of the Vanderbilts and Rockefellers as a model, and while his achievement realized at least *one* American paradigm, for the American public the success of Levinsky and his ilk was redolent of a stereotype which in the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had again become virulent in the Anglo-Saxon world. This redirects our attention to the external perspective on Jewish Americans. The "greatest collective Horatio Alger story in American immigration history" as the economic social success and rise of this ethnic group has been termed,<sup>19</sup> was in this case not accepted as a positive romance. As Edgar Rosenberg has demonstrated in *From Shylock to Svengali* (1960), and as the evidence assembled by Michael N. Dobkowski on anti-Semitism in American culture shows, the image of the smart and avaricious Jew witnessed a renaissance in that era. The (far-reaching) emancipation in the Old World with the successful rise of various Jewish bankers into the moneyed aristocracy provided the background for the frequency with which the image of the calculating and unscrupulous Jewish

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Chametzky's comments on the "American Significance" of Cahan's text.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Milton M. Gordon's praise in *Assimilation in American Life* (1964), 185; quoted from Dittmar, "Jüdische Gettoliteratur," 54.

businessman re-entered (American) literature. To correct this image, epitomized in the United States by General Grant's notorious decree in the Civil War banishing all Jews from Tennessee as they had allegedly traded with the enemy out of greed,<sup>20</sup> was also the intention of an essay composed by Mark Twain in Vienna with the title "Concerning the Jews." Twain, who had himself been suspected of belonging to the Jews because of his first name Samuel, published this essay after his misunderstood article "Stirring Times in Austria".<sup>21</sup> The increasing influence of Jewish businessmen irritated literary representatives of patrician families in New England in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. On the one hand, they saw that their leading role, long taken for granted, was in jeopardy through these social climbers and nouveaux riches. On the other, they noted with anxiety the intrusion of strangers in their relatively homogeneous neighborhoods.<sup>22</sup> Ethnic origin, deemed irrelevant in the economic success of the Robber Barons, was made so in the case of Jewish immigrants, thereby confirming and consolidating a negative cliché, which was at least partly of literary origin. These facts help to make understandable the dislike Henry Adams expressed of the uncontrolled waves of immigrants and his readiness to formulate attacks on Jewish upstarts and their allegedly destructive influence on American culture: "We are in the hands of the Jews; they can do what they please with

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. Dobkowski, 84-85, on the accusation in a decree dated December 17, 1862, in which Jews were blamed for offending against "every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department," and on the consequences of such a stigmatization among the American public.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. the essays contained, for instance, in Mark Twain, *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg and Other Stories and Sketches* (1925), 203-225, and 296-336. See also the unpublished thesis by Karl Stiehl, "Mark Twain in der Wiener Presse zur Zeit seines Aufenthaltes in Wien" (1953) about the speculation about Clemens' alleged Jewish ancestry. Since the completion of this essay Carl Dolmetsch has explored this issue in "*Our Famous Guest*": *Mark Twain in Vienna* (1992), 162-180.

<sup>22</sup> On the reservations Henry James expressed, cf. Dobkowski, 85-88, and 115-130 on Frederick Jackson Turner's irritation at this phenomenon. Long before his lecture on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," he lamented the intrusion of the "pawnbroskers and similar followers of Abraham" in Boston's urban sphere. Cf. Dobkowski, 128-129, and Edward N. Saveth, *American Historians and European Immigrants, 1875-1925* (1948), 128-131. There is a possibility that the artists and aestheticians from patrician families in New England found in the Jewish businessman a substitute for the secularized Puritan whose materialism and pushiness they resented.

our values.”<sup>23</sup> The fear of the strengthening of Jewish power, extrapolated from the rapid increase in the economic and political power of Jewish immigrants and enhanced by the persistence of prejudices in the Occident and in the New World, even fears of a Semitic plot, also provided a basis for Ignatius Donnelly’s dystopian vision of *Caesar’s Column* (1891), which is rooted in populist attitudes. There Jewish capitalists act as the suppressors of their own fellow countrymen; but the leaders of the merciless revolutionaries are also recruited from this group. A generation later, after the Bolshevik Revolution and in the wake of publications of radical Jewish social critics, and in connection with the agitation in favor of the rigorous restriction of immigration, this anxiety was reactivated in even more virulent form in the paranoid excitement concerning the apocryphal “Protocols of the Elders of Zion.”<sup>24</sup>

The late 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the use of the stereotype of the avaricious Jewish pawnbroker and the junk dealer which both provided a fertile soil for many anti-Semitic caricatures in cartoons, but also in narrative prose, for instance, in the portrait of the greedy Zerkow in Frank Norris’ *McTeague* (1899).<sup>25</sup> Also in the gallery of figures from the ghetto which Michael Gold, the ideological leader of intellectuals with Marxist-Leninist perspectives, offered in *Jews Without Money* (1930), there is the portrait of a grotesque miser named Fyfka. In this novel he is, however, not presented as a typical representative of the Jewish character, but his life is shown to be the consequence of grinding poverty.

That the negative heterostereotype of the avaricious Jew is frequently employed can be inferred from the little known novel of the Canadian author of bestsellers, Ralph Connor,<sup>26</sup> who renders the implications of the mass immigration of East European settlers in Canada. In his novel *The Foreigner* (1909) the author, by then

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. Adams’ letter to Charles M. Gaskill, July 31, 1896, in *The Letters of Henry Adams*, vol. 2, 111.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. also Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 279-285.

<sup>25</sup> This infamous presentation is considered at the beginning of the chapter “Remarks on the Tradition and Function of Heterostereotypes” in this volume.

<sup>26</sup> As the first best-selling Canadian author Charles Gordon, who published under the pseudonym Ralph Connor, managed to sell five million copies of his first three books *The Man from Glengarry*, *Black Rock*, and *The Sky Pilot*. In the two latter books he depicted the frontier with its characteristic violence and lack of control, which was gradually re-established by civilizing agents.

Presbyterian minister in Winnipeg, gives vent to his anxiety concerning the unrestricted influx of foreigners into the Prairie provinces. While ostensibly fascinated by the spectacle of the arrival of innumerable, only partially civilized “Galicians,” (the term taken from the Austrian crown land, and used for immigrants from Ukraine and eastern Poland), he exploited the increasing anxieties of the Anglophone majority. It is significant that he assigns the role of a diabolic villain to a character whose *name* at least suggests a Jewish background:<sup>27</sup> Rosenblatt appears at first as an unscrupulous conman, who crams the new immigrants into barrack-like housing, exploiting the fact that they do not speak the language of the majority. He thus hinders the process of integration, which the authorial narrator postulates and which is to raise the Slavs to the cultural and ethical level of the Anglo-Saxon pioneers. The authorial readiness to provide sweeping generalizations on the characters of the immigrants and in his assessment of individuals<sup>28</sup> is in this novel supported by the depiction of violent conflicts between the characters. Rosenblatt is eventually exposed as traitor who is fundamentally responsible for the long Siberian exile of Michael Kalmar and for the death of his first wife. He has also cheated Paulina, the second, somewhat mentally slow wife of the Russian aristocrat who has emigrated to Canada, ruining her both economically and morally. The author, whose arrangement of characters and themes has been trained in the local color tradition, devotes himself to the depiction of the rude manners and semi-barbaric splendor of the customs of the immigrants. On the other hand, he specializes in melodramatic confrontations in which the boundless sly art of the avaricious villain Rosenblatt becomes apparent. Before he is caught in his own trap which he had set for Kalmar’s son, a bomb attack to remove him from the scene completely and to rob him of his newly discovered coal mine, Rosenblatt has come to appear as the epitome of iniquity. He would have easily fitted into an Elizabethan or Jacobean tragedy, which may suggest something about his literary ancestry. How far the character of

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<sup>27</sup> Rosenblatt is differentiated from the Russian and Ukrainian immigrants and is explicitly called a “Bukovinian.” Cf. Connor, *The Foreigner*, 45.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *The Foreigner*, 347: “The fierce lust for vengeance which had for centuries run mad in his Slavic blood, had died beneath the stroke of the cross. . . .” – On Connor’s promotion of a specific Canadian autostereotype, cf. J. Lee Thompson and John H. Thompson, “Ralph Connor and the Canadian Identity,” *Queen’s Quarterly* (1972), 159-170.

Rosenblatt mirrored a widespread dislike of the new Jewish element in Canada, especially in the urban spaces of Montreal and Toronto but also in Winnipeg, needs further analysis.<sup>29</sup> That the nativist agitation with its relatively pronounced anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic prejudices was not only active in the United States but also north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel.<sup>30</sup>

The racist ideology which in the United States had appeared in the guise of scientific knowledge<sup>31</sup> had supported the latent skeptical attitude against the readiness and capability of East European immigrants to acculturate, and had warned against a mixture of races. The potentially positive contribution of these immigrants to the cultural achievement of the nation was questioned, and a good part of the early Jewish American literature intended to refute these claims. The widespread distrust of East European Jews meanwhile produced in mainstream literature dubious fruit. Stereotypes based on such prejudices occur, for instance, in the early work of William Faulkner in his novel *Mosquitoes*, or in several short stories, such as "There Was a Queen,"<sup>32</sup> as well as in F. Scott Fitzgerald, whose Meyer Wolfsheim in *The Great Gatsby* represents the familiar figure of the "villainous Jew."<sup>33</sup> Various portraits of Jewish tycoons sketched from a distance, expose their inclination to parade their unscrupulously acquired wealth. These first appeared in the 1920s when a further increase of anti-Jewish prejudices was noticeable. T. S. Eliot's poem "Burbank with a Baedeker, Bleistein with a Cigar" confronted the

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. for instance Stephen Speisman, *The Jews of Toronto* (1979), and Abraham J. Arnold, "The Jews of Western Canada" in Jean Leonard Elliott, ed., *Two Nations, Many Cultures: Ethnic Groups in Canada* (1983), 319-330.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Palmer, 151-158. That in the 1920s the Ku-Klux-Klan movement also spread into the prairie provinces of Canada is a fact, as Howard Palmer's study *Patterns of Prejudice* has shown.

<sup>31</sup> Like Arthur William Ripley, who had published *Races of Europe* in 1899 and considered the issue of racial intermixture in America in 1908, Madison Grant had warned against the admission of new immigrants and the mixture of races, especially in *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916). His ideas were taken up, for instance, by Lothrop Stoddard in *The Rising Tide of Color: Against White World Supremacy* (1920), Charles B. Gould, *America: A Family Matter* (1920), and Carl C. Brigham, *A Study of American Intelligence* (1923). A critical analysis of nativism and its coalition with racism is offered in Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 149-157, and 270-277.

<sup>32</sup> For a comment on Faulkner's relationship to Jews see remarks in the preceding chapter on "Stereotypes and Sense of Identity of Jewish Southerners."

<sup>33</sup> Cf. the essay by Joseph Z. Kopf on "Meyer Wolfsheim and Robert Cohn," *Tradition* 10 (1969), 93-104.

reader slightly earlier with a *nouveau riche* from Central Europe who had gained his wealth in Chicago. The negative portrait of Louis Marcellus in Willa Cather's *The Professor's House* showing a sharp Jewish businessman who takes full advantage of the creativity of an inventor, who observes a higher ethic, displays a similar type of character.<sup>34</sup>

Even a decade before, Cather, who otherwise revealed an exceptional measure of sensitivity and empathy with the difficulties of European immigrants in several stories, gave expression to her dislike of Jewish characters. One cannot overlook the similarity between the portrait of the Greek Jew Miletus Poppas, who functions as the successful impresario of Primadonna Cressida Garnet, who herself is being exploited by her extended family ("The Diamond Mine"), with DuMaurier's Svengali in *Trilby*, a fact which the author has also indirectly admitted.<sup>35</sup> The sweeping characterization of the impresario ("he was a vulture of the vulture race, and he had the beak of one ...") (Cather, *Youth and the Bright Medusa*, 75)) is not confirmed in the text itself through the actions of Poppas, who, in comparison with the parasites among Cressida Garnet's relatives, does not deserve such a negative assessment. The story "Scandal" can provoke even stronger anti-Semitic emotions; it was also inspired by Cather's preoccupation with the fate of concert and opera singers, and exposes the unscrupulous exploitation of a pretended intimate relationship to a primadonna by a smart upstart (*Youth and the Bright Medusa*, 151-177). It is significant in our context that Siegmund Stein is a former tailor who now owns a department store. Is this originally indigent immigrant from old Austria, who has risen through his naked ambition and somewhat dubious readiness to "learn," to the status of a successful entrepreneur, patron and collector of art, not related to David Levinsky? Stein's visits to libraries and museums, and his inclination to read in his store are not positively assessed (as was the case with Benjamin Franklin), but regarded as a sign of a suspicious pushiness by the narrator. In contrast to Cahan's novel, the physically

<sup>34</sup> Cf. James Schroeter, "Willa Cather and *The Professor's House*" in his collection *Willa Cather and the Critics* (1967), 363-381.

<sup>35</sup> That Cather's narrator is aware of the link to DuMaurier's novel is apparent in the text of "The Diamond Mine," where the narrator offers a diagnosis of Cressida's relationship to her impresario: "When 'Trilby' was published, she fell into a fright and said such books ought to be prohibited by law; which gave me an intimation of what their relationship had actually become" (*Youth and the Bright Medusa*, 86).

ugly protagonist in Cather's story, who is, however, favored by fate, is only viewed from outside, from a negative, critical perspective. From the angle of one of Garnet's friends and from the perspective of the primadonna herself, who is completely unaware of the part allocated to her by Siegmund Stein in his professional and social strategy, such an unscrupulous, though not directly criminal, exploitation deserves to be condemned. Both the author and the reader probably share this view. They are also tempted to ascribe this misdemeanor not to a singular calculating individual but to the ethnic group to which he belongs.

In Cather's work it is no coincidence that there is no sketch of a young Jewish woman who tries to find her way with enthusiasm and great expectations in the New World, and who is inspired after the destitution and injustices of existence in the East European settlement of the Pale and with a kind of intoxication of freedom. If Cather had not committed herself to an external, negative and critical perspective on Jewish characters, perhaps, "My Sara" or "My Ruth" would have had a place in her work in addition to *My Antonia*. The disappointments of young Jewish women whose hopes had not infrequently been greatly exaggerated and who found, instead of the dreamland(s) of their wishes, the sad reality of the ghetto and the drudgery of the sweatshops, might have offered an epic subject for her in spite of her preference for the rural spaces in which Jewish immigrants settled only rarely, for instance, in the provinces of Alberta or Saskatchewan in Canada.

In the vignettes included in *Manhattan Transfer*, Dos Passos, in contrast, offered a genuine cross-section of the Jewish American experience, as he included among his cast, in addition to the orthodox Jew seeking assimilation at the outset of the book and the stout impresario Harry Goldweiser, who began his career on the Lower East Side (202-204), also the poor seamstress Anna Cohen. She finally loses her only capital in a fire, her good looks (398). On the other hand, glimpses are offered of criminal activities fostered by the misery in the dumbbell apartments of the ghetto, as little Nicky is sent out to steal by his mother and then is cursed by her for bringing worthless booty, "She threw the roll on the floor and wrung her hands with a swaying gesture, 'Oyoy, it's stage money ...'" (148-151, esp. 151).

A few years later, in his fictionalized autobiography *Jews Without Money*, Michael Gold was to sketch the panorama of the

ghetto in the time of his childhood, in which poverty, crime, but also humanity are manifest. Gold's documentation supplements the positive picture offered by Hutchins Hapgood from the angle of an individual who grew up in this world and who was in the penumbra of misery doubtlessly surrounded by crime.<sup>36</sup> A few years earlier Samuel Ornitz similarly drew on the reality of such an experience in *Haunch, Paunch, and Jowl* (1923), a novel in which he made his protagonist Meyer Hirsch a crude, grossly materialistic character who has no scruples.<sup>37</sup> His novel evinced neo-picaresque traits and inaugurated a tradition within Jewish American literature. Gold's *Jews Without Money*, in contrast, represents the rise of radical opposition among Jewish writers and those alienated from their cultural heritage to the social order prevalent in the USA. These authors stressed the gulf between proletarian masses of Jewish immigrants and the few capitalists of the same ethnic group who exploited them. Among the chief frustrations of Jewish youths in the ghettos was the fact that they were at the mercy of "landsleit" who had become successful entrepreneurs in the textile industry. Anzia Yeziarska's story "How I Found America" illustrates this disappointment instructively. As the autobiographies of Jewish women document, such experiences turned quite a few among them into advocates of revolutionary ideologies or even anarchists (Eva Goldmann, Marie Ganz, or Rose G. Cohen). But their texts, like Arthur Bullard's *Comrade Yetta* (1913), also furnished ammunition for those who spoke of the subversive activities of Jewish immigrants and in the time of the "Red Scare" advocated the deportation of such undesirable aliens.<sup>38</sup>

As Sam B. Girgus has demonstrated in *The New Covenant* (1982), the search of Jewish immigrants for a new identity normally did not result, however, in a radical rejection of American culture and its basic ideals and myths. Though the experience of marginality was the lot of the majority of Jewish immigrants during the following decades, they were generally ready to integrate even after personal

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. the provocative statement by Police Commissioner Bingham in 1908, which caused resentment among New York Jews, that half of the criminals in New York were of Jewish extraction. Cf. Glazer, "Jews," in Higham, *Ethnic Leadership in America* (1978), 22.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Guttman, 35-38, and Dittmar, *Assimilation und Dissimilation* (1980), 153-196, esp. 165-167 on the evolution of Hirsch into a cynical hypocrite and accomplished manipulator.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 254-257.



crises and felt that they might contribute their own share to the continuation of an old American tradition.

The early autobiographies of Jewish writers show that the road towards the distinct identity and towards success leads normally through the school and not through the unpopular “heder,” which was increasingly avoided by children of immigrants, through the public American institution and, if possible, through college. In contrast to the restrictions experienced in the *shtetl* Jewish women were not excluded from this educational opportunity. It is thus symptomatic that in Anzia Yeziarska’s *Bread Givers* her protagonist and first person narrator is convinced to have reached her goal when she has managed to earn a degree after years of drudgery and has won a qualification for teaching (232-234). That Sara has found a partner and a kindred spirit in Mr. Seelig (269-280), the principal of her school, who differs very favorably from the aggressive Max Goldstein whom she rejected in spite of her passionate feelings in a time of great hardship, highlights the happy ending of the book. It must be admitted that like earlier stories of Yeziarska the novel does not avoid some bombastic passages and in spite of Sam Girgus’ relatively favorable assessment of the use of language<sup>39</sup> in the book shows some structural flaws due to the introduction of the *deus ex machina*. These weaknesses do not, however, limit the ethical aspect of Sara’s eventual care for her father near the end of her (fictional) autobiography. While he appeared initially almost as a bugbear to be blamed for destroying the happiness of several of his daughters by rejecting their lovers and replacing them by unworthy or unsuitable tutors, as he is finally a helpless old man and in the clutches of an avaricious widow he needs her assistance. In contrast to other young women in Yeziarska’s stories, who protest in vain against their sad fates, toiling as exploited factory workers in sweat shops, and who occasionally cause anger and resentment even in those well-disposed (towards them), Sara is privileged to express her true feelings in her new home. Also the narrator of the story “How I Found America,” who had bitterly complained that society noticed only the outward appearance of the immigrant and exploited his physical strength, can finally receive as consolation a quotation of Waldo Frank’s from an

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. Girgus, 108-117, esp. 115-117.

understanding teacher, “We go forth all to seek American. And in the seeking we create her.”<sup>40</sup>

Admittedly, such a harmonized presentation remained often a mere dream of immigrants which failed to materialize.<sup>41</sup> Success was granted to Mary Antin, whose reminiscences, published in 1912 when she was in her thirties, show the favorable circumstances which permitted this talented girl, who together with her mother and sisters had followed their father from the Pale in Tsarist Russia to the New World, to regard this journey as an exodus to the Promised Land. Enthusiastically she describes this experience as a second birth which she had lived through, cared for and supported by many individuals in the process of Americanization, when she was spared the deep disappointments and frustrations some members of her own sex encountered. This was a process in which the beginning of her attendance at school figured prominently: “The apex of my civic pride and personal contentment was reached on the bright September morning when I entered the public school” (198). It has rightly been pointed out that the sad fate of her elder sister Frieda, who, instead of attending school, had to work as a seamstress, thereby contributing to the family’s coffers, only perfunctorily evokes Mary Antin’s sympathy and causes her some concern (199-201). As Frieda’s perspective is not directly presented, her plight is merely very briefly hinted at and hardly communicated. That Antin presented her own career as paradigmatic and scarcely considered the strikingly less favorable conditions of the overwhelming majority of young Jewish women of the first generation of immigrants is a serious shortcoming in the eyes of her critics. The pathos with which she expresses her confidence in her new home [“to be alive in America ... is to ride on the central current of the river of modern life; and to have a conscious purpose is to hold the rudder that steers the ship of faith” (356)]

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<sup>40</sup> The first-person narrator in the story “How I Found America” (*Hungry Hearts*, 294) complains, “They see only his skin, his outside – not what’s in his heart. They don’t care if he has a heart.” The citation of Waldo Frank’s statement is from pages 297 and 298.

<sup>41</sup> The disappointment and frustration of Ludwig Lewisohn, the descendant of a German-Jewish family, who attended college and was eager to enter the academic profession, is mirrored in the first part of his autobiography, entitled *Upstream*. On his predicament following his temporary acculturation in the American South and then on the stages of his career in academia until his loss of opportunities, see the preceding chapter “Stereotypes and Sense of Identity of Jewish Southerners.”

mirrors her exceptionally positive experiences, her encounter with and support by philanthropists in Boston and its surroundings. These, however, give a touch of complacency to her memoirs: "Being set down in the garden of America, where opportunity waits on ambition, I was bound to make my days a triumphant march toward my goal. The most unfriendly witness of my life will not venture to deny that I have been successful" (355). Her achievement due to her successful Americanization seems to have repeated the course of the Pilgrim Fathers presented as a type in the book and to have thus confirmed and authenticated ideals essential in the history of the American nation.

The effectiveness of these ideals is also celebrated by David Quixano in Israel Zangwill's play *The Melting-Pot*, when he apostrophizes in his vision his new home, to which he has fled from the pogroms of Kishineff, as a melting pot of nations and races. He stresses the mysterious power of this melting pot which would dissolve opposites (and antagonisms) in his conversation with his skeptical uncle Mendel.<sup>42</sup> In contrast, Mendel underlines the solidarity within the ethnic group and values more highly the retention of the identity of Jews from the various countries of the world. He thus adopts a position resembling that of Horace M. Kallen, the Zionist, who, in a series of articles published under the title "Democracy vs. the Melting Pot" professed and disseminated the concept which has much in common as "cultural pluralism" with views held since the 1960s in connection with the recognition of ethnicity.<sup>43</sup> In his conversation with his beloved Vera, a Russian aristocrat, the brilliant violinist and composer David, however, repeatedly rhapsodizes the transforming power of the New World and professes his belief in America as "God's Crucible." While the fairly recent carnage in Kishineff (involving David's family), for which Vera's father was also partly responsible, prevents David's marriage with Vera, he returns in the final scene to this image, after celebrating America earlier as "the great melting pot, where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming" (Zangwill, 184-185).

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. Zangwill, *The Melting-Pot*, 33: "America is God's Crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all races of Europe are melting and re-forming!"

<sup>43</sup> Kallen's essays appeared in *Nation* in February 1915 and were later developed further in *Culture, Democracy, and the United States* (1924).

The frame of this essay precludes an analysis of the question whether the concept effectively formulated by the British Zionist Zangwill, though basically present for some while in America, accorded even remotely with the dominant experience of Jewish immigrants. The scope of this essay also does not permit answering the question to what extent the openness and ambiguity of the imagery permitted very different interpretations,<sup>44</sup> a fact that compelled Zangwill to address the criticism from contrasted positions in an afterword. The dedication to Theodore Roosevelt and the speed with which its title entered everyday speech and figured in the debates of central political problems reflects the cultural importance of the play. In a critical phase, in which up to 1.3 million immigrants arrived annually, it signaled the confidence of American society to accommodate such large numbers and give them a new home. In the "Tribal Twenties" there was therefore explicit criticism of this document<sup>45</sup> whenever commentators wanted to stress the fact that the United States was incapable of coping with the task of assimilating and integrating these newcomers. Zangwill's play certainly encouraged American publishers to abandon their reservations concerning the publication of Jewish-American narrative prose and made the appearance of a large number of autobiographies of Jewish authors possible.<sup>46</sup> The play, which combined sentimental and melodramatic elements, at least to some extent not only addressed and actualized a topical issue but also connected external and internal perspectives on Jewish figures as it offered several Jewish characters the opportunity to describe in monologues their own experiences, while several other characters from various nations assessed them. Thus, a relatively balanced and realistic representation of Jewish immigrants and their lot is provided for the American public. Meanwhile, longer fictional texts gradually created the preconditions for a genuine Jewish-American literary tradition, which, after the decline in the number of immigrants as a consequence of the quota laws of 1921 and 1924, was carried by the children of first generation

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. Philip Gleason, "The Melting Pot: Symbol of Fusion or Confusion," *American Quarterly* 16 (1964), 20-46.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Henry Pratt Fairchild, *The Melting-Pot Mistake* (1926).

<sup>46</sup> Thus the rejection of Cahan's "Yekl" by Harper's, which had been explained by the assumption that "the life of an East-Side Jew wouldn't interest the American reader" (cited from Dittmar, "Jüdische Gettoliteratur," 58) was soon deemed an anachronism.

immigrants. This distinctive emerging tradition, in which the range of types engendered by the self-perception of American Jews also bore fruit, was to help shape literary life and practice in the USA in the following decades.

## **Images of Italians in Anglophone Cultures**

- Perfect Revenge: Observations on the Image of Italy in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries
  - Perspectives on the Mediterranean: Americans as Transatlantic Sojourners

## Chapter 22: Perfect Revenge: Observations on the Image of Italy in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries<sup>1</sup>

Ever since Paget Toynbee's pioneering study of *Dante in English Literature* (1909), scholars have been aware that until the 18<sup>th</sup> century Dante's work was largely unknown to English poets and men of letters. Petrarca was acknowledged as the master of the sonnet both in Elizabethan England and in the rest of western Europe, providing a pattern for poets, and the verse romances and heroic poems of Bojardo, Ariosto and Tasso were read, translated and imitated by Shakespeare's contemporaries. Yet Dante's work was to a great extent ignored: if he was referred to at all, it was primarily as the author of a journey to the Netherworld, a literary scheme repeatedly returned by 17<sup>th</sup>-century satirists. John Milton's *oeuvre* is unique in showing evidence of an intimate acquaintance with Dante's epics. It was left to the romantics to appreciate his *Commedia* and to discover in it an inexhaustible source of inspiration, and it is to this period that the English-speaking world owes the classic translation of Dante's work.<sup>2</sup>

Among the few references reflecting any familiarity with Dante's work in texts from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, there is one which reveals the image of Dante and his fellow-countrymen circulating in England at that time. This is contained in an epigram by Sir John Harington,<sup>3</sup> who in his youth had earned a reputation as a competent translator of Ariost's *Orlando furioso*. This courtier and expert on

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is based on an essay written for a *Festschrift* dedicated to Rudolf Palgen, an expert on Dante's work and his sources. The footnotes are slightly expanded with references to a spate of relevant books which have appeared since 1971, such as Manfred Pfister's comprehensive anthology documenting the relationship of the English to Italy.

<sup>2</sup> The young John Keats came to know Dante's epic poem in Henry F. Cary's translation, which left a lasting impression on him, as Robert Gittings has demonstrated (5-44).

<sup>3</sup> For John Harington's epigram published in London 1615 see Toynbee, vol. 1, 84.

Italian literature presents the Florentine poet (“*the pleasant learn’d Italian Poet Dante*”)<sup>4</sup> in a disputation with an atheist, in which Dante castigates his opponent. In the final phrase of this epigram Harington formulates his regret, “Oh Italy, thou breedst but few such D a n t s ...”. This exclamation would have been approved of by Harington’s contemporaries in England. In this epigram Dante represents those religious poets and thinkers who appeared to the English as particularly necessary in Italy to stop the spread of atheism in that country. For the subjects of Elizabeth I and James I, Italy seemed, in spite of numerous idealistic texts of the humanists, to be the playground of heretics, villains and impious, wicked men. The Elizabethans were, admittedly, also aware of the Italy of humanism which provided a vague background to both the many ‘conduct books,’ euphuistic romances, as well as in Shakespeare’s comedies. It functioned there as a pleasant Arcadian space, with Italian names, in which bonds of love were tied or long conversations on love were conducted.<sup>5</sup> But the real geographical space of Italy and its inhabitants was closely associated with vice and criminal acts. The Welsh writer William Thomas may have offered a fairly favorable picture of the conditions on the Apennine peninsula in his *History of Italy* (1549) and extolled the characteristics of the Italians, but from the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century those voices describing Italy as a sink of iniquity and warning against any visit to that home of the wicked capable of every kind of villainy became a clamor. There were denominational and moral reasons why Puritan teachers and moralists like Roger Ascham and Joseph Hall were inclined to paint an image in glaring colors of

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<sup>4</sup> The seemingly pale epithet “learn’d” Harington applies to Dante and the unfriendly judgement passed by Lady Politique Would-Be in Ben Jonson’s *Volpone* (Act III, iv, V.95) mirrors this lack of any true perception Dante’s work made great demands on English readers and their Italian language teachers which they could not meet as they did not dispose of the required historical knowledge.

<sup>5</sup> On the coexistence of independent images of Italy see Franz K. Stanzel’s study on “Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller*” in *Der englische Roman*, vol. 1, 73-81. That the Italy of Arcadian romances was blended with the contemporary image of Italy, of political intrigues and power games, is probably the reason for Eduard Eckhardt’s claim that Englishmen were favorably disposed to Italy, and his assumption that the character portraits of Italians in English Renaissance drama may have been closest to the truth among the types of foreigners presented there (cf. *Die Dialekt- und Ausländertypen des älteren Englischen Dramas*. Part 2, 120 and 129).



the numerous dangers threatening in that hotbed of vice and iniquity.<sup>6</sup> In spite of these admonitions generations of young noblemen and commoners travelled to Italy: the long list includes Philip Sidney, Henry Wotton, Thomas Howard, Fynes Moryson, Thomas Coryate, and George Sandys. By the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century a visit to Italy had become a definite part of the Grand Tour of young Englishmen. One result of the warnings of authors such as Ascham seems to have been the negative expectations of young travelers when reaching Italian soil. From the increasingly popular guidebooks they knew about the loose manners, the proverbial lasciviousness of the Italians, notoriously represented by the elegant courtesans of Venice. Additionally, young Englishmen reckoned with one very negative feature of Dante's countrymen: their exceptional and unquenchable desire for revenge. The present chapter explores the reasons and consequences of this heterostereotype of the Italians held by Englishmen.

The well-traveled Fynes Moryson, who spent more than one year in Italy (1593-95) and who was the first of those undertaking a Grand Tour who noted the Latin verse on Dante's tomb in Ravenna (*An Itinerary*, vol. 1, 207), directed special attention to this national vice of the Italians. He opined that it was the innate pride and excessive sensitivity of the Italians which led them to seek bloody revenge for every slight. In the pursuit of their revenge they had no scruples in their choice of methods. They did not shrink from insidiousness and were used

to circumvent enemyes for revenge of wronges by treason and upon all disadvantages, ye this is so bredd in the bone of the Italyans, as it will neuer out of their nature ... By this Nature, or practise growing to a second nature, the Italyens about all other nations, most revenge by treasons, and espetially are skillfull in making and giving poysons. (*Shakespeare's Europe*, 405-406)

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<sup>6</sup> Roger Ascham's assessment was particularly influential in this respect. The prominent 16<sup>th</sup>-century educator lamented in his *School-Master* (73) that he had witnessed during his nine days in Venice "more liberty to sin" than he had heard of in London within nine years. He lambasted those who appeared to (want to) import to England Italian habits and vices. Again and again he cites a proverbial phrase allegedly circulating in Italy, calling an "Inglese Italianato" a "diavolo incarnato"; cf. Lievsay, *The Elizabethan Image of Italy*, 7.

Regardless of whether they had themselves visited Italy or not most of Moryson's contemporaries would have probably agreed with this assessment which he substantiates with various anecdotes. They considered the treacherous killing by poison as the most frequently practiced device whereby Italians satisfied their lust for revenge. The act of revenge could, however, be the *non plus ultra* of the desire for revenge, which tried to deprive an enemy simultaneously of life and salvation. If a foe could be killed at a moment when he was burdened with great guilt, he was certain to be eternally damned. Such an ingenious perfection in the taking of revenge is attributed by many English writers of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries to the Italians. As will be shown, the contemporary stage used such an act of revenge as a particularly effective motif.

The physician and erudite scholar Sir Thomas Browne (1605-82) has a claim to a special place among the men of letters of his age. He spent quite some time in Italy during his Grand Tour and attended the famous medical school in Padua. He concluded his magnum opus *Pseudodoxia Epidemica or Vulgar Errors*, in which he not only exposed many medical errors but also subjected numerous traditional beliefs handed down from the ancients and historical accounts to critical analysis, with one chapter focusing on "*some Relations whose Truth we fear*" (Browne, vol. 2, 546-547). In this he notes with considerable regret that a report on the behavior of an Italian, apparently a notorious one ("*of the Italian*"), seems to correspond to the truth. He adds to his remark a short report on a treacherous assassination in which the perpetrator aimed at ensuring eternal damnation for his enemy:

... after he had inveigled his enemy to disclaim his faith for the redemption of his life, [he] did presently poyniard him, to prevent repentance, and assure his eternal death. (Browne, vol. 2, 546)

Browne refrains at this point from speaking generally about the desire for revenge of the Italians. For him, the Christian thinker, it is a disgrace for the whole of Christendom and not only for the fellow-countrymen of the villain. In contrast to his Puritan predecessors and contemporaries, he sees no reason to warn against traveling to the south of Europe. His thorough familiarity with Italy spared him from making any claims that such a dastardly act was typical of Italy. He repeatedly expressed his aversion to making sweeping judgements and

stressed that it would of necessity lead to gross errors. In the epistemology which he places at the beginning of his book *Vulgar Errors*, he mentions as one of their causes the habit of inferring from a particular phenomenon general or universal facts. In connection with this he offered as an example the erroneous practice of deducing the character of a whole nation from the vices of a few:

This fallacy men commit when they argue from a particular to a general; as when we conclude the vices or qualities of a few upon a whole Nation. (Browne, vol. 2, 35)

In recounting this revenge murder Browne did not succumb to such a temptation. That he was intensely aware of this human inclination is, however, apparent in the criticisms he expresses in another passage where he censures the use of stereotype epithets when mentioning various nations. In the second part of his 'private' confession of faith *Religio Medici* he quotes the following verse as an example of this common habit in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries:

Le mutin Agricola, er le bravache Escossois;  
Le bougre Italien, et le fol François;  
Le poultron Romain, le larron de Gascongne,  
L'Espagnol superbe, et l'Aleman yurogne. (Browne, vol. 1, 75-76)<sup>7</sup>

Browne regards the use of such epithets as an offence against the principle of justice and general love as if it were a murderous attack on the honor of an entire nation:

It is as bloody a thought on one way as Neroes was in another. For by a word wee wound a thousand, and at one blowe assassine the honour of a Nation.

It would have run against the principles of this tolerant and enlightened thinker to present this revenge murderer as a paradigmatic representative of the Italian nation. His bloody crime appears to Browne merely as a sign of the power of the devil in the world. Browne also refers to this assassin in another passage of his works. In contrast to the passage cited above he even doubts the veracity of this

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<sup>7</sup> According to H. G. Ward this is a free rendition of Du Bellay's verse which Browne had probably come to know during his studies in Montpellier.

account (in *Religio Medici*)<sup>8</sup> as such an atrocity would be beyond the limits of human iniquity and wickedness.

Browne's reflection on this murder and his deliberate refusal to draw from it any conclusions for his image of Italy are a remarkable aspect in the intellectual history of 17<sup>th</sup>-century England; it is, moreover, one which has received little attention. His contemporaries, and especially his Elizabethan predecessors, had not hesitated to draw such inferences. On the contrary, the vindictiveness which they (almost) unanimously ascribed to the Italians could not be illustrated more effectively than by describing such an assassination. Such an act of revenge appeared as a suitable climax in any literary work capitalizing on the Italophobia of the Elizabethans. This is actually the case in Thomas Nashe's novel *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594), in which the total triumph of this lust for revenge is melodramatically enacted.

It is from the condemned Cutwolfe himself that the executioner and the spectators hear the proud and cynically-mad confession of the crime he perpetrated on Esdras de Granado and how he achieved perfect revenge.<sup>9</sup> After a long hunt Cutwolfe managed to confront the murderer of his brother. He reports that he promised to spare his life on the condition that he renounced God and sold his soul to the devil. No sooner had Esdras fulfilled these conditions than Cutwolfe killed his deceived enemy with his pistol and, to his great satisfaction, had immediately discovered outward signs of the total success of this act of his vengeance. Cutwolfe's final speech culminates in an encomium, in a panegyric on revenge before he demands that the executioner begin his work:

Revenge is the glorie of armes, and the highest performance of valure, revenge is whatsoever we call law or justice. The farther we wade in revenge the neerer come we to the throne of the almightie. To his scepter it is properly ascribed, his scepter he lends unto man, when he lets one man scourge an other. (Nashe, vol. 2, 326)<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Browne, vol. 1, 80: "I cannot beleeeve the story of the Italian; our bad wishes and malevolous desires proceed no further than this life; it is the Devill and the uncharitable votes of Hell, that desire our misery in the world to come."

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, vol. 2, 320-326.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Nashe, vol. 2, 326: "His bodie being dead lookt as blacke as a toad: the devil presently branded it for his owne."

After this apotheosis of revenge and perversion of the image of the Jehova from the Old Testament Cutwolfe stresses the solidarity of all true Italians when it comes to revenge : “All true Italians imitate me in revenging constantly...”

It is significant for an analysis of the image of Italy in the Shakespearian age that Cutwolfe designates his treacherous act of revenge as a “*notable neue Italionisme*”.<sup>11</sup> Apart from the ascription of this murderous deed to a nation, what is striking is the claim that this criminal act is an innovation. The question arises for the literary and cultural historian whether Cutwolfe was truly the first to devise a bloody deed of such satanic ingenuity. Or was there a source that inspired Nashe when composing Cutwolfe’s confession, one which also may have prompted Sir Thomas Browne’s reflection cited above? Scholars posed this question some while ago. In 1960 Philip Drew referred to a slanderous pamphlet against Spain by Edward Daunce entitled *A Discourse of the Spanish State* (1590), in which such a murder is described as a memorable example of *Spanish* cruelty and treacherousness. Drew pointed out the parallels between Cutwolfe’s crime and the evil deed of a Spanish murderer in Daunce’s treatise, and insisted that this text should be regarded as the earliest example of the literary representation of such an incident and as Nashe’s source.<sup>12</sup> The author of this chapter can, however, point to three texts whose composition preceded Daunce’s diatribe and could have served as inspiration for Nashe’s description of such an act of revenge. Moreover, like many later descriptions of such an incident in plays and fictional texts, all three considered this crime an *Italian* specialty.

Before we turn our attention to these possible sources, several examples found in Elizabethan dramas will be briefly analyzed which suggest a correction of Drew’s opinion. Literary historians have not failed to observe that such a perfect revenge is also considered by a

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<sup>11</sup> The question whether in his description of this “notable Italionisme” Nashe approaches the borderline where the blood-curdling story descends into comedy or absurdity seems relevant for any analysis of his image of Italy and its function in his work. Stanzel has demonstrated how through this style Nashe opens the events to the absurd without losing the effect of horror he seems to have tried to attain (*Der englische Roman*, vol. 1, 80-82).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Drew, 412: “In the absence of any evidence for an earlier source ... it is reasonable to assume that Nashe had the story from Daunce.” Stanzel has endorsed Drew’s opinion and has tried to interpret Nashe’s reasons for ascribing such a deed to an Italian instead of to a Spaniard.

figure of exceptional status in world literature, namely Hamlet. A 1967 study postulates a new portrait of Hamlet on the basis of an interpretation of the scene (III, 3, V. 73-75) in which the Danish prince expresses such thoughts. In the "Prayer Scene" Hamlet hesitates to carry out the admonition of the ghost to revenge him because he encounters Claudius at a moment when the latter is praying. Hamlet is eager to wait for a better opportunity when he can be certain that the King will be deeply implicated in his sins, and then would be the appropriate moment to kill him:

When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,  
Or in th' incestuous pleasure of his bed,  
At game, a-swearing, or about some act  
That has no relish of salvation in't,  
Then trip him that his heels may kick at heaven,  
And that his soul may be as damned and black  
As hell whereto he goes;

This somber monologue, according to Eleanor Prosser's *Hamlet and Revenge*, starkly illuminates the true origin of command to seek revenge, namely hell. Prosser argues that it is in this scene that Hamlet finally loses any remaining sympathy of the audience because of his insatiable thirst for revenge, and it no longer seems possible to regard him as a hero suffering under the burden of orders from above. Prosser is intent on challenging Fredson Bowers' argument (*Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy*) that English society had a great understanding for the act of revenge and that the revenge tragedy, a subgenre very popular at the time, owed its life to the sympathy of the public for the avenging figure. Prosser's interesting though not entirely persuasive argument is supported by her belief that such unlimited desire for revenge is almost exclusively engendered in outright villains.<sup>13</sup> When in the scene under discussion Hamlet is placed on a level with those stage characters who are eager to satisfy their barbarous desire for revenge, this may offer a clue to the attitude of the public to the most famous of avengers of his time.

Of even greater significance than these fairly problematical conclusions<sup>14</sup> is the fact that an examination of those passages in

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<sup>13</sup> *Hamlet and Revenge*, esp. 3-40.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the review by Bullough, "Eleanor Prosser, *Hamlet and Revenge*, London, 1957," 338-340. The problems of Prosser's interpretation, which seems to neglect the

which characters on the English stage contemplate or execute an act of ‘perfect revenge’<sup>15</sup> reveals that these avengers come almost exclusively from Mediterranean countries, especially Italy. Some of the agents are only superficially Italianized stage villains, but some evince clearly characteristic features in their bearing and conduct, and thus appear unmistakably as Italians. Such a representative of Italy can, for instance, be found in John Webster’s *White Devil*.<sup>16</sup> Lodovico, driven by an insatiable thirst for revenge and a perverse longing for committing this deed in as an ingenious manner as possible, reflects on how he might kill the Duke of Bracciano:

To have poison’d his prayer book, or a pair of beads,  
 The pommel of his saddle, his looking-glass,  
 Ot th’ handle of his racket, – O that, that!  
 That while he had been bandying at tennis,  
 He might have sworn himself to hell, and struck  
 His soul into the hazard! o my lord,  
 I would have our plot be ingenious,  
 And have it herafter recorded for example  
 Rather than borrow example. (Act V, scene i, lines 69-78)

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impression Hamlet as a stage character makes on the audience in acts I and V, has already been highlighted by John Dover Wilson when dealing with the insufficiently substantiated attempt of a Spaniard to regard Hamlet as a typical southerner and a pagan avenging spirit resembling Cesare Borgia (*What Happens in Hamlet*, 321-323). A psychological reading which argues that Hamlet looks for an excuse to justify his own inability or unwillingness to act does not change the fact that the audience will here dissociate themselves from him. This issue has naturally engaged the attention of many scholars since the composition of this investigation. The theme of the unbounded desire for revenge and retribution in Elizabethan and Jacobean literature is treated extensively in Jonathan Bate’s edition of *Titus Andronicus* (21-29) and in various monographs as well as essays, for instance by Ronald Broude and Michael Neill.

<sup>15</sup> A computation of relevant passages shows that perfect revenge is at least considered in approximately twenty plays of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Prosser (263) is also of the opinion that Daunce’s pamphlet contains the first influential representation of such a crime. Only Fredson Bowers (52) alludes briefly to the treatise by Gentillet (see below) but without examining the question of the familiarity of the Elizabethans with this text.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Isabella in John Marston’s *Insatiate Countess*, who desires such a descent to hell for her enemy before her own execution. The attempt to deprive his enemy of any opportunity for repentance also preoccupies Antonio in his cruel deeds directed against Piero in Marston’s *Antonio’s Revenge* (Act V, scene v). Lussurioso in Cyrill Tourneur’s blood-curdling play *The Revenger’s Tragedy* also desires perfect revenge when ordering the assassination of his antagonist, who is entangled in sin.

Like Cutwolfe in Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller* this figure from the south of Europe is intent on achieving an unrivaled master performance in villainy and to ensure eternal damnation for his enemy. Less reflection may precede the act of another contemporary stage figure Alexander in *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*,<sup>17</sup> but it does illustrate very clearly the dubious company Hamlet keeps when he desires hellfire for the murderer of his father. In this gory drama, in which the chaos of the interregnum following the demise of the house of Hohenstaufen provided an excuse for the staging of innumerable intrigues and atrocities, the stage villain Alexander perpetrates an act of murder attaining perfect revenge on the eponymous hero. After the Spaniard's confession, in a moment of weakness, to his implication in the death of both Lorenzo, his secretary, and Alexander's father, Alexander first chains him to the Imperial throne. Then he forces Alphonso to choose between making his soul over to the devil or die immediately by Alexander's dagger. In spite of the urgent supplications of the Empress, who is a witness to the scene, Alphonso, in order to save his life, curses himself. But this is the very thing the unscrupulous avenger has waited for. He relishes the triumph of his perfect revenge and stabs Alphonso in the heart.<sup>18</sup> This barbarous act of revenge in front of the audience is a climax in the tradition of murder by revenge cultivated in the Elizabethan theater. Whether Alexander, this archvillain, is of Italian or Spanish descent cannot be deduced from the text but as the son of the shrewd and cunning Lorenzo de Cyprus he certainly has his roots in a Mediterranean country. For the identification of his spiritual home, and of relevance for our purposes, it is significant that Alexander's father has set down a number of political precepts in the form of maxims, whose origin can be ascertained. Edward Meyer in *Machiavelli and the Elizabethan Drama* (134) has demonstrated that these precepts of an unscrupulous prince are taken from a contemporary text in which the opinions of Machiavelli are distorted: Innocent Gentillet's *Anti-Machiavell (Discours ... Contre Nicholas Machiavel)*. A reading of this text,

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<sup>17</sup> This play, which was long ascribed to George Chapman, was presumably composed by the little-known John Poole who wrote it probably in the 1590s.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Chapman, *Tragedies*, vol. 2, 466. The editor, Thomas Parrott, refers to the parallels in Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller* but does not give any source for this blood-curdling climax.



whose first French edition appeared in 1576 with a dedication to the protector of French Protestants, the Duc d'Alençon, reveals that it contains a passage which may be regarded as a potential source for the frequent representation of acts of perfect revenge. There Gentillet, a Huguenot author who was implacably and rabidly hostile to Machiavelli and the Italians, deals with the desire for revenge of the countrymen of the Florentine thinker, which is only satisfied when the enemy is totally destroyed in body and soul. He analyzes Machiavelli's advice never to trust an enemy, even after an ostensible reconciliation, and after extending a kindness. He justifies this maxim by pointing to the Italian national character:

... car selon l'honneur de ceux de sa nation, les vengeances & inimitiez sont perpetuelles & irreconciliables. Et n'y a chose en ce monde où ils prennent plus grand' delectation, plaisir & contentement, qu'à exercer une vengeance. De maniere que quand ils peuuent auoir leur ennemi à gré pour s'en venger, ils le meurtrissent de quelque façon estrange & barbare, & en le meurtrissant luy ramentoyent l'offense qu'il leur a faite, luy font de reproches, luy disent des iniures, pour tourmenter l'ame & le corps tout ensemble, & quelque fois lauent leurs mains & leur bouche de son sang, & le contraignent à se donner au diable, afin de faire damner l'ame en tuant le corps, s'ils peuvent. (*Discours ... Contre Nicholas Machiavel*, 309)<sup>19</sup>

Even with a superficial knowledge of Elizabethan stage conventions it must be conceded that Gentillet's statement appears like an instruction to Elizabethan playwrights to compose effective horror scenes involving Italian villains. Yet before any such function is ascribed to this passage, the question must be answered whether contemporary dramatists, apart from the author of *Alphonsus*, were familiar with Gentillet's Italophobic treatise. Since Edward Meyer's pioneering study critics have repeatedly maintained that *Anti-Machiavell* exerted an important influence on Elizabethan literature.<sup>20</sup> The parallels between Gentillet's judgment on the vices of the Italians, especially

<sup>19</sup> The passage quoted is intended to illustrate the maxim "C'est folie de penser que nouveaux plaisirs facent oublier vieilles offenses aux grands seigneurs."

<sup>20</sup> Clarence Boyer (*The Villain as Hero*, 1914) largely follows Meyer's argument. Bowers (*Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy*, 76) also traces the gallery of English stage villains beginning with Lorenzo in Thomas Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* partly back to Gentillet's *Anti-Machiavell*. Mario Praz ("The Politic Brain: Machiavelli and the Elizabethans") similarly acknowledges with some qualifications Gentillet's important role for Elizabethan literature.

their perfection in acts of murder prompted by revenge, on the one hand, and stereotypes employed on the Elizabethan stage, on the other, suggest the need for a closer examination of the general availability of this text to English men of letters.

Even before 1900 Meyer sought to demonstrate that Gentillet's polemic reached a wide audience in England soon after its appearance although an English translation would appear only in 1602. An argument for the familiarity of Elizabethans with this book is provided by the fact that just a few years after the publication of the French edition the type of the unscrupulous political villain on the stage was already being dubbed generally "*Machiavel*" or "*Machiavell*". Thus the Florentine political theorist enters the stage for the prologue in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* and prepares the audience for the appearance of Barabas.<sup>21</sup> Following in the steps of Meyer (31-34) Clarence Boyer regards Gentillet's distorted image of Machiavelli as the most important impetus for the creation of the outright villains in English revenge tragedies; he does not, however, take into consideration the parallels between the motif of the perfect revenge and the passage cited above from Gentillet. Irving Ribner has argued, in contrast to Meyer and Boyer, that the English theater in its antipathy towards Machiavelli could draw on other sources as the latter had already been transformed in his native country into a bogeyman. Ribner also insisted that Elizabethans were in a position to form their own judgment of the Florentine as Latin versions of his book *Il Principe* were readily accessible<sup>22</sup> even if censorship prevented the printing of English translations. Ribner's reluctance to relate the type of the Machiavellian stage villain to the distorted version of Machiavelli's ideas in Gentillet's book is based on his desire not to underestimate

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<sup>21</sup> In the prologue to the play spoken by "Machiavelli," which fits into the pattern of confessions familiar from morality plays, echoes of the topical political points which fed Gentillet's hatred of Machiavelli can be heard. There are parallels to the confession of the Duke of Guise in Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris* (Act I, scene ii). The Duke observes the maxims allegedly formulated by Machiavelli according to his fanatic opponent Gentillet, and he appears as a paradigmatic representative of France, which foreign influences had corrupted and which Gentillet had mercilessly attacked.

<sup>22</sup> The enterprising London printer John Wolfe, who had earlier demonstrated his independence when he refused to recognize the traditional monopolies of printing houses, brought out a Latin version of Machiavelli's work, but as a precaution faked the place of publication. On translations of *Il Principe* circulating in manuscript see Praz, 100, and Ribner, "The Significance of Gentillet's 'Contre-Machiavel'," 154.

the importance of the native tradition of morality in which evil had become incarnated in various characters.<sup>23</sup> At the same time Ribner doubts the wider effect of *Anti-Machiavell* which he calls a “foreign polemical document which, although probably translated in 1577, did not appear in print until 1602” (153). However, in his criticism of the exaggerated influence of Gentillet’s treatise Ribner overlooks the fact that the ties between Protestant England and Huguenot France were very close at that time and that cultural and political relations were so intense that this book was almost certainly known in England in its French version.<sup>24</sup> With his allusion to the unprinted translation of *Anti-Machiavell* Ribner accepts the correctness of Meyer’s assumption (9-14, 19-20) that Simon Pat(e)rick, the author of the English translation, had produced it already in 1577. This seems to be supported by its dedication to two English noblemen which appears in the edition of the translation of 1602 and which is dated August 1, 1577. This opinion has been generally accepted. Now the discussion of the *Anti-Machiavell*, which here is of interest as a potential source of the image of Italy, must be supplemented with two important aspects. On the one hand, a close analysis of the dedication at the beginning of the English translation of 1602 inscribed to Francis Hastings and Edward Bacon reveals a number of contradictions which remain unresolved. It seems strange that in this epistle the translator, whose name is not given in the epistle, expresses his gratitude to the young noblemen for the support they have given his co-religionists and fellow-countrymen, and that he juxtaposes the misery of his own country to the happy lot of England. He explicitly states that he has never been to England.<sup>25</sup> Simon Patrick, the translator, however, came from Lincolnshire.<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, Latin versions of Gentillet’s book, which had appeared

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. also Bernard Spivack’s *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil* where Elizabethan (theatrical) villains are traced to the figure of “Vice.” Spivack believes that the distorted image of Machiavelli provided “not so much an origin as an affirmation” for the representation of evil on the stage.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. the many French diplomatic missions to England after 1578 on account of the marriage project between Elizabeth and Duc d’Alençon/Duc d’Anjou, the brother of the French King. Among the notables visiting Britain were the jurist Jean Bodin and the poet Du Bartas. Cf. John Bennett Black, *The Reign of Elizabeth*, 348-351.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. “...although I never saw England, yet it [my work] might serve as a pledge, to testifie my thankfull minde towards your countrymen ...” (“A Discourse ... against Nich. Machiavel – The Epistle Dedicatorie”).

<sup>26</sup> See *Dictionary of National Biography*, s. v. “Patrick, Simon.”

in 1577 and 1578 without giving the location of where they were printed, can be found in numerous European libraries.<sup>27</sup> These versions have, however, received little attention from scholars. A close analysis of these editions shows that the dedication to the two English noblemen is also placed first in Latin versions of *Anti-Machiavell*.<sup>28</sup> The English dedicatory epistle is thus nothing but a translation of the dedication which had been revised for the second Latin edition dated 1578. These facts make it impossible to assume any longer that the text of the dedication was composed by Simon Patrick. The author of the epistle was rather a Huguenot who wanted to dispense to all nations Gentillet's treatise as an antidote to Machiavelli's poison and who attempted to achieve this by providing a Latin translation of Gentillet's French text.<sup>29</sup> He dedicated his translation to young English noblemen whom he may have met on their Grand Tour and from whom he may have expected (further) assistance.<sup>30</sup> For reasons unknown Patrick seems to have integrated this dedication in his own translation into English and to have even retained the date ("*Kalends Augusti, Anno 1577*") which must have led to the erroneous assumption that the English translation had originated at this early point in time. As such a dating of the manuscript version of the English *Anti-Machiavell* is no longer possible, the availability of this important document for Elizabethan literature seems to be put in doubt. The existence of a number of printed Latin versions of Gentillet's book which has not been fully

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<sup>27</sup> The claim included in some bibliographies that the Latin version was composed as early as 1571 seems to be without any foundation.

<sup>28</sup> The Latin version printed in 1577 contains vitriolic attacks against Catherine de Medici, Henry II's widow, an implacable enemy of the Huguenots. The author of the dedication blames her for the infiltration of Machiavelli's pernicious maxims, and calls her an ally and tool of Satan. In the Latin edition of 1578 the more general phrase "peregrines hominess" replaces the more aggressive formulation "Reginam matrem".

<sup>29</sup> The intention expressed in the dedication of making Gentillet's work accessible to other nations in the interest of preventing the influence of Machiavelli has been interpreted by the readers of the English volume as Simon Patrick's justification for this translation, while the epistle in reality only explains the goal the Huguenot translator had in mind.

<sup>30</sup> As the two (young) addressees belonged to the English nobility (one was the son of the Lord Privy Seal and the other, Henry Hastings, a relative of a potential successor to the throne), the translator hoped that he could count on assistance if political conditions in France might force him in the future to emigrate.

taken note of supports, however, the belief that *Anti-Machiavell* did have a significant impact on the image of Italy among the Elizabethans and on the contemporary stage.<sup>31</sup> Latin was after all the language of the educated and a printed Latin version could thus achieve a far wider audience among the ‘university wits’ than an English one available only in manuscript. It is highly probable that Gabriel and Richard Harvey came to know Gentillet’s *Anti-Machiavell* in this Latin translation;<sup>32</sup> the same was also true of Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe, who both studied at Cambridge. It is likely that Harvey’s subsequent powerful and mordant opponent Thomas Nashe also read Gentillet’s text in Cambridge. Just like the Harveys, Nashe sees Machiavelli as the incarnation of corruption. Even though Nashe may have known Machiavelli’s work in the original, his frequent fierce attacks on the Florentine and his general Italophobia demonstrated in *The Unfortunate Traveller*, as well as in *Pierce Penniless*, seem not to have been engendered in ignorance of *Anti-Machiavell*.<sup>33</sup> The English stage had already long transformed Machiavelli into a stage villain and had come to associate his name with every kind of cunning and treacherousness. Still, it is very probable that Nashe read Gentillet and learned of that sensational and “typical Italian” perfection in revenge which Cutwolfe brags about in *The Unfortunate Traveller*.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> After Felix Raab’s dismissal of Gentillet’s book as being of little significance for English culture and the Machiavel figure in Elizabethan drama (1964), Nigel W. Bawcutt has recently documented the familiarity of late 16<sup>th</sup>-century English moralists, theologians and political theorists with the *Anti-Machiavell* in its French and Latin versions. Unaware of my prior discovery of this fact (1971), Bawcutt also corrects the wrong attribution of the dedication in the English version of the *Anti-Machiavell* to Simon Patrick. Cf. “The ‘Myth of Gentillet’ Reconsidered: An Aspect of Elizabethan Machiavellianism,” *Modern Language Review* 99 (2004), 863 – 874. I owe this and other references used for updating my article to my colleague Dieter Fuchs, Vienna.

<sup>32</sup> Gabriel Harvey was probably inspired to compose his “Epigramma in effigiem Machiavelli” by the Latin version of Gentillet’s book, and his brother Richard referred to the *Anti-Machiavell* in a theological treatise of 1590, cf. Meyer, 21 and 53.

<sup>33</sup> That Nashe repeatedly seizes the opportunity to expose immoral and villainous behavior as “Machiavellism” is shown in a long list of “Machiavellian” vices drawn up by a minor devil (Cf. Nashe, vol. 1, 220-221), and in additional allusions (cf. vol. 1, 176, 347, 385; vol. 2, 179-180; vol. 3, 277).

<sup>34</sup> There is circumstantial evidence for the assumption that Nashe was reading Gentillet’s book while composing or waiting for the publication of his *Unfortunate Traveller*. It may be found in a passage in the preface to the second edition of *Christis*

Before addressing the question whether there were certain patterns in the contemporary world picture which facilitated the literary use of Gentillet's report and confirmed Elizabethan prejudices against the revengeful Italian, two books need to be considered which apart from *Anti-Machiavell* may have served as sources for this cliché. The first is the principal work of the French lawyer and political theorist Jean Bodin, *De republica*. In the significantly expanded and revised Latin version of his science of politics (1586) may be discovered the description of a treacherous murder prompted by revenge through which the assassin tries to ensure eternal damnation for his victim:

... impius ille Mediolanensis quem appellare nefas est, cum adversarium inopinantem adortus esset, humi deiecit, & sicca faucibus imposita mortem minatus est, nisi ob illatas iniurias satis sibi fieret: ille inopinato casu perterrefactus veniam precari, poenam deprecari, dictum, factum nolle: sicarius urget se mortem illaturum nisi Deum immortalem eiuraret: ille deos deasque omnes detestabilem in modum execratur: non eo contentus adversarius execratioanes illas saepius, quo minus simularentur, iterari ex animo iussit: deinde iugulum gladio hausit: postremo de hoste triumphans, Et illa est, inquit, generosa ultio, quae & corpori vitam eripiat, & animo cruciatus sempiternos sit allatura.<sup>35</sup>

It may seem difficult at first sight to regard this passage as a possible inspiration for Nashe and Elizabethan dramatists as the English translation of Bodin's treatise appeared only in 1606. It may be assumed, however, that the Latin version of Bodin's *magnum opus*

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*Tears over Jerusalem* (1593). There Nashe settles his score with Gabriel Harvey, who had allegedly attacked him when he had been ready for a reconciliation, thus demonstrating his implacable enmity. Nashe regards this behavior as confirmation of the Machiavellian maxim "that he is vtterly vndone which seekes by new good turns to roote out old grudges...". This phrase may have been borrowed from Machiavelli's *Il Principe* (Nashe, vol. 2, 179), but it also serves as the motto for the report on perfect immortal revenge in Gentillet.

<sup>35</sup> In the English translation by Richard Knolles (1606) the story of the "wicked Millanois whom it were a sin to name" is presented in the following way: "... who hauing taken his enemie at an aduantage, set a dagger at his throat, threatening to kill him, if he did not ask him pardon for all the iniuries he had done him, the which was done: then he threatened him with death if he did not denie God; he abiured God and all his works with horrible execrations, but his aduersarie not satisfied therewith, caused him to repeate those curtesies often, least they should be counterfeit, and he slue this blasphemmer, saying, That he was reuenged both of bodie and soule." (607)

was used at English universities soon after 1586. There is no lack of evidence for the popularity of his science of politics. In a letter to his friend, the poet Edmund Spenser, dated 1579, Gabriel Harvey remarks, “You can not stepp into a schollars studye but (ten to on) you shall litely finde open ether Bodin de Republica or ... sum other like Frenche or Italian Politique Discourses” (*The Letter Book of Gabriel Harvey*, 79). There was probably no change in the following years in the lively interest English students took in Bodin’s political theories. The quoted passage in Bodin’s work may thus be considered as a source for the popular (literary) theme of perfect revenge.

When looking for the origin of the cliché of the insatiable desire for revenge of Italian villains a third, and even earlier, example of the description of such a perfect revenge can be encountered in the writings of the prominent French humanist Henri Estienne. In his polemical treatise *Traité Préparatif à l’Apologie pour Herodote* (1566), where he defends the credibility of the reports of the ancient historian by relating the vices and outrageous crimes of his own contemporaries, especially men of the Roman church, the reader is informed of the inhuman behavior of a revengeful Italian. This man waited ten years for an ideal opportunity to revenge himself on an enemy before he attacked him treacherously, and threatened,

si il ne renioit son Dieu, il le tueroit. Cestuy-ci apres auoir faict grande difficulté de telle chose, toutesfois en la fin s’y accorda, plustost que de mourir : tellement qu’il renonca Dieu, & les saints, & toute la kyrielle, ainsi qu’on parloit en ce temps-la. Mais le malheureux, ayant ce qu’il demandoit, luy mit dedans la gorge la dague qu’il luy tenoit dessus : & puis se vanta de s’estre vengé de la plus belle vengeance que iamais homme auoit eue, d’autant qu’il luy auoit faict perdre l’ame aussi bien que le corps. (*Traité Préparatif*, 229)<sup>36</sup>

What Estienne adduces as an extreme example of contemporary wickedness may have been drawn from a *chronique scandaleuse*, or directly from an early Italian news-sheet or long local chronicle.<sup>37</sup> This original source may also have served as the source for Gentillet

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<sup>36</sup> Estienne’s caustic satire was widely disseminated in numerous editions on the continent in the following years. The first English translation by Richard Carew was published in 1607 under the title *A World of Wonders*.

<sup>37</sup> The great Italian historians Francesco Guiccardini and Paulus Jovius do not refer to any such a murder prompted by revenge. The compiler of such a local chronicle or news-sheet must have relied on a more obscure source.

and almost certainly for Bodin. This is indicated by the fact that Bodin, in contrast to Estienne and Gentillet, names the perpetrator (“ille Mediolanensis”) and thus identifies the place where the murder occurred (Milan). As Bodin was generally precise about his sources, it must be assumed that he was able to draw on such a report. He probably rendered it without distorting it, whereas Estienne used it as an illustration of the current state of affairs in Italy, and Gentillet reinterpreted it as evidence of the typical conduct of Machiavellian Italians. Many English writers of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries came to know it as a significant event, with some reading about it in Henri Estienne, others in Bodin’s more reticent book.<sup>38</sup> Among the latter was probably the enlightened Sir Thomas Browne.<sup>39</sup> The growing familiarity of the Elizabethans with Italian *novellae* by Bandello and Cinthio, which certainly did not lack for bloody deeds and which, to the dismay of Puritan moralists, were translated into English at that time, made it easy for them to give credence to Gentillet’s sweeping judgment. Thus the account of a single case taken from an obscure historical source via the polemical treatises of Gentillet and Estienne and the political theory of their fellow-countryman Bodin, helped to establish a convention in the English theater and prompted a recurrent theme in English prose literature (Edward Daunce, Thomas Nashe), thereby generating a significant facet in the composite image of Italy for Shakespeare’s contemporaries.

While the image of Italy thus had its literary roots in contemporary polemics, there was also a pseudo-scientific base for opinions concerning the nature of southern Europeans, which helped to account for the stubborn persistence of the cliché of the Italian insatiable yearning for revenge. In classical antiquity the inhabitants of Egypt and of the rest of North Africa had the reputation of being treacherous. In the Roman Empire the Carthaginians were regarded as

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<sup>38</sup> It is impossible to decide whether an individual reference is indebted to Henri Estienne or Gentillet, or to another report of a perfect murder inspired by their accounts. An allusion in Thomas Heywood’s encyclopedic *Gynaikeion* (1624) is probably indebted to Jean Bodin as the perpetrator of this atrocity is a Milanese, as was the case in Bodin’s text.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas Browne owned the English translation of Bodin’s *De republica* and a Latin version of *Anti-Machiavell* edited in 1577. Cf. *Catalogue of the Libraries of... Thomas Browne*, 44 and 15. In his study *Sir Thomas Browne: Religio Medici and Other Works* L. C. Martin also regards Bodin as the source for Browne (312). The author is indebted to K. J. Hölzgen for this reference.



faithless; the “*fides Punica*” was proverbial (Livy). Revengefulness and cruelty were imputed to all nations south of the Roman Empire. Many scholars in the 16<sup>th</sup> century believed they could recognize these attributes in the nations on the southern fringe of Europe. Relying on the authority of Hippocrates, Aristotle and Galen they related the generally familiar national characters with their virtues and vices to the location and the climate of the various regions. According to contemporary accounts, the climate, the air, and the soil of the Mediterranean area determined the outward appearance and behavior of the Italians. It would go beyond the limits of this essay to analyze the ramifications and consequences of those theories which, in the form of the theory of climate, shaped the world picture from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards. But it is incontestably true that the theory of climate, which Jean Bodin had revitalized and brought up-to-date in his *Methodus ad facile historiarum cognitionem* (1566) and his principal work *De republica* (1576 in French, 1586 in Latin) fulfilled a very important role in that historical process in the course of which Italy gained in the eyes of Protestant northern Europe, but especially of England, the dubious reputation of being an eldorado of villains. In chapter five of *Methodus*, Bodin subsumed the Italians together with the Africans and the inhabitants of southern Spain under the rubric “southerners”, and had traced their vices back to the effect of the climate.<sup>40</sup> In his *De republica* he characterized them as “cruell and reuengefull, by reason of melancholie, which doth inflame the passions of the soule with an exceeding violence, the which is not easily suppressed ...” (*Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, 555). Bodin knew how to substantiate his theories intended to illustrate the revengefulness of southerners with abundant historical evidence which he drew from the medical lore of his time, especially the venerable theory of humors. He maintained that Italians and Spaniards were, like the Moors, exposed to the stronger rays of the sun. Because the other humors, as it were, evaporated due to the heat of the sun, this led to a preponderance of the melancholy humor (*atra bilis*) which

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<sup>40</sup> In his first explication of the theory of climate Bodin attributes the implacability of the southern Europeans to the preponderance of “*atra bilis*” in their bodies: “*Aurales vero atra bile abundant, qua exhaustis ardore coeli humoribus, quasi fex in imo subsidet & perturbationibus magis ac magis augetur, ut qui sunt hunc in modum à mente constitute, planè implacabiles sint.*” (*Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem*, ed. Basel 1979, 196).

determined the physical and psychic constitution and behavior. Bodin's assessment seemed to be based on a sober and careful examination. His, as well as that of numerous imitators, schematic division of the European nations into three groups, among which southerners stood out not only for their rich imagination but also their revengefulness and treacherousness, was easy to comprehend. Thus Bodin's hypothesis added scholarly weight to the prejudices held against the Italians in the north of Europe in an age riven by religious divisions. The resulting image of the Italian national character offered welcome opportunities which the English theater did not ignore.

The characters who are presented as residents of the Apennine peninsula on the contemporary stage are like the Moors<sup>41</sup> under the influence of the southern climate. They are often depicted as revengeful villains who devise sensational crimes.<sup>42</sup> That Spaniards are also assigned similar roles is a consequence of the correspondence in the climatic premises. Yet the imperial power of Spain stirred the imagination of English authors much less than the politically impotent Italy, and the odium of revengefulness stuck to the Italians.<sup>43</sup>

The crimes and atrocities depicted in the revenge tragedies, which drew on Seneca's tragedies, on those of his Italian imitators and 'restorers' and on native tradition, as well as on the distorted image of Machiavelli, seem to have appealed to theater audiences as much as the public executions in Tyburn. As a rule the fictional worlds presented in literary texts in the act of reception color the 'real' worlds in the minds of the readers or spectators. Thus Shakespeare's contemporaries, including those who had traveled to Italy, were inclined to perceive the real country of Italy through spectacles tinted by the accounts rendered in polemical pamphlets and in contemporary revenge tragedies. That some independent thinkers such as Thomas Browne managed to retain their own critical perspective may be

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<sup>41</sup> Elizabethans rarely differentiated between the Moors of North Africa and Negroes. "Moors" generally were regarded as exceptionally revengeful and treacherous, and repeatedly appeared as devilish plotters and avengers on the Elizabethan stage, cf. Aaron in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and Eleazar in Thomas Dekker's *Lust's Dominion*.

<sup>42</sup> Further illustrations of the ascription of revengefulness to Spaniards can be found in Bowers, 56, but this vice was not yet regularly included among their features in the catalogues of nationalities in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>43</sup> On the complex reasons for this focus on Italy see Stanzel's appreciation of Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller*, esp. 81.

credited to them as their special individual achievement. To the great majority of the English, however, the stock character of a Machiavellian villain long continued to represent the Italian way of life. Even those who were able to appreciate the rich artistic accomplishments of Italy were tempted to maintain that this country produced a greater number of infidel philosophers, treacherous politicians, and revengeful villains than great intellects and religious thinkers. Depending on the individual this either prompted a vehement rhetorical attack on Italian viciousness and morbidity or a resigned statement such as Harington's, "Oh Italy, thou breedst but few such D a n t s ...".

## **Chapter 23: Perspectives on the Mediterranean: Americans as Transatlantic Sojourners**

Students of literature and culture have over the last four decades shown that foreign places both in books of travel and works of fiction are usually culturally constructed, and that the representation of countries and their inhabitants is generally predetermined by already existing concepts. Studies of travel literature have demonstrated that authors of books of travel frequently carry preconceived notions as their cultural baggage to the foreign destinations. Scholars concerned with the literature of travel have also illustrated the co-presence of two contrasting tendencies which socio-psychologists and cultural anthropologists have identified and described: on the one hand, the inclination to judge every foreign phenomenon from an ethnocentric position, and on the other, the apparent desire to find the altogether “other,” which stands out against the everyday and commonplace. Students in the field of imagology have variously documented this complementary fact, the concern with and the keen interest in “alterity.”<sup>1</sup>

In the course of history ever new regions have come to appeal to the imagination as experts in the growing sub-discipline of imagology have demonstrated. Both real and armchair travelers have discovered counter-images to their own humdrum environments at home on previously untrodden paths. This was equally true of those American journalists and literary pioneers who round about 1830 began to expand the itinerary of the Grand Tour from the well-traveled destinations in western and southern to those of Central Europe. There the recently reformed universities began to appear as worthwhile locations for study and for leisure time travel, appealing to a rapidly increasing number of American travelers and readers. The

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<sup>1</sup> See the work of scholars such as Hugo Dyserinck, Franz Karl Stanzel, Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen listed in the bibliography concerning the field of Imagology, and James Buzard, on 19<sup>th</sup>-century travel literature.

transatlantic scene beyond the ken of earlier visitors engaged the attention of the reading public, for instance, that of *The New York Mirror*, which sent two of its editors on simultaneous errands to the Old World: Nathaniel Parker Willis and Theodore S. Fay. Willis' regular column "First Impressions of Europe" with its graphic vignettes, later collected as *Pencilings by the Way* (1835), offered impressions of Paris, Italy, and the eastern Mediterranean, including brief references to parts of Slovenia and Croatia, at that time on the fringes of the American imaginative map of Europe. As Larry Wolff has shown,<sup>2</sup> the eastern coast of the Adriatic and the people living inland had slowly been taken note of by the educated in Europe. It was only in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century that the inhabitants of the Venetian possessions in Dalmatia attracted the attention of Italian philosophers and cultural anthropologists such as Alberto Fortis<sup>3</sup> and that the mountain people called the Morlacchi, regarded as savages, entered the collective consciousness of European intellectuals. This in turn directed attention to the Slavs on the borderline between occidental Europe and the eastern part of the continent with its alleged remnants of barbarism.

Contemporaneous with the travelogues of Willis and Fay, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow briefly alluded to this region in the depiction of his itinerary in his first narrative in the mode of Washington Irving's *Sketch Book*, entitled *Outre Mer* (1833-34), and the caves of Postojna gradually came to figure on the route of the Grand Tour, as they did in Willis' travel letters or in the diary of the significant Southern Cavalier James Johnston Pettigrew (see below). The caves also find their way into Willis' fiction, for instance, in his story "The Bandit of Austria," included in his *Romance of Travel*, 1840.<sup>4</sup>

Historians of literature and imagologists, such as Vesna Goldsworthy and Maria Todorova have, however, shown that much of southeastern Europe, including the provinces of the Austrian Empire, continued to remain in the shadow as far as American travel writers

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<sup>2</sup> Larry Wolff, *Venice and the Slavs: The Discovery of Dalmatia in the Age of Enlightenment* (2001).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. his *Viaggio in Dalmazia* (1774).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Zacharasiewicz, "Waltzing in the German Paris: American Encounters With Musical Vienna," *Transatlantic Encounters*, ed. Udo J. Hebel & Karl Ortseifen (1995), 176-192.

were concerned.<sup>5</sup> In their descriptions of the people, of their customs and national costumes the Americans seem to have echoed either British geographers or their German-speaking contacts, whose opinions and prejudices they imbibed as their cursory comments suggest (cf. the pejorative references in the travel letters of Bayard Taylor published in American journals and collected in the popular *Views A-Foot* (1846), a book which achieved many editions in the next few decades.)<sup>6</sup> As Goldsworthy and Todorova have shown, southeastern Europe, loosely and elusively labeled “the Balkans,” emerged only gradually as a favorite setting for romances, and especially as the proper ambiance of Gothic stories involving blood-sucking vampires. Louis Adamic’s narratives, following his Guggenheim fellowship and return to his native country in 1932, supplied necessary if problematical factual information largely lacking in America before.<sup>7</sup> Only the coastal region of Dalmatia had earlier been within the purview of American travelers, and there might have been some interest of American Southerners in these provinces, but language barriers and difficult travel arrangements seem to have impeded any such development.

This latter possibility (unfortunately not realized until the 20<sup>th</sup> century) seems to have been related to a dichotomy which came to shape the attitudes of American intellectuals to the various regions on the European map in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and which are mirrored in the contrasted visions of the continent and the assertions of ‘elective affinities’ by young Americans involved in the educational experience of a transatlantic visit.

This can be illustrated by considering significant texts offering perspectives on Italy, the Mediterranean country, on which most of the attention of Americans focused in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The frequency and impact of visits to Italy of Americans as documented in bibliographies and standard studies such as Nathalia Wright’s *American Novelists in Italy* (1965) make it abundantly clear that Italy served as a trigger for new perspectives and as the occasion

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (1998) and Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (1997).

<sup>6</sup> See above in the chapter 15, “Elective Affinities and Biased Encounters” and my volume *Das Deutschlandbild in der amerikanischen Literatur* (1998), 59.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Ivo Vidan, “Croatia in the Writings of Louis Adamic,” in *Images of Central Europe*, 226-235.

for the imagination to locate and tap a reservoir of desires. What her magisterial study and further explorations also show is that to American visitors and armchair travelers Italy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century presented a complex bundle of basically incompatible facets. It seems to have derived partly from the tradition of Gothic fiction fostered by the numerous Italophobic texts produced by anglophone writers since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when a bifurcated image emerged and the Italy of humanist endeavor and achievement clashed with the image of a morally corrupt domain of atheists and papal intrigues. In their efforts to account for differences between national cultures in Europe and elsewhere, 16<sup>th</sup>-century thinkers and their 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century disciples employed the theory of climate, a model of thought going back to classical antiquity. Round about 1800 Mme de Staël gave fresh impetus to its popularity not only by relating the different cultures of Continental Europe to environmental, i.e. physical causes, which Abbé Du Bos, John Arbuthnot,<sup>8</sup> Montesquieu, William Falconer and other intellectuals had adduced and analyzed, and which David Hume had also acknowledged, but also by rooting the psychology of central characters in fiction in these factors. Her popular romance *Corinne, ou: l'Italie* (1807) juxtaposed two protagonists representing different regions of Europe within this framework. As “the daughter of the sun” Corinne shows her Italy to her beloved Oswald, a child of the northern cold and the mists. Oswald, Lord Nelvil, however, fails eventually to live up to the challenge and the passion that Corinne has engendered in him. In spite of the resulting tragedy, the appeal of this romance set in Italy did not fail to impress and inspire American readers and writers, including prospective transatlantic travelers from Dixie.

Affluent Americans had, of course, gone to Italy as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the scions of plantation owners from the South discovered the treasures of that country and praised it as blessed with its mild climate and bewitching landscapes. They lauded it as the home of the great artists of the past and perceived it as a crossroads for sculptors and painters of the present. Members of the planter families in the South Carolina lowlands, such as the Izards, Middletons, Manigaults and Smiths, were regular visitors to the Mediterranean and as patrons of the arts even commissioned portraits

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Zacharasiewicz, *Klimatheorie* (1977, 569-579..

during their sojourns in Italy.<sup>9</sup> Some of these visitors also took up the brush and easel themselves and dabbled in painting, taking lessons from established painters (often of cosmopolitan background) or increasingly, worked with sculptors, endeavoring to emulate the great masters of the past. A growing number of American artists settled more or less permanently in Italian cities, established reputations, and eventually received commissions from private patrons or Congress to carve, for instance, neo-classical busts and sculptures for public buildings back home. Horatio Greenough and Hiram Powers in Florence, and Thomas Crawford in Rome in particular, gained such recognition and even fame: they opened studios in the two cities and attracted American travelers, for whom a visit to the studios became an integral part of their itineraries through Italy.<sup>10</sup>

While the atmosphere of Italy and the cult of beauty represented powerful attractions, the contemporary Italian political scene in the first half of the nineteenth century, with the division of the country into numerous kingdoms, principalities and republics, the apparent poverty of large sections of the population and the absence of any of the democratic processes dear to Americans, resulted in complex discourses precluding a straightforward representation of Italy as a treasure-trove of historical monuments and contemporary works of art. The political realities and the importance of the established Catholic religion in the Papal lands and beyond again gave credence to a bifurcated image of Italy. While the negative variant harked back to the Elizabethan and Jacobean images, of even more direct relevance for Italy as the site of Gothic terror was the genre of the British Gothic novel. Even those visitors who benefited fully from the congregation of artists such as Washington Allston could not escape the temptation to adopt the resources of Gothic fiction in the vein of Ann Radcliffe's novels and Matthew Gregory Lewis' *The Monk*. Allston's only novel *Monaldi*, which was ready for publication by 1822, corroborates this argument, though the choice of a painter as the title character mirrors

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. John Singleton Copley's portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Izard done in the winter 1774/75. Cf. Maurie D. McNis and Angela D. Mack, *In Pursuit of Refinement: Charlestonians Abroad, 1740–1860* (1999).

<sup>10</sup> See Sylvia E. Crane, *White Silence: Greenough, Powers and Crawford. American Sculptors in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (1972). Several American visitors, e. g. James Fenimore Cooper and Nathaniel Hawthorne, also had their own busts made by American artists. Cf. Wright, *American Novelists in Italy*, 114-137 and 138-167, esp. 28, 116, and 149.



the author's personal experience and the significance of artistic training sought and found in Italy by a growing number of American individuals.

The ambivalence in the relationship of scores of American visitors to Italy was intricately linked to denominational factors. These affected the perception of the country, its institutions and population, among the growing number of roving journalists who, like Willis and Fay, catered to the growing interest of the American reading public in their regular columns in *The New York Mirror*. A modification of individual responses during their *Giro d'Italia* through existing negative heterostereotypes was fed by the agitation and even mob violence against convents in the USA, which reflected early nativist trends and anti-Catholic sentiment. This trend in the 1830s served as a catalyst when Fay composed his melodramatic depiction of bloodshed and intrigues in Italy in *Norman Leslie* (1835), which contrasts the ideal climate of Italy with the vices of its population.

This negative image was, however, counteracted by the appeal of the country in Mme de Staël's popular romance *Corinne* (see above), and by the experiences of American visitors who never tired of praising certain Italian locations and vistas. The enthusiasm engendered in the general traveler by tributes in guide books popular after the 1830s can be gauged by the eulogies contained in George Stillman Hillard's *Six Months in Italy*, disseminated in five editions published in the 1850s.

We remember England or Germany as we remember a valued and esteemed friend; but the image of Italy dwells in our hearts like that of a woman whom we have loved. (Hillard, *Six Months in Italy*, 560)

Long before guide books facilitated the *Giro d'Italia*, a visit to the country seemed mandatory to travelers crossing the Atlantic, with several Italian regions standing out as preferred destinations. Florence and Tuscany in particular were singled out for praise and found their way as appealing sites into Nathaniel Hawthorne's ambivalent image of the peninsula in *The Marble Faun* (1860), while John R. Thompson, the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, in the November issue of 1857, in his essay "Impressions of Italy" lauded

the agreeable American colony in Florence composed of artists and their families.<sup>11</sup>

Florence and its vicinity were also for six years the home of the Southern poet and writer Richard Henry Wilde. He had gone there from Augusta, Georgia, and studied Italian literature, preparing an anthology with his own translations and producing several learned disquisitions, for instance, on Torquato Tasso, on Dante, and on Italian poetry in general. His own poetry, which follows the Byronic mode and echoes (another) literary catalyst for American writers, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, highlights his remarkable empathy for Italian society and culture. In his own topographical, quasi-epic poem *Hesperia* he applies to America the ancient name for Italy used by the Greeks and, implicitly stresses the elective affinity between his native and his adopted country. It was with great reluctance that he finally left Italy, whose desired *Risorgimento* he anticipated while being deeply involved in its grand past.

Eleven years after Wilde's departure another Southerner, the scion of a leading Caroline family, came to Italy after spending some time as a student in Berlin: James Johnston Pettigrew had resided there like many other Southern graduates attending the reformed German universities<sup>12</sup> and had enjoyed the sophisticated musical culture in the Prussian capital. As his letters to his friends and family and an intriguing diary<sup>13</sup> show, he took advantage of his university vacations to travel in Central Europe, and, after the conclusion of his semesters, also in Mediterranean countries. In a letter to his sister from Vienna (November 1850) he noted parallels between the Berliners and the Yankees, and favorably commented on the openness and hospitality of the Viennese, who in this respect he contrasted with the North Germans and, in particular, the Berliners, "who are proverbially rather deficient in this respect and are much more like the Yankees." He diagnosed an elective affinity with the more southern nations of Europe as emerges in another letter from March 1851, in which he admits that

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<sup>11</sup> Several siblings and in-laws of the sculptor Horatio Greenough, for instance, also resided there and were inspired to take up the pen by their residence there. Cf. Wright, *American Novelists in Italy*, 78-86.

<sup>12</sup> The transatlantic cultural ties between Dixie and Europe had not yet been severed (see esp. O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order*, vol. 1, 90-161).

<sup>13</sup> His diary and his letters are kept in the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

in proportion, as we approached Italy, my feeling of satisfaction arose; I felt as I used to do on leaving the Yankee land on the way to the South. At almost every railway station, one could perceive an increase in the beauty of the women, in the sociability of the men, and in the smiling genial aspect of the country.

His travels through Italy, France, and, eventually, Spain, as reflected in his diary, exhibit more than average self-discipline as he couches his entries largely in the language spoken in the country visited. Admittedly, he blends some of the foreign languages in his occasionally very brief entries, some of which, in their telegraphese, evince a certain breathlessness, for instance, when he acknowledges the beauty of the women, as he does on his journey to Florence, “ah Dio! que cielo! que belle ragazze!!” (March 26) He omits mentioning the inevitable tourist sites, as he deliberately refers to his guide book during his two brief stays in Florence in March and in May 1851, where on May 24 he notes, “Rencontre Henderson. Powers: Ses bustes.” In between he visited Rome and Naples, though he excluded the Neapolitans from the generous praise he usually granted the Italians. In his encounters with other travelers and the inhabitants of the places visited Pettigrew generally showed a remarkable openness, refraining from resorting to stereotypes, thus exhibiting a cosmopolitan attitude which affluent Southern patricians not infrequently displayed (with the single exception in their attitude to African Americans). His publication of *Notes on Spain and the Spaniards in the Summer of 1859* on the eve of the American Civil War offered an exploration of Spanish history and manners and a defense of the Spanish against the prejudices of Anglo-Saxons. This book clearly shows that Pettigrew successfully eschewed ethnocentricity, distancing himself from what he himself called ‘Anglo-Saxonism’, rejecting the negative stereotype of the violent, lazy Southerner allegedly lacking the virtues of self-control, industry and thrift, while himself claiming kinship with the Latin peoples.<sup>14</sup> It is regrettable that Pettigrew did not choose a more easterly route

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<sup>14</sup> Pettigrew did not share the partisanship for the peoples of the north and their alleged superiority vis-à-vis the weaker races of the south expressed in the great histories produced by American historiographers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century such as Francis Parkman, William Prescott, George Bancroft and John L. Motley, see David Levin’s study *History as Romantic Art* (1959).

during his southern travels and did not include more extensive remarks on Slovenia or Croatia in his journey southward, apart from an incidental comment on the caves at Postojna, which did not fulfill his expectations.<sup>15</sup>

Other American visitors evinced less openness in their encounter with the country and the people of Italy than this Southern paragon, who was to become one of the casualties of Gettysburg. The grave reservations about Italy many of them had, as did Nathaniel Hawthorne during his extended sojourn with his family there in 1858 and 1859 after his consulship in Liverpool, were modified by his contacts with artists. In his case it was encounters with Hiram Powers and W. W. Story in their Florentine studios that shaped a more positive attitude to Tuscany, Hawthorne's growing intimate familiarity with the people of Italy and his sharpened awareness of regional cultural differences.<sup>16</sup>

The circle of Anglophone artists and intellectuals in the peninsula provided a world apart from that of the Italians, an environment in which Harriet Beecher Stowe was also received when, during her second trip to Europe, she visited Rome in 1856 or, again, in 1859. This experience helped to inspire her romance *Agnes of Sorrento*, which uses an exoticized 15<sup>th</sup>-century Italian landscape with extensive stereotypical portraits of Italians. The effects of the local climate on the character of the population in classical antiquity are described at some length and a distinction is drawn between the sensuality of the people in the more southern parts of the country and the more restrained (and healthier) inhabitants of the mountainous regions of northern Italy. In her straightforward application of the venerable theory of climate Stowe differentiates between the regions but generally grants stronger religious fervor to the children of *Mezzogiorno*.

As the strength of the beautiful and pious heroine Agnes is set against the background of the crisis in the Catholic Church under Alexander VI Borgia, Stowe tones down the anti-Catholic rhetoric

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<sup>15</sup> See his entry in the diary for March 14, "Feci una visita oggi alla grotta d'Adelsberg. Non m'ha dato nulla soddisfazione."

<sup>16</sup> Powers advised the Hawthornes on their choice of residence and Story helped to inspire significant passages in *The Marble Faun*, the romance in which the Tuscan scenes reflect a much more positive attitude to that location than the at least ambivalently judged ambiance of Rome.

practiced in New England at the time, suggesting a potential regeneration of Italian Catholicism, which finds expression in the teachings and the martyrdom of Girolamo Savonarola.

It was not from dreamy, voluptuous Southern Italy that the religious progress of the Italian race received any vigorous impulses. These came from more northern and more mountainous regions, from the severe, clear heights of Florence, Perugia, and Assisi, where the intellectual and the moral both had somewhat of the Etruscan earnestness and gloom. (*Agnes of Sorrento*, 187)

In her assessment of Italy Stowe, the most effective critic of slavery in the American South, thus showed more understanding for Italian culture<sup>17</sup> than Samuel Clemens did, whose at times enthusiastic praise of the beauty of its landscape in *Innocents Abroad* (1869) abruptly shifts into parody and scorn for the drones of society to be found among the clergy and the religious. The complexity of Henry James' representation of Italy in numerous sketches and fictional masterpieces precludes even a brief consideration in this context,<sup>18</sup> and the reference to the popular romances of the Italian-born son of the sculptor Thomas Crawford, Francis Marion Crawford, which variously evoked phases of Italian history and episodes from the lives of its artists, is merely made to highlight the continuing appeal of Italian settings and themes.

The importance Italy gained for the 20<sup>th</sup>-century Southern dramatist, fiction writer, translator and drama critic Stark Young, however, is to be examined in some detail here as it reflects once again an important function of foreign settings in the work of the imagination. In the case of Young, who was an elitist and advocate of quasi-aristocratic manners, the choice of Italian settings permitted the presentation of simple rural folk in an ambiance which raised them above the commonplace. Young, who looked nostalgically back to Antebellum chivalry and focused on the graces and morals of the

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<sup>17</sup> Stowe adopts a variant of the theory of climate ascribing masculine traits to the Anglo-Saxons but feminine traits including patience, tolerance, and sensitivity to Africans and to people from the Mediterranean. Cf. Anna Scacci's essay "'Born Beneath a Tropic Sun': Shades of Brown and Masculinity in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Agnes of Sorrento*," in Massimo Bacigalupo, and Pierangelo Castagneto, eds., *America and the Mediterranean* (2003), 423-433.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Sergio Perosa's essay "Henry James and Northern Italy" in *Images of Central Europe*, 119-127, where further references to this well-researched topic are given.

gentry,<sup>19</sup> otherwise largely avoided any closer exploration of these social segments in his fiction. He did this, however, when conjuring up scenes from the Italian countryside in numerous collections of essays and sketches, based on his regular visits to Italy from 1907 onwards, where he spent many months during his vacations from teaching college in Mississippi and Texas. He continued his habit later during his residence in New York where he worked as a dramatist and drama critic supporting avant-garde theatre, and in a range of texts offered impressions of religious practices and the rituals of Roman Catholicism in Italy and subtle, sometimes elusive renditions of evanescent moods.<sup>20</sup> Umbria, Tuscany, or Naples serve as the preferred settings for many “Italian Notes” in a volume entitled *Encaustics* (1926), and several stories collected in the volume *The Street of the Islands* (1930) reflect Young’s literary Italophilia.<sup>21</sup>

In connection with his work as a dramatist and drama critic it is instructive to note that in some of his early one-act plays he drew on national and racial stereotypes. *Addio* and *Madretta* are set in the Deep South, which had also attracted numerous Italian immigrants. The four characters in *Addio*, set in a bakery and restaurant in New Orleans, are typical figures whose accents hark back to 19<sup>th</sup>-century American comedies focusing on immigrants.<sup>22</sup> In addition to a recent German immigrant there are two Italian characters; a Sicilian girl named Susa, and her former fiancé, Tomasso, who has followed her to America but is not recognized by her, as he is now crippled and forced to earn his living with a street organ. The conventions of the dramatic genre foster quick, shorthand characterization, which supports the introduction of clichés and stereotypes, and in this case defines the figures in terms of outward appearance, vocation and background. In

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<sup>19</sup> This becomes apparent especially in his most successful novel based on the McGees on his maternal side: *So Red the Rose* (1935).

<sup>20</sup> In his romances, especially in *The Torches Flare* (1928), which is set both in New York and in the South, there are numerous allusions by the narrator, who is from the South but currently in the North, to his regular journeys to Italy, thus underlining the parallels to Young’s own life.

<sup>21</sup> The “Italian Notes” make up almost a third of the book *Encaustics* (1926), 106-188. The following portraits in *Encaustics* include further depictions of Italians and Italian settings.

<sup>22</sup> For this popular practice to present ethnic characters, especially of Irish and German origin, cf. above the chapter on “The Rise and the Demise of German and Hybrid German-English in American (Popular) Culture.”

the light of Young's marginalization of the Southern yeomen in his romance *So Red the Rose* (1935) and his perception of poor whites as insignificant, his inclusion of and focus on Italian rural and working class people in his dramatic and narrative text is intriguing. Despite Young's elitist views his imaginative world is thus supplemented in his Italian pieces by attention to more mundane and down-to-earth social realities. It seems as if the remote setting somewhat ennobled the human material, as Young, for example, in "Assisi Farmer"<sup>23</sup> turns his attention to plain rural folk and shows empathy with simple people or adolescents in their milieu. This practice indicates a recognition of closer links and a stronger anchoring of experiences in the socio-cultural reality of the distant country in which the author invested so much emotionally.

Young's nostalgic representation of Southern culture must be seen against the background of the fundamental changes in the South. The decades since Reconstruction had seen advances made by the advocates of the New South, and the process of industrialization was continuing there, prompting a defense of the life style and fundamental values of Southern society as perceived by the young intellectuals assembled at Vanderbilt University. When they collected and disseminated their ideas in *I'll Take My Stand* (1930), they were ready to include an ostensible supporter of Southern culture such as Young, though he embraced views which stood in stark contrast to the praise of the yeoman farmer as the backbone of Southern culture in Andrew Lytle's perspective in this collection. This contrast stressed by Richard Gray in *Southern Aberrations*<sup>24</sup> was, perhaps, less harsh when Young's vignettes of Italian rural life were considered by his associates who regarded his presence as an ally in the Agrarian symposium as "vital."

Decades later, the Canadian cultural critic Marshall McLuhan, long before his own popular studies of the media secured him a global readership, identified and recognized in a remarkable essay entitled "The Southern Quality" the transatlantic orientation of leading members of the Agrarian circle. He did not find it necessary to comment on the intellectual ties between John Crowe Ransom and British culture, or on the appeal French rural culture had for Allen

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. Young, *The Street of the Islands* (1930), 47-49.

<sup>24</sup> *Southern Aberrations: Writers of the American South and the Problems of Regionalism* (2000), esp. 110-127.

Tate. But he did note the special relationship between Stark Young and Italy: “Mr. Young’s deep sympathy with Italian society (one recalls his fine appreciation of Duse) is as natural as Bishop’s for France or Andrew Lytle’s for Spain.” (“The Southern Quality”, in *A Southern Vanguard*, 118). At the end of the 1920s several members of this group of conservative intellectuals expressed their opposition to Yankee concepts of a good life and a proper society by claiming allies in Europe, a continent which had not yet fully succumbed to Yankee concepts of efficiency, Fordism and the conveyor belt. Yet some of them expressed the fear that they were themselves “the last Europeans”,<sup>25</sup> as Europe had begun to imitate the Yankee mode of conduct and industry.

The inspiration which Young found in Italy reflects the sense of affinity which other writers and artists from Dixie felt for the Apennine peninsula and the Mediterranean. One of those was the most prominent Southern dramatist Tennessee Williams, who spent long periods of time in Italy, had an Italian partner and close friends among Italian artists and actors. This special feeling of affinity is also reflected in several of his plays.<sup>26</sup> In the following decades the long tradition of American creative artists inspired by the Italian landscape and the high art of its past was continued in spite of the acute problems with Italian Fascism.<sup>27</sup> After a brief period in the immediate aftermath of World War II, when Edmund Wilson sketched a dismal picture of a corrupt and revolting society,<sup>28</sup> the re-established democracy quickly attracted American artists and writers. The longstanding links, intensified by generous awards, prizes and fellowships administered and given by the Guggenheim family or by the American Academy in Rome, once again permitted writers and

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<sup>25</sup> This is Allen Tate’s phrase in a letter to Donald Davidson in August 1929. See *The Literary Correspondence of Donald Davidson and Allen Tate* (1974), 230.

<sup>26</sup> The most significant use of Italian aspects in his work can be found in *The Rose Tattoo*, which is set in an Italian immigrant community in the Deep South.

<sup>27</sup> Despite these political developments George Santayana, who had left New England dissatisfied with the mentality there for England, moved to Italy; Ezra Pound’s disastrous involvement with Mussolini’s politics is notorious.

<sup>28</sup> See Edmund Wilson, *Europe without Baedeker: Sketches Among the Ruins of Italy, Greece, & England* (1947).



artists to reside in Italy and respond creatively to the unique Mediterranean milieu.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Numerous fiction writers, for instance, from the American South, such as Eudora Welty and Elizabeth Spencer, Robert Penn Warren and William Goyen, William Styron and George P. Garrett found inspiration for significant literary work there. That also Dubrovnik on the other side of the Adriatic attracted writers and scholars was partly due to the foundation of a European University Center there. The history of this fruitful encounter should be left to the *connoscenti*, and to the expertise in transatlantic relations evinced by the scholar in whose honor this essay has been submitted.

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