

AN IMAGINED BINARY:  
THE EXILIC BODY AND THE HOST NATION  
IN THE HOLLYWOOD FILMS OF  
PETER LORRE, BÉLA LUGOSI AND CONRAD VEIDT,  
1930-1956

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*Nagypapának / for Granddad*



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## ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates representations of exile in Hollywood cinema in the period between 1930 and 1956 through the films of Peter Lorre, Béla Lugosi and Conrad Veidt. It aims to dispel the remarkably durable assumption prevalent in critical approaches to Hollywood cinema that by virtue of its hegemonic, reactionary and exclusionary modes of representation, especially in what is considered its ‘Golden Age,’ otherness is excluded from, or only obliquely alluded to in Hollywood cinema. This thesis contends that Hollywood uses European émigré actors to speak of the experience of exile, exilic attempts at integration into the host nation, and the sometimes grand, often pitiful failures of these attempts.

Dictated largely by its contention that a consistent and fairly constant discourse surrounding exile can be apprehended in Hollywood cinema, this thesis focuses primarily on the film texts that form its corpus. The close reading of key texts is underpinned by a productive clash with existing critical writings on exile, shifting the focus back to the films, themselves, from analyses of the system, historical accounts of migration and exile, or critical evaluations of archival material and the impact of marketing and political strategy on production.

The thorough engagement with the films is further supported by an interdisciplinary critical framework. Theories of the nation and national cinema (Hayward, 2000), body theory (Butler, 1993), and critical works on identity, stereotyping and pathology (Gilman, 1985; 1991; 1995) are combined with critical accounts of immigration in the US (Behdad, 2005) and analyses of the significance and symbolism of blood in US concepts of nationhood (Chinn, 2000) to explore the complex system of representation that dictates the onscreen lives and deaths of exilic stars. Critical works on the language of death and bereavement (Seale, 1998; Hallam et al, 1999), the concept of the posthuman (Halberstam et al, 1995), Lefebvre’s theory of space (1991) and Baudrillard’s analysis of interior design are used to elaborate my argument further.



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*People who have been exiles too long seem to end up  
as either zombies or vampires. I don't want that  
to happen to me.*

(Dibdin, 1999: 322)

*I was determined to change countries and to blow up my  
bridges behind me. I resolved to forget about everything  
that was Hungarian—memories, feelings and culture.  
But it seems that I deceived myself, for I came to realize  
that I could not start an entirely new life anywhere—not  
in Berlin, not in New York, or Hollywood. [...] Despite  
thousands upon thousands of miles that separate us from  
Hungary, the distance is bridged by our Hungarian  
thoughts and feelings.*

Béla Lugosi in *Californiai Magyarsag*, 1934  
(Lennig, 2003: 187)



# PREFACE

## Who am I?

Before I do anything else I feel the need to situate myself in relation to the thorny issues this thesis hopes to unpick. I need to render visible the accent that remains unheard thanks to the written word. I am not an exile. I simply (I wish it were simple) swapped countries: Hungary for the UK. I have now done so twice. The first time, when I was seventeen, I was naïve and thought I could become English. I thought my accent flawless and my intonation appropriately melodic. I thought, having no visible corporeal inscription of difference (though I did not think of it in these terms), I looked native. The two years I spent at school in rural England opened my eyes: I saw and heard myself with the eyes and ears of my schoolmates. When I thought I sounded like Bertram Wooster, they heard Dracula. The second time I moved to England, I entertained no illusions. I was still, however, perceived, first and foremost, as foreign. But this time it hurt less, because I already knew it. I accepted it, and it became part of who I am. In the process of trying to entangle myself into the complex network of being English, I had stretched the bonds that have entangled me into Hungarianness. And I like to imagine myself a little more me, a little more free from these webs of nationality (and a host of other things), than I really am. So the voice that should emerge from what follows, is the voice of a well-informed expatriate with perhaps that heightened sensitivity for the pain of exile that has prompted this enquiry. I do not write *about* myself in this thesis, but I write about others (in every sense of the word), while I bear myself in mind. Which is perhaps a little schizophrenic. But then again, that is what exile does to you.



# INTRODUCTION

## What's eating the exile?

When we swap countries we destabilize a complex system of relationships. We stretch the ties that bind us to family, to birthplace and community. We loosen the anchor that connects us and keeps us steady, floating at a more or less constant position in relation to our homeland. Migration may be an external journey, often through state borders, but the greatest changes it brings take place within. Our concept of 'I' is constantly measured up to the host nation's concept of the 'he/she' that refers to the same body. The delicate house of cards that we foolishly think Fort Knox is scattered in exile. We try to rebuild our house of cards, but we find that cards from a different deck have been swapped for some of our old ones. Local is replaced with foreign, the voice of the majority is replaced with the accented voice of the minority, natural with alien, I with he or she.

To be an exile is having to confront without warning the vulnerability of the construct we had thought impregnable. Those qualities that we had thought we possessed, and whose values we had accepted unquestioned, are exposed to a different way of seeing: our concept of the I as a member of a homogenous community united by a shared language, history and self-image is undermined by a repositioning of the I as he or she, a member of a heterogeneous and disparate mass of people whose difference from each other is elided by the host nation's blanket concept of the foreign. Being in exile forces us to turn a critical eye on our own concept of who we are, and in the process leads us to question the I we thought we knew. A reconstruction of the house of cards becomes necessary. In this process we inevitably reconfigure not only our concept of the I, but also our bodies. Our facial muscles get used to a different mode of speaking, our sound-forming organs adjust to a different intonation, different patterns of speech, different sounds entirely. There is another bodily change that takes place in exile, which I now go on to consider at some length.

'Whosoever swaps countries, swaps hearts,' the 19<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian freedom fighter Lajos Kossuth is reputed to have said in exile. This quip reflects a sentiment that is perhaps a fatalist echo of the saying: 'home is where the heart is'. András Merkler, the son of a Jewish Hungarian songwriter and lyricist who became, in exile, the ward of Alexander Korda after his father perished in a Nazi death camp, told me a variant on this saying coined by a fellow Hungarian in Eng-

land, whose name he could not recall: ‘whosoever swaps countries, swaps stomachs’. This aphorism encapsulates many of the themes in this thesis and, therefore, I begin this introduction by unravelling its implications in order to sketch, briefly, the journeys—theoretical, metaphorical, geographical, filmic—that I take and trace in what follows.

The playful substitution of ‘stomach’ for ‘heart’ suggests both optimism and despair. Optimism, because it implies that swapping hearts is not the issue: it is impossible and therefore not even worth attempting. No matter the reasons for exile, one can never truly change hearts and leave behind the homeland, where one was raised. It may be impossible too, but somehow the idea of swapping stomachs sounds like something that one might *almost* achieve. And despair, because it hints that because of the simple impossibility of changing hearts, the exile is destined to live out their life with a broken heart. This bittersweet elision of the problems of the heart shifts the focus to the stomach and as a result to ingestion, nourishment and digestion. Swapping countries means that one must swap stomachs because in exile only ‘foreign’ food is available. But of course it is not the food that is foreign, but the exile, and the exile’s stomach. Therefore a new stomach is necessary. A person raised on dry-cured pig-fat and raw onions can have trouble adjusting to thick American pancakes and grilled bacon with maple syrup. A whole new outlook and a whole new digestive system is required. For, to cope with the unfamiliar food, a food that one must ingest in order to survive, one must also digest this unfamiliar food. And in getting used to the unfamiliar food, one loses one’s knack for dealing with dry-cured pig-fat or a pungent fresh ewe’s cheese mixed with paprika.

The outward journey of migration, of exile, is then accompanied by an inward journey. In the course of this inward journey, which continues long after the body has arrived in the host nation, the internal workings of the body slowly adjust to the new surroundings and the new nourishment. In other words, while the mind remains constantly preoccupied with the sense of displacement, the many ruptures it brings about, the exile is slowly left behind by their own body. It is an imperceptible evolution: one day while wolfing down the contents of a pack from home, the exile finds that their longed-for flavours from home give them excruciating indigestion. The pig-fat, with which the exile had gleefully terrified friends in the host nation, becomes as disgusting to the exile, as it is in the mind of the disgusted friends. The ewe’s cheese loses its appeal, and the food, as if sensing the change of heart, mind, and stomach, seems to rebel against the exile. Crippled with gastric torment, the exile is confronted with the unpalatable realization that they have become neither one thing, nor the other: no longer ‘of’ the home nation, and never ‘from’ the host nation, whose flavours will never have the same resonance as the pig-fat of childhood.

The realization of an irreversible rupture in one’s very body leaves an inefface-

able imprint on one's identity. An anxiety is born: who am I? How can I remain myself when my own body rebels against the very things that have shaped my identity? Measures must be taken to stop the pain; to make the stomach work again. Only that can still the question that seems to echo and amplify the pangs of dyspepsia. The only thing that brings physical relief is a monastic diet. But to renounce the pleasures of rich food is to throw away a crutch, a source of spiritual comfort. The exile then battles on—against the foods that no longer soothe—in search of this spiritual comfort, but the corporeal discomfort sours the spiritual one. The displacement and its rupture are complete.

The above may sound rather speculative, but, remarkably, exiles in general seem to share a sensitive stomach. Anecdotal evidence abounds. András Merkler told me that Alexander Korda's early death was in part due to the large quantities of fattened goose liver that he had imported from Hungary. The Russian writer Gogol, according to his biographer Henri Troyat (1974: 170), ate himself into agonising fits of indigestion while in exile in Paris. Emil Jannings and Lya de Putti took their own cooks to Hollywood so they could continue eating dishes from home, while Lubitsch is said to have depended on sauerkraut and sausages (Horak, 2005: 245). Béla Lugosi is known to have imported Hungarian salami, goose liver and wine, which he consumed to excess, although in other ways he was a believer in healthy eating (Lennig, 2003: 185). Lorre, too, continued to eat goulash, sauerkraut and liver dumplings in Hollywood (Youngkin, 2003: 431). It has been said of Lorre, perhaps with a touch of malice, that his habit of subsisting largely on alcohol and ripe cheese gave him infernal breath (*ibid.*: 170), a charge, incidentally, also brought against Lugosi, but attributed to alcohol alone (2003: 335). It is only the skeletal Conrad Veidt of the three stars I consider in this thesis that seems to have avoided such unpleasant comments from co-stars. But even Veidt has been tainted with this particular brush: his daughter told his biographer of the time when Veidt exceeded the recommended dose of laxatives to relieve his constipation, with predictable and scatologically humorous results (Allen, 1987: 242). At the beginning of his last stint in Hollywood—cut short by his death—he insisted in his contract with MGM that the studio import Berliner Weisse beer for him, writing that 'I am a genuine Berliner and I prefer to drink that genuine German beer' (*ibid.*: 289).

Just as the exile had not sprung from the soil of the host nation, the fundamental food stuffs of his home are not produced in the soil of the host nation. As we have seen above, even at a time of war, Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt all had food or drink, or both, imported from home, or wherever these were available. Not even the greatest and most devastating global conflict could completely come between the exiles and the longed-for flavours from home. But the sausage, wine and beer not only comfort: they also bring physical discomfort, and mental distress too. Once consumed, that fleeting connection with the home land is gone. The sausage

eaten, the wine and beer drunk, all that is left behind is the dyspepsia, the reminder of an irreversible separation from the home nation.

The three stars, Béla Lugosi, Peter Lorre and Conrad Veidt, the many films and characters that I explore in this thesis all seem to seek the answer to the same question: how can one survive, if at all, in exile? A wide range of strategies can be apprehended in the private lives of the three actors whose work this thesis takes as its focus, in the private histories of the characters they portray, and in the films in which they appear. I have already mentioned above how Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt maintained their contact with their homeland through what they ate and drank. Veidt was a frequent diner at The Blue Danube, a Hungarian restaurant that formed the focal point of the social lives of many Central European exiles in Hollywood (Allen, 1987: 292-293). Lugosi, too, would visit Hungarian restaurants to eat, and almost as importantly, to listen to Hungarian Gypsy music (Lennig, 2003: 188). For Lorre, towards the end of his Hollywood career, ‘Scandia Restaurant became a sort of surrogate home that passed for the Vienna coffeehouse of his youth’ (Youngkin, 2005: 431). The characters the three actors portrayed during their careers showed similar strategies of sustaining at least the illusion of remaining rooted in or connected with the home nation.

Interestingly, it is the films of Veidt that suggest a direct alimentary dimension to displacement: Major Strasser in *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) eats Russian caviar and drinks French Champagne in a gastronomic re-enactment of Nazi Germany’s invasion of the USSR and France. The motif, stripped of its intended political resonance, can also be read as the intruding/immigrant foreign body forcing itself to subsist on the food and drink of the (unwelcoming) host nation. In this reading, Veidt’s skeletal frame gains a new significance: the body cannot flourish on food that it was not reared on. Another Veidt character, the German exile Otto Becker (in *Nazi Agent*, Jules Dassin, 1942), a timid philatelist in New York, drinks only milk. There are two (speculative) conclusions that suggest themselves: milk is frequently used to soothe a rebellious stomach; and milk is a child’s drink, a drink that carries associations of home and nurture and care, and therefore indicates an attempt by the exile to soothe the soul, not just the stomach.

Lugosi’s characters more typically seek to remake themselves, rather than the host nation, and displace the anxiety surrounding digestion to other body parts and other substances. Lugosi’s exiles search the solution in life-giving blood, in spinal fluid and gland secretions. These, they hope, will allow them to make the necessary adjustments to their bodies and organs in order to function within the host nation. Lorre’s exiles often turn on their own bodies in order to punish them for the inadequacy that the normative discourse of the host nation inscribes into them. What unites the three is that they all see their own bodies as a, or perhaps *the* site for the assertion of viability. In this sense the exile’s own body becomes a tool for the communication of normality. But in spite of any absence of real

corporeal difference, the normality, which the exile hopes to project by means of presenting the body for scrutiny, becomes abnormal. Implied is the awareness of the function of the exile's body, for the host nation, as the site of the inscription of the inadequacy of the other.<sup>1</sup>

Being in exile is hard to stomach. Not only is there the constant battle against one's own digestive system that seems hell bent on keeping the knowledge of displacement at the forefront of the exile's mind, but there are a myriad other factors that serve as constant reminders of the exile's inability to come to be seen as one who belongs. Just as one cannot change one's heart, and has no control over one's stomach, one cannot entirely remake one's speech organs.<sup>2</sup> That is not to say that one cannot learn to mimic the accent of members of the host nation. But mimicking is not speaking naturally in the voice of the host nation. One misplaced emphasis, an odd inflection, a failure to intonate quite properly immediately draws attention to the exile. No matter how grammatically correct one's speech may be, no matter how idiomatic the expressions, members of the host nation will immediately identify the speaker as foreign, and an interloper. A number of immediate assumptions are made, fuelled by stereotypes.<sup>3</sup> A foreign accent means foreign birth. It further means a foreign mind, one that, however suited it may be for life in the home nation, is just not up to scratch in the host nation. It also means a foreign outlook, and a failure to understand what members of the host nation consider the true meaning of things, meanings that must elude one who is an alien in the host nation. Indeed, these assumptions can be apprehended in much of what has been said about Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt in the US.

## The period

What follows is an interdisciplinary investigation of representations of exile in Hollywood cinema. I focus on the period 1930-1956. The period almost picked itself. Albeit a rather long period, it is bookended by two significant moments in the history of Hollywood. It begins with a series of more or less simultaneous developments: optical sound (Fielding, 1979: 115), the Universal Horror film cycle and Hollywood's self-imposed censorship rules. It ends with the pitiful death of

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this thesis I use the lower-case other. I do so because I do not intend to talk about the Lacanian 'Other', but the other plain and simple. The other in this thesis is other in the sense of different, and not one of us.

<sup>2</sup>My aunt, Kati, once told the story of a friend of hers, who had lived in Berlin for over twenty years. She was proud of her accent, which, she was certain, carried not a trace of Hungarian. One day she telephoned a German friend. The friend's daughter answered the phone. My aunt's friend asked to speak to the child's mother. The child, without covering the mouthpiece, shouted for her mother: 'Mum, a Hungarian lady wants to speak to you!'

<sup>3</sup>I explore the significance of stereotyping in great detail in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

one of the first great horror stars, Lugosi; the ignominious end of Senator Joseph McCarthy's career and the House Un-American Activities Committee; and the crisis of old Hollywood as mass production by major studios was finally replaced by the 'package-unit' system<sup>4</sup> (Bordwell et al, 1985: 331-332) and television began noticeably to erode box office figures.

The period 1930-1956 also roughly coincides with what is generally considered the Golden Age of Hollywood. And yet, as the moments that bookend the period point out, this was also a period of great upheaval, encompassing not only watershed moments in terms of technology, film style and business models, but also the Great Depression, World War II and the beginning of the Cold War. It was, too, the period of the producer system, which sought to contain and manage the power of the stars. Further, it was the period of a striking influx of European filmmakers, artists and thinkers to the US, which, paradoxically, coincided with the beginning of an ideologically-conceived exclusionary immigration system that for the first time imposed limits on migrants from certain countries, ethnic groups, religious communities and political formations. Finally, the period coincides more or less with the final 25 years of white hegemony, segregation and unapologetic, state-sanctioned, institutional racism in the US.<sup>5</sup> All these will form a backdrop to my exploration of representations of exile in Hollywood.

My aim, however, is not to put the cart before the horse. I plan to approach the films first, as the body of evidence, as *corpus delicti*. This is not to say that I intend to ignore the social, political, geographical context. I analyse the films in order to reconstruct the crime. The crime, in this instance, being the exclusionary practices deployed against the other. As I hope to show, these exclusionary practices and strategies are virtually timeless. Therefore the environment, the contexts—social, political, geographical—of the films will lend strength to my arguments, rather than serve as their starting point. Rooting my analysis in the temporal, historical specificities of the period would be limiting both in terms of the scope of the findings of this project and in terms of suggesting that the problem itself is rooted in and therefore belongs to the past. For instance, rather than reading Peter Lorre's *Mr Moto* films (1937-1939) as reflections of increasing tensions between the US and Japan—for that would predetermine my findings to a large extent—I

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<sup>4</sup>The package-unit system operated on the basis of independent production companies assembling cast and crew for a specific project on a one-off basis and selling the product to a studio or distributor. The advantage of the system was to spread financial liability, allowing independents to make big profits on successful projects, while leaving them to suffer the consequences of a flop, and freeing up studio resources for large-scale prestige productions financed from returns on films bought from the independents. (Bordwell et al, 1985: 331-332)

<sup>5</sup>See Chinn (2000) for a brilliant account of the shifts in the perception of racial difference and their impact on society at large in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and Behdad (2005) for an eye-opening analysis of US attitudes towards immigration and the inherent contradictions of American self-perception as an insular yet immigrant nation.

shall read them as representations of the exilic body, where virulent anti-Japanese sentiment comes to colour a discourse that is first and foremost concerned with conceived, rather than perceived otherness,<sup>6</sup> something that, I contend in this thesis, remains with us to this day, and for the foreseeable future.

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<sup>6</sup>This is something that I unpick in greater detail in Chapter 2 and my analysis of stereotyping and the writings of Sander Gilman.



# CHAPTER 1

## CONTEXTS AND METHODOLOGY

### Why Lorre, Lugosi, Veidt?

Before I begin sketching the lives and careers of the three actors whose films I explore in this thesis, I pause here to explain just why I chose them, and not others. Because I was planning an investigation of the representations of exile in mainstream cinema in the period I outline above, I was looking for actors with enduring fame and popularity who worked in the premier centre for film production, Hollywood. Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt were all hugely popular at the height of their careers, which together stretch from 1931 to the mid-1950s. Lorre was as popular with co-stars as with audiences in general, and his period at the top would roughly correspond with his time at Warner Brothers, where he made, amongst others, *The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941), *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) and *Passage to Marseille* (Michael Curtiz, 1944). Lugosi's peak, in terms of the prestige of the productions he starred in, was briefer (*Dracula* to *The Raven* or 1931-1935), but he remained a powerful box office draw until the late 1940s. Veidt was probably the most popular of the three, beginning with European stardom with silent films in Germany, through successful stints with British-Gaumont and Korda in the 1930s to a sadly all-too brief association with MGM brought to an end by his untimely death at just 50 in 1943.

Veidt may have been the most popular in his lifetime, and he is instantly recognisable to many even today for roles such as Major Strasser in *Casablanca* or Jaffar in *The Thief of Bagdad* (Michael Powell, Ludwig Berger, et al, 1940), but Lorre and Lugosi's fame has endured to this day. Practically all of Lugosi's films, whether they were big budget productions or Poverty Row quickies, are available on DVD and there flourishes a brisk trade in all sorts of Lugosi memorabilia (in no small part due to his son, Béla Jr, who, with a well-developed business sense, continues to cater for—and to an extent maintain—demand). Lorre, perhaps more surprisingly, has also remained in the public consciousness to this day: from the character of the mad scientist he inspired in Looney Toons cartoons (e.g., *Hair-Raising Hare*, Chuck Jones, 1946) to Maggot in Tim Burton's *Corpse Bride* (2005) he continues to crop up in film and on television in affectionate parodies,

or in creepy homage, even if younger audiences may be unaware of the actor who had inspired the goggle-eyed, whiney-voiced characters they often encounter.

Originally, I was planning to include Johnny Weissmuller. Just as the other three, Johnny Weissmuller was a Central European émigré. Like Lorre, he was Jewish. Like Lugosi, he was born in Transylvania (then Hungary, now Romania). His films, like those of Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt, go to the very heart of the problems of exile, integration and exclusion. However, I felt compelled to drop him. First, he made the move to America while still a child and had no body of work behind him in Europe. Second, he was not a trained actor, unlike the other three. He was, in fact, one of the greatest sportsmen of his time, World and Olympic champion swimmer many times over. Third, his films explore a very different aspect of exile: the *Tarzan* films investigate the implications of an all-too perfect integration into the host nation. Tarzan is so good at blending in, that those who follow in his footsteps at a later stage in life (in other words, those who emigrate as adults, and not children), no longer recognise him as one of their own within the host nation. Tarzan is fully integrated into the hierarchy of the jungle, he understands its code of conduct perfectly, but has no memory of the established modes of being in the homeland. Subsequent émigrés from his homeland look at him, and they do not see a human being, let alone a compatriot. They fail to identify him as a member of the same race. Instead they see an ‘Ape Man’, one who may have been a man once, but is now an ape in all but outward appearance. While the *Tarzan* films continue to fascinate me, and I still plan to explore them in a different project,<sup>1</sup> I felt I had no choice but to exclude Weissmuller’s films from my corpus, although I do briefly consider *Tarzan* in the Conclusion of this thesis.

Of course, my choices were partly dictated by personal preference. I like Peter Lorre and enjoy his films and performances. I like Lugosi and Veidt too. But, equally, the three, like the period, almost picked themselves. These three were by far the most popular male Central European émigré actors in Hollywood who had made the voyage across the Atlantic after varying degrees of success in Vienna and Berlin. Edward G Robinson and Kirk Douglas were too young when they became US residents, and had not performed on stage or in films in Europe. Francis Lederer, Paul Lukas (despite an Oscar) and Paul Muni (another Oscar winner) may have been popular in their lifetimes, but their fame has not endured so well. That is not to say that the findings of this thesis would be undermined or greatly altered had they been picked. There is a remarkable consistency with which Hollywood uses the exilic star body to convey a sense of nationhood and to weave narratives around exile, attempted integration and exclusion. Charles Boyer

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<sup>1</sup>A comparative study of Weissmuller’s *Tarzan the Ape Man* (WS Van Dyke, 1932) and Lugosi’s *The Ape Man* (William Beaudine, 1943) would, I suspect, yield fascinating results, and is a study I hope to write some other time.

or Paul Henreid have played much the same characters throughout their careers as indeed have the three I picked for this thesis. Although Boyer was one of the great émigré stars of the period, I chose Veidt, whose career-trajectory and background was closer to those of Lugosi and Lorre. Ultimately, I had to make a choice if for no other reason than to limit the size of the corpus of films. Limiting myself to just three actors still meant that I ended up with a corpus of some hundred films.

The corpus of films that this thesis takes as its focus consists of three main groups. The first group are films made by Hollywood studios, mostly majors. This is the least problematic group, in that all three of the stars discussed in this thesis made films for majors. Lorre started out at Columbia but worked most successfully at Warner Brothers, Lugosi achieved huge success with Universal and Veidt was one of MGM's major stars. The films in this group include *Above Suspicion* (Richard Thorpe, 1943), *Passage to Marseille* (Michael Curtiz, 1944) and *The Raven* (Lew Landers, 1935).

The second group of films are Poverty Row quickies. Lorre rarely and Veidt never ventured into this arena, but Lugosi spent much of his Hollywood career there. My goal in this thesis is not to analyse the aesthetic merits or failures of artistic productions, but to trace modes of representation in popular culture. Although Poverty Row cannot be compared, on the whole, with the output of Hollywood 'proper' in terms of production values, quality of scripts and attention to detail, Poverty Row films reached a broad audience. This broad audience and the freshness of the output of this sector, due to its ethos of trying to cash-in quickly on topical issues and trends, make it just as suitable for an exploration of attitudes to and representations of exile in mainstream culture in the period this thesis focuses on. This group includes Lugosi's films from *White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932) to his roles in the infamous Ed Wood films *Glen or Glenda* (1953) and *Bride of the Monster* (1955).

The final group of films come from Conrad Veidt's work with Alexander Korda in the UK. I chose to include these films because of Korda's ambition to release his films on the American market, his documented efforts to tailor his product for American tastes and the general reluctance to accept his films fully into the British canon by film historians. The one film from this group that I discuss at length is *The Thief of Bagdad* (Ludwig Berger, et al, 1940). *The Spy in Black* (Michael Powell, 1939) or *Contraband* (Michael Powell, 1940) could have been used to just as good effect, but are cited only briefly.

The final issue I need to address here is why I chose to focus on the films of three men, and decided not to explore representations of female exiles. There would have been many possible candidates for inclusion, from Greta Garbo and Ingrid Bergman to Marlene Dietrich, Ilona Massey and Hedy Lamarr. However, addressing the vastly complex power-relations that dictate representations of women in exile would have inflated this project to an unmanageable size. In order

to keep my thesis balanced, I would have needed far more than the space available here, and would have struggled to keep my arguments, structure and analyses coherent and logical. Although important work has been done in the field of female stardom and ethnicity in Hollywood cinema, particularly Diane Negra's *Off-White Hollywood*<sup>2</sup> (2001), I do feel that an exploration of the representation of women in exile through the prism of mainstream cinema is an issue that sorely needs attention, but this gap in existing scholarship cannot, at this point, be remedied by me.

Over the coming pages I shall trace the lives and careers of the three actors I chose for the purposes of this thesis. I do so in order to set out the many reasons why the three make an ideal prism through which to explore representations of the exilic body in Hollywood cinema. I do not, however, suggest that the films in which they appear, and the roles they play are a direct or intentional reflection on their personal histories. It would be futile to speculate whether scriptwriters had any specific actors in mind when writing a particular character, or whether they were aware of the biographical details of the stars who ended up being cast in the film they had written. It would be equally unfruitful to seek to attribute intentional reflection on the exilic state to the directors involved.

Auteurist approaches to films dealing with the issue of exile are probably the most common ones, as I discuss later on in this introduction. Yet, especially in the context of such a highly organised and disciplined, business-oriented centre for cultural production as Hollywood, it would make little sense to base our conclusions, or even hypotheses, on the possible individual experiences, intentions and influences of specific directors. Michael Curtiz may have been an exile, but not all of his films can be read as artistic responses to the experience of exile. *Mildred Pierce* (1945) or *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (1942) cannot be said to investigate the rupture and trauma of exile. Tod Browning was American (born and bred), yet his *Dracula* (1931), as I discuss at some length in Chapter 3, is one of the most important explorations of exile in Hollywood cinema.

The actors, however, with their specific accents, perhaps slightly foreign looks—often greatly exaggerated by make-up and wardrobe—cannot but inform every role they play, every character they inhabit, with precisely those personal experiences and influences which it would be hopeless to trace back to the director. That is not to say that the actors' biographical details will form the basis of my analyses. I sketch them here briefly to give account of the historical, geographical, political and social background of their films. What is remarkable about the actors is, in fact, not something that they are responsible for: the way they are

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<sup>2</sup>Negra's work approaches a similar concern to the one addressed in this thesis, but focuses on issues of ethnicity, rather than a difference that is not corporeally inscribed, as I do in this thesis. Further, her study is based in the reading of film texts as well as a close analysis of extra-textual material, such as fanzines, press reports, posters, etc.

made use of by mainstream cinema. If anything, their private histories serve as a refutation of the often troublingly negative characteristics attributed to them by cinema, the scriptwriters, the directors, the producers, the critics and audiences, and, tragically, to an extent the actors themselves.

## Journey 1: Béla Lugosi and the end of unrestricted immigration

*Dracula, the werewolf, zombies. But really, you know,  
they were sort of jokes. Who could take them seriously?  
Bela Lugosi... you see what I mean.*

(Roszak, 1991)

Béla Lugosi arrived in America in December 1920. He was a dashing, if somewhat mannered Hungarian stage actor, who had made some films in Germany before the trans-Atlantic voyage to America. He was popular with female audiences, but not so much with amateurs of the theatre, or the critics. Although in later years he would cast himself as a graduate of the Hungarian stage school, he was not a formally trained actor (Lennig, 2003: 19-24).<sup>3</sup> He tended towards the melodramatic, in gestures, intonation and indeed in his recollections of his early career (ibid.: 18-19; 40-41). From the distance of some two decades, he cast himself as the lead in Shakespeare and the Hungarian classics, but had been more often seen as the vapid young man who tempts a girl from the path of true love (ibid.: 26). Once he played Jesus, and, from what one can gather from the publicity stills, he milked it to the utmost.

Lugosi declared his intent to become a permanent resident in the USA in March 1921 (ibid.: 41). His reasons for moving to America certainly included the political: he had participated in the 1919 Communist uprising in Hungary and had been heavily involved in the political organisation of a new state-controlled theatre. However, he was not quite the spearhead of the movement amongst the cultural elite as he would claim later in life. After the fall of the short-lived Hungarian Tanácsköztársaság,<sup>4</sup> a four-month Communist Government that briefly seized

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<sup>3</sup>I rely heavily on Lennig's extraordinarily detailed and impressively researched biography of Lugosi, which goes to great lengths to set the record straight on not only many of the wild rumours circulated about Lugosi by others, but also the outlandish stories the dramatic Lugosi liked to spread about himself.

<sup>4</sup>Tanácsköztársaság is usually translated as Council of Republics, although there was only one Republic and many Councils in the Hungarian instance. A more appropriate translation would therefore seem to me to be Republic of Councils.

power in the hectic year that followed the end of World War I, Lugosi fled from retribution—alongside the far more prominent filmmakers and revolutionary activists Mihály Kertész (who took the name Michael Curtiz in exile) and the Korda brothers. His first destination was Berlin. There he appeared in a number of plays and films, including Murnau's *Der Januskopf* (1920), where he played alongside Conrad Veidt as the latter's butler.<sup>5</sup> Success failed to find Lugosi, who turned 38 in 1920, and he decided to try his luck in the US. His emigration was therefore also economically motivated.

Lugosi could not have timed his move better. The US was entering the Jazz Age, a period of unparalleled wealth and comfort. Hollywood was emerging as the largest centre for filmmaking in the world, and began to erode the market share of domestic industries across Europe. As the European powerhouses of cinema, France, Germany and Italy were busy with reconstruction, implementing or coming to terms with the harsh Treaty of Versailles (which included the Trianon Treaty of 1920 that ordered the annexation of Transylvania, including Lugosi's birthplace, by Romania, thereby effectively rendering the already exiled Lugosi utterly homeless), Hollywood was flexing its muscles for the first time. It was an auspicious moment to find oneself in the USA as an actor: Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and the director DW Griffiths were laying the foundations for Hollywood's supremacy on the world stage. With an unnerving knack for failing to make the most of an opportunity, however, Lugosi settled in New York, rather than California, making a meagre living by performing in Hungarian productions on the East coast (Lennig, 2003: 41).

Nonetheless, Lugosi's timing, if not his subsequent choices, was fortunate. The political and economic upheavals of the 1910s and 1920s had triggered large-scale trans-Atlantic migration, primarily from Central and Eastern Europe (Poland, Hungary, Germany, Austria, Russia, etc.). The influx of migrants was by no means unwelcome. Many of the new arrivals manned the booming factories of Chicago, Seattle and Detroit, amongst others. American industry was expanding at breakneck speed, and the need for workers meant that immigration was relatively easy. Neither were all migrants planning to settle permanently in the US (Daniels, 2002: 232-237). Hungarian migrants, a group whose movements were exhaustively analysed by Julianna Puskás (*ibid.*: 233), often stayed only briefly, especially if they had left family behind at home, and returned to their families at least as often as they settled down in the US.

Migration from Southeast Asia was also continuing apace through the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Concentrated especially in the Southwest of the US, Asian

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<sup>5</sup>To my knowledge, it is the only time they appeared in a film together. Lorre and Veidt co-starred twice, in *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) and *All Through the Night* (Vincent Sherman, 1941).

migrants had provided the labour for much of the expansion of industry, particularly the railroads, in that part of the country, just as the Central and Eastern European migrants had powered the expansion further north. This great need for cheap labour had kept American immigration policies relatively lax until the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, although to an extent always present in the US, a paradoxical combination of nativist and pro-immigration discourse came to the fore in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Behdad, 2005: 129-142). The myth of the melting pot was qualified with dire warnings about the perils of unrestricted immigration. Immigrants were necessary to meet the demands of a rapidly expanding economy. They were also resented, often depicted as illiterate, stupid masses who had contributed to overcrowding and a concomitant decline in standards of living. The political elite continued to cast the US as a welcoming host nation, all the while asserting national homogeneity through a nativist discourse. Behdad cites a journal article of 1902 in which the commissioner general of immigration, Terence Powderly warns of the diseases spread by immigrants, arguing that ‘The old cry, “America is the asylum of the oppressed of the world,” is too threadbare to withstand the assault of disease. There is a danger that the oppressed may, through the burdens they fasten on others, become oppressors’ (2005: 129). Behdad goes on to note that where Powderly is virulent in his anti-immigration rhetoric concerning ‘new’ immigrants in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, he idealizes the ‘old’ immigrants of the previous century, the ‘sturdy Englishman, Irishman, Scotchman’ (*ibid.*: 130). Whether immigrants were depicted as heroic founding fathers of a youthful but homogenous nation, or as the vermin that threatened to infect that youthful nation varied depending on the interests of those expounding on immigration. In other words, migrants were represented, sometimes at the same time, as both invaluable labour, and worthless intruders, a dual discourse that I will trace at length in the films that form the corpus of this thesis.

On the back of increasing public pressure to curtail immigration, Congress passed the Quota Act of 1921, and three years later the Immigration Act of 1924, which imposed discriminatory quotas on migrants. Migration from Asia had already been banned in 1882, and now immigration from Europe, although not halted altogether, was restricted according to largely racist prejudices given pseudo-scientific support by the eugenics movement (*ibid.*: 11). As it turned out, Lugosi arrived in the US just a few years before a general clampdown on immigration. A struggling journeyman actor with few great successes and no powerful backers behind him, Lugosi might have had trouble entering the US, had he waited much longer.

The preference for Europeans of Nordic background merits further consideration. Two more or less simultaneous developments had dictated the shift from the ideal of a European background to the ideal of a Nordic one. The first was the end of the great pioneer project, the fulfilment of what was termed, in the 1840s, the

nation's 'Manifest Destiny' to spread across the entire continent and to claim as their home all the land between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Once the pioneers reached and settled the Pacific coast, the country's official borders solidified. The US, a country closed off by the British Empire's Canadian territories to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the east, was no longer a country permanently open westwards. Nor was it open, by any means, southwards. A steady influx of immigrants from Mexico prompted the establishment of the Border Patrol, and with it stricter border policing (Behdad, 2005: 163), which in turn crept into the public consciousness through the rise of nativism as a consensual determinant of 'true' citizenship. As the national myth of a cultural melting pot, a welcoming host nation with no obstacles in the path of its western expansion lost its currency, a new, more inflexible concept of citizenship emerged that constructed the nation as a closed and homogenous community under threat of infiltration and invasion from 'foreign' bodies. A new sense of the vulnerability of the US's southern border was concomitant with the emergence of a narrative that sought to create the illusion of a hermetically closed border. This in turn meant that, while the threat was external, the fear was that the enemy was already within, in the form of millions of immigrants. (This is a fear that continues to exercise America to this day.) Given that the vast majority of European immigrants in this period came from Central and Eastern Europe, and that Americans of a 'Nordic' European background were predominantly those in a position of political, economic and cultural power, the Nordic emerged as the acceptable norm as immigrant.

The second development was the destabilization of (skin) colour as a determinant of identity. Sarah E Chinn traces this development in her eye-opening *Technology and the Logic of American Racism* (2000: 1-23; 53-92), a work that I come back to again later in this thesis. Chinn gives account of the 'Rhineland Case' of 1924 (*ibid.*: 65-92), in which Skip Rhinelander, the son of a rich white New York family, sued Alice Jones Rhinelander, his wife, for fraud. Skip alleged that he had married her thinking she was white, an assumption he claimed she had encouraged. Chinn traces the lawsuit, both in the courtroom and the media, and analyzes in detail the implications of Alice Jones's acquittal, the arguments deployed in her defence by her attorney, the jury's verdict and popular opinion as reflected in headlines, editorials and cartoons. What is significant for the purposes of this thesis is the notion of the destabilization of skin colour as a determinant of identity. From the point of view of the dominant white population, skin colour was no longer a cast-iron way of identifying the other body. This is illustrated by the trial, where the case hinged on the plaintiff's assertion that Alice Jones's race could not be determined on the basis of her skin colour, while the defence—in an appallingly degrading strategy for the defendant herself—had Alice Jones strip naked to her waist in order to prove that her race was unequivocally inscribed in her body (*ibid.*: 76). The acquittal, as Chinn argues, was far from being the

triumph of a newly enlightened race politics. On the contrary: Alice Jones was acquitted of fraud precisely because the jury decided that her racial identity could be ascertained, without shadow of doubt, just by looking at her. In other words, the idea that a black person could pass for white was so distasteful that the jury preferred to acquit Alice Jones of a deliberate and successful false claim to whiteness, before conceding that racial difference was predominantly subjectively conceived, rather than objectively perceived.

Difference, as the wealth of ‘passing’ narratives (both fictional and factual) of the era demonstrate, was far from being a manner of simple perception. Rather, difference (always and already) was a highly flexible quality attributed to whoever failed to comply with the norm. The preference for Europeans of Nordic descent emerged as a safe label that would adequately exclude not only light-skinned African-Americans who could pass or be mistaken for Spanish, say, but also Southern Europeans, Jews and a whole mass of other (and othered) bodies, leaving only truly ‘safe’ bodies within the loop of the norm and the desirable.

Lugosi arrived in the US at a time when the binary opposition between the accepted norm and the rejected ‘other’ was in the process of ceasing to be a simple ‘black and white’. With a growing uncertainty about the homogeneity of the nation and an increasing concern about the hegemony of the white majority, new lines were drawn to separate the acceptable ‘us’ from the dangerous ‘them’. US-born bodies of a European Nordic background—an exceedingly limiting category, indeed—emerged as the one desirable category. Everyone *deemed* to fall beyond that category made up the mass conveniently labelled as other and therefore not desirable. The destabilization of skin colour and the emergence of an increasingly inward-looking discourse on nativism and the foreign body present in the space of the host nation meant that the concept of otherness became broader, much more fluid, and less rooted in obvious corporeal inscriptions of difference. In this climate, Hollywood representations of the foreign other developed a disregard for the specific personal histories of the exilic stars it used. In the second half of the 1920s, and even more markedly after the introduction of sound, which rendered foreignness audible through the accent of the émigré actor, a general, more abstracted category of the alien emerged (Vasey, 1997: 101). Foreignness still carried a mark, but this mark was more often the mark of a rupture: scars, physical deformities, outlandish and alien modes of dress.

This proved to be, in a way, a blessing for Lugosi, an immigrant to the US from the south of Eastern Central Europe.<sup>6</sup> By the above standards, he came to embody a difference that, although not inscribed in the body, was still obvious.

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<sup>6</sup>Eastern Central Europe refers here to the Eastern part of the region the EU calls Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The CEE region comprises the former Communist block West of the former USSR, and the Baltic States, although it should also include Austria and Germany. They, unsurprisingly, prefer to belong to Western Europe.

Lugosi's entire screen career, which spanned over a quarter century, was spent performing and embodying a wide variety of difference, playing any and all kinds of foreign bodies, from Transylvanian to Mexican, Indian to French, and Chinese to (perhaps most unbelievably) British.

## Journey 2: Peter Lorre and self-censorship in Hollywood

*Home six thousand miles away and  
this addiction as close as my stomach.<sup>7</sup>*

Peter Lorre, like Lugosi, was a man without a home. He was born László Löwenstein into a Jewish family in Rózsahegy, northern Hungary (now Ruzomberok in Slovakia) in 1904. By the time he turned 16, his hometown was no longer part of the country he was born in. He, too, was uprooted, made homeless by the Trianon Treaty. He ran away to Vienna, the region's cultural capital, to pursue a career in the theatre, defying his father who had envisaged a bank clerk's life for his son (Youngkin, 2005: 11).<sup>8</sup> From Vienna Lorre moved to Berlin, where Max Reinhardt and Bertolt Brecht were revolutionizing the art of theatre. This defiance of expectations, a refusal to conform to the norm would characterise Lorre the man, and the actor, throughout his life.

As an actor, Lorre sought out difficult roles, relishing as much the challenge of portraying ambiguous characters as he did surprising and shocking audiences. On the stage, he worked with the two great innovators of theatre, Bertolt Brecht and Max Reinhardt (*ibid.*: 27-31). He learnt alienating techniques from the former, and psychological realism from the latter. Lorre would combine the two to chilling effect throughout his career. Lorre was predominantly a supporting actor, although his status off-screen was certainly that of a star.<sup>9</sup> He was short and pudgy, and, although by no means ugly, he certainly was not handsome in the conventional sense. But then again, there was nothing conventional about Lorre in general. This meant that he was rarely contracted for leading roles, unless the

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<sup>7</sup>From '...and embarked on a life of poverty and freedom...' by World/Inferno Friendship Society (2007) *Addicted to Bad Ideas, Peter Lorre's 20<sup>th</sup> Century, New Jersey: Chunksaah*

<sup>8</sup>I take the biographical details in this section from, sadly, the only comprehensive Lorre biography, Stephen D Youngkin's *The Lost One: a Life of Peter Lorre* (2005).

<sup>9</sup>Lorre's appearance on the television programme, 'What's My Line', shows this clearly. Although it is acknowledged that he is not a leading man, the host is quick to explain that Lorre is a major star. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cermSSPX\\_Hk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cermSSPX_Hk) (Accessed on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2011.)

main character was an antagonist saddled with some terrible psychological flaw, such as the serial child-murderer Hans Beckert in *M* (Fritz Lang, 1930). Having come to prominence as the premier actor for difficult roles that tested the boundaries of the mores and tastes of the time, Lorre had no place or prospect of livelihood—even of life—in Nazi Germany. Lorre emigrated within a year of Hitler’s rise to power. After a brief sojourn in Paris, then in London, Lorre arrived in the US in 1935, celebrated as the ‘Greatest Living Actor,’<sup>10</sup> and heralded as ‘a new, strange and gifted personality’<sup>11</sup> in American cinema.

As fortunate as Lugosi’s timing had been, so unfortunate was that of Lorre. With his reputation for a tendency towards the macabre and the sinister, Lorre would have been a natural choice for the horror films that Hollywood began to churn out on the back of the extraordinary success of *Frankenstein* (John Whale, 1931) and *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931). However, by 1935, the first Universal horror cycle had just come to a close with *The Bride of Frankenstein* (John Whale, 1935). The second Frankenstein film was a masterful balancing act, mixing black humour, genuine horror and high camp, a perfect coda to horror’s classical period. The public, however, was beginning to tire of horror, and the genre was relegated to B-feature status. Only Poverty Row continued to produce horrors with unrelenting fervour, but that was an arena into which Lorre only rarely ventured.

The industry’s self-imposed code of censorship, the Production Code, had been set down by the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MP-PDA) in 1930 under growing pressure from political and religious groups dismayed at the moral laxity of life on screen (Doherty, 1999: 1-3). The Production Code, however, was seldom enforced (for the simple reason that no agency had been set up to do so), and the first half of the decade was a relatively unregulated period in which films pushed the boundaries of sex and violence on screen.<sup>12</sup> Soon, however, hand in hand with the growing dissatisfaction with what was considered unfettered immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe, horror films had come to be seen as a manifestation of the nefarious influence of European decadence. By 1934 the MPPDA set up the Production Code Administration, and empowered it to enforce the rules the studios had adopted in an effort to pre-empt and prevent Federal interference in film production (*ibid.*). It was a newly self-regulating Hollywood where the headstrong and anti-authoritarian Peter Lorre arrived in 1935.

Little wonder, then, that Lorre’s first US feature, *Mad Love* (Karl Freund,

<sup>10</sup>A quote attributed to Charlie Chaplin in the theatrical trailer for *Mad Love* (Karl Freund, 1935), the first of Lorre’s Hollywood films to be released.

<sup>11</sup>As the *Mad Love* trailer went on to introduce him.

<sup>12</sup>These depictions of sex and violence were, clearly, explicit by the norms of the time, but nothing that today’s audiences would recognize as such. See for instance the see-through negligee Madge Bellamy wears in *White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932)

1935), was a flop at the box office. Its plundering of Grand Guignol themes, the visuals of German Expressionism, its plot revolving around the intense sexual desire of an unconventional body for a classical feminine figure—something that had made *Dracula* an extraordinary hit just four years earlier—was now obscene and repulsive for US audiences. (Of course, Lugosi's unconventional body was far more appealing, than Lorre's genuinely disturbing surgeon.) That is not to say that Lorre had his heart set on a career in horror films. Far from it: he only made *Mad Love*, on loan to MGM, on condition that Columbia boss Harry Cohn would agree to make *Crime and Punishment* with Joseph von Sternberg as director (Youngkin, 2005: 114). Cohn agreed, and *Crime and Punishment* (1935) was to be Lorre's last personal project until he returned to Germany in 1950 to direct *The Lost One (Der Verlorene)*. Dostoevsky's naïve philosopher-murderer, renamed Roderick Raskolnikov, was precisely the kind of role that Lorre had made his own in Europe. American audiences, however, proved as resistant to 'serious' depictions of obsessions and the repercussions of psychological flaws, as they were to the grotesque excesses of *Mad Love*.

That *Mad Love* was released at all, is, perhaps, testament to Lorre's—as yet untested—Box Office draw. Like so many other European stars then and to this day (Horak, 2005: 258), Lorre had seemed a winning bet from across the Atlantic, but once contracted by a Hollywood studio, executives struggled to find the right vehicle for the uncompromising actor. A series of publicity stills taken in 1937 at Columbia and held by the Bibliothèque du Film in Paris show Lorre in three very different guises. In one, he looks unconvincing in tennis whites, clutching a racket, standing awkwardly next to a female tennis partner.<sup>13</sup> Clearly, the pose of the debonair society man ill becomes him. Another shows him reclining in a chaise longue. Here, Lorre is the personification of European decadence. The unflattering angle emphasises the folds of flesh under his chin. The sparse stubble, fleshy cheeks and full lips lend Lorre an air of sensuousness, and hint at gluttony, lasciviousness and easy living—all characteristics attributed at all times to all Jews in anti-Semitic discourse (Gilman, 1991: 104-127). The third image is stark proof of the prejudices that had shaped the former two: depicted in a classic studio portrait, Lorre looks intently beyond the camera, his head turned slightly to the side, hair combed back with a neat side parting. There is nothing odd about him. The eyes do not bulge. The lips are not moistened in a sign of rapacious appetites. The stomach is not made visible through the marks of gluttony on the face. There is no hint of stubble, no subtle allusion of uncontrolled nature. Of course, this was the face Lorre was never to get the opportunity to show. Just as Lugosi would never realize his dream of playing the romantic lead, so Lorre was never allowed

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<sup>13</sup>Later he would grow into the role, and become an avid tennis player in private life (Youngkin, 2005: 197-198).



Figure 1.1: Lorre steals the scene in *Passage to Marseille* (Michael Curtiz, 1944) by means of an exaggerated performance of putting on his stripy jumper.

to appear as he was, every bit as normal as it is possible to be.

In Hollywood Lorre faced a challenging situation. Unlike Lugosi, he arrived in the US as a celebrated actor, one of the biggest names in cinema. His move had been motivated purely by politics: had Germany remained democratic and free, there would have been little reason for Lorre to leave Berlin, one of the cultural centres of the world, until the rise of Hitler. On arrival, however, Lorre found America very much to his liking (Youngkin, 2005: 106). He enjoyed the pace of life and the geography and architecture around him (*ibid.*). Ironically, while the US offered him a place where he could feel at home, Hollywood, forced to operate within the suffocating confines of the Production Code, could not offer him the type of roles that had won him a reputation for great artistry in Europe. Hollywood struggled to fit the irrepressible Lorre into a convenient category. Like Lugosi before him, Lorre became categorised as one who was impossible to categorise as anything, except ‘foreign’. Again, like Lugosi, Lorre played people from all nations and ethnicities in the world-according-to-Hollywood, from Japanese master detective through treacherous Chinese freighter captain to Russian law student, Dutch crime novelist, even Irish oil prospector. Although Lorre would remain a vastly popular star, both with audiences and fellow actors, after *Mad Love* and *Crime and Punishment* he would never again play the leading role in a major Hollywood production, earning some fifty supporting role credits—predominantly as

an ineffectual heavy—between 1935 and 1956.<sup>14</sup> Paraphrasing Norma Desmond: Lorre was still big; it was the parts that had become small.

Lorre, a highly individualistic actor with a penchant for scene-stealing (fig. 1.1), arrived in the US some years after a major shift in US immigration policy,<sup>15</sup> and in the immediate aftermath of the imposition of prudish censorship rules on Hollywood cinema. As a Central European Jew—one whose image was used by the Nazi propagandists as an example of the typical, racially inferior Jew—Lorre was a living reminder of the porosity of America's less than impermeable borders. As an actor with a reputation for taking on difficult roles at a time of a new prudishness in Hollywood cinema, Lorre was the epitome of the provocative artist, who, uncontrolled, would surely be likely to offend public tastes and mores with some obscene spectacle. As always, Hollywood made a virtue of these perceived vices, reducing Lorre, like Lugosi before him, to an icon of foreignness and of the threat of uncontained desires. For the next two decades, Lorre would again and again perform the impossibility of integration into a reluctant host nation. From Dr Gogol to Conseil in *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (Richard Fleischer, 1954) Lorre would play, almost exclusively, the runt of the litter who thought he could run with the pack, only to be confronted, humiliated, then cast aside as the world around him continues unaffected by his demise.

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<sup>14</sup>By the middle of the 1950s Lorre had gravitated towards TV, his appearances in crime and mystery serials, such as *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *Climax!* outnumbering his film credits.

<sup>15</sup>Indeed, Lorre and his wife had to apply for “Quota” immigration visas’ (Youngkin, 2005: 137).

## Journey 3: Conrad Veidt and the early years of the Second World War

*Truffaut was so wrong when he said that the art of cinema is pointing a camera at a beautiful woman. That's not cinema, that's fashion photography. The art of cinema is pointing a camera at Conrad Veidt.*

(Peterson: 2005)<sup>16</sup>

Conrad Veidt followed yet another trajectory after the rise to power of Hitler.<sup>17</sup> A hugely successful film star, Veidt had been a prolific actor throughout the 1920s and early 30s. His breakout role was as Cesare, the sleepwalking murderer, in *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (*Das Kabinett des Dr Caligari*, Robert Wiene, 1919), seven years after he became a stage and film actor in Max Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater (like Lorre and Lugosi, in the face of parental, or rather paternal, opposition). For the next fifteen years he would alternate between villain and hero roles on screen and stage. He played the Dorian Gray-like youth who makes an infernal pact for which he pays a heavy price in *The Student of Prague* (*Der Student von Prague*, Henrik Galeen, 1926); a mad scientist based on Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) in FW Murnau's *Der Januskopf* (*Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, 1920); and Ivan the Terrible in GW Pabst's *Wachsfigurenkabinett* (*Waxworks*, 1924). Alongside Emil Jannings he was a member of the select group of German silent film stars who maintained homes in California and appeared in Hollywood films (Horak, 2005: 243). In 1928 he played the disfigured mountebank Gwynplaine in Universal's super-production of Victor Hugo's *The Man Who Laughs*, directed by the German émigré Paul Leni. Unlike Lugosi and Lorre, Veidt had solid links with the Hollywood film industry and a very impressive body of work—supported by good Box Office takings—in Europe. Unlike Lorre, Veidt was not Jewish, and unlike Lugosi, he was not a Communist, but he, too, chose exile over staying in a home nation that had become grotesque and hostile, and would soon precipitate a devastating global conflict.

By the time sound film arrived in Europe, Veidt was one of the greatest stars of the continent. His stage training stood him in good stead: he had a clear, individual and pleasant speaking voice, which was as suitable for delivering lines with real

<sup>16</sup>Peterson, B (2005), 'The Quiet Heroism of German Actor Conrad Veidt' ([http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/4003/the\\_quiet\\_heroism\\_of\\_german\\_actor\\_conrad\\_pg3.html?cat=40](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/4003/the_quiet_heroism_of_german_actor_conrad_pg3.html?cat=40), accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2010).

<sup>17</sup>For my brief summary of Veidt's career and life, I use Jerry Allen's enthusiastic, if naïve biography of Veidt, *From Caligari to Casablanca* (1987).

warmth, as for issuing blood-curdling threats in the most suave manner. It was perhaps this quality that Halliwell's *Who's Who in the Movies* (2006) picks up on, when they award Veidt a star at the end of his entry with the justification: 'for his almost liquid villainy' (477). He even became an unlikely singing sensation with the release of 'A lighthouse shines across the bay', a tie-in for the film *F.P.I.* (aka *F.P.I. Doesn't Answer*, Karl Hartl, 1933). As an international star, Veidt often took on roles in multilingual productions, where the same film would be shot in different languages simultaneously. Veidt therefore frequently travelled the continent, making films in France and the UK, as well as Germany. When Hitler gained power, Veidt had a large network of friends and industry contacts to call on.

Allen's biography is a bit confusing on the chronology (180-197): he writes about Veidt's growing determination to leave Germany as if it had been a response to constant pressure for collaboration by Goebbels, but then notes that Veidt had already put plans in place to leave Germany in December 1932, *before* Hitler's rise to power. Having completed the necessary paperwork for emigration, Veidt left for England by April, 1933 (*ibid.*: 195). At any rate, what seems certain is that Veidt was a vocal opponent of the ominously growing Nazi movement in the late 1920s and early 30s and that in spite of his opposition, and because of his star status, the Nazis courted him once in power and tried hard to convince him to return to Germany and lend his talents to the Nazi propaganda machine. Allen gives account of the frankly fantastical tale of Veidt being kidnapped by the Gestapo when shooting a film in Germany after Hitler's rise to power. He is said to have refused to collaborate and delicate diplomacy by the British is said to have secured his release (1987: 208-214). What is certain, is that Veidt steadfastly refused the courtship and cajoling of the Nazis, presumably, in no small part because of his marriage to the Jewish Ilona Barta Prager (Allen, 1987: 188), incidentally, a Hungarian. He set up home in England and signed for British-Gaumont. This stint was so successful that by 1934 he was named *Picturegoer Magazine*'s Best British Actor of the year, a title that, for Veidt, was confirmation of his acceptance into the host nation (*ibid.*: 224). Amongst his films at British-Gaumont was an adaptation of Leon Feuchtwanger's *Jew Süss*<sup>18</sup> (Lothar Mendes, 1934), an impassioned condemnation of anti-Semitism, and a considerable affront to the Nazis back in the home nation.

Although Veidt spent some seven years in England as one of the country's foremost film stars, and even took British citizenship in 1939 (Allen, 1987: 259), with the outbreak of war the title of best British actor he had won a few years earlier was revealed to be meaningless. As a native of an 'enemy nation' when World War II broke out, Veidt was in real danger of expulsion or detention (Phillips and

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<sup>18</sup>The film was released as *Power* in the US.



Figure 1.2: Johnny Szabo (Peter Lorre) in *The Face Behind the Mask* (Robert Florey, 1941) panics when he cannot find his money, shortly after disembarking in New York.



Figure 1.3: Johnny confronts the corporeal inscription of difference in the host nation.

Vincendeau, 2006: 460). He may have been a British actor when it suited the needs of the domestic industry, but he became a hostile alien the moment complete national cohesion in the face of a mighty foe became imperative. The fickleness with which bodies are claimed as a nation's own and then discarded or repudiated when the need arises is a theme that runs through in some form or another the entire corpus of films in this thesis, and indeed, most of mainstream cinema where émigré actors are used. Take for example *The Face Behind the Mask* (Robert Florey, 1942). Johnny Szabó (Peter Lorre) turns overnight from useful addition to the domestic workforce into a disruptive foreign element as he enters a life of crime when he cannot find work because of his face disfigured by a fire in a transient hotel (figs. 1.2 and 1.3). Similarly, Veidt's Otto Becker is useful to the nation when he dismantles a Nazi sabotage ring in Jules Dassin's *Nazi Agent* (1941), but he is even more useful impersonating his own twin brother, and returning home as a repatriated Nazi traitor. In the guise of the former Nazi High Consul in New York, he is a figure of hate that, by focusing an entire nation's anger, can engender a new national unity in the face of a foreign threat. I explore both these films in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis.

At the time of the beginning of World War II Veidt was filming Alexander Korda's *The Thief of Bagdad*. The original plan had been to shoot desert sequences on location in North Africa (Allen, 1987: 264-265). With the outbreak of war, that plan had to be scrapped. Korda then moved cast and crew to the US, where outdoor shooting was completed on location, with the Grand Canyon, amongst others, providing dramatic backdrops for the action. After shooting wrapped on the film, Veidt returned to the UK, but only briefly. In the early summer of 1940 Veidt once more made the transatlantic voyage to America, this time to promote *Contraband* (Michael Powell, 1940), which was to be released in the US as *Black-out*. Soon after he arrived, he was sought out by MGM with an attractive offer of the role of the Nazi general in *Escape* (Mervyn LeRoy, 1940). Veidt accepted, and remained in the US (Allen, 1987: 287-8). During the three years he spent as a star there, Veidt made a small handful of films that played an important part in drumming up support for US involvement in what was then a deeply unpopular European war (Divine, 1965: 75-92).

In the inter-war period the US had turned its back on Europe (*ibid.*: 1-12). American entry into World War I was seen by many as a costly mistake that had yielded very little benefit. Woodrow Wilson's policy of internationalism was widely criticised and isolationists—those who believed the US should stay out of any future foreign war at all costs—dominated not only the public forums, but also the Congress. President Roosevelt, according to Divine, was an extremely cautious politician, who refused to take any action until he was certain of the

likely political cost and repercussions.<sup>19</sup> As a result, US foreign policy in the 1930s was a largely passive one, where increasingly worrying international developments were handled with the utmost care. In a climate where Germany, Italy and Japan were beginning to threaten world peace in a quest for an ever greater area of influence, the US consistently shied away from any action that might have dragged it into armed conflict beyond its borders. By 1940, the year Conrad Veidt returned to Hollywood, Japan had occupied Manchuria, vast tracts of China and was threatening the Dutch, French and British territories in Southeast Asia; Germany had occupied France, the Netherlands and Belgium, half of Poland and the Battle of Britain was under way; Italy had annexed Ethiopia and was seeking to occupy further territories in North Africa. To make matters worse, the Soviet Union, under the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, had stood by as Germany pushed into Poland. It then claimed the eastern half of the country, along with the Baltic States. The understanding between Stalin and Hitler made the defeat of the Allies seem certain. Yet US public opinion, although slowly turning towards approval of the delivery of aid and material support to the desperate Allies, remained firmly against involvement in any direct conflict unless US sovereign territory were threatened.

True to his strong anti-Nazi stance in the 1930s, Veidt sought to play his part in the British war effort. He readily embodied the ruthless invader in a series of films, contributing to a nationalist discourse—which, as we saw, in return excluded him when war broke out—that strove to engender national cohesion. According to Allen (1987: 295), he even threatened to return to Britain in 1940 in order physically to help the war effort. He was convinced by the studio bosses that he would be of more use on the US home front. He would make eight films in a period of under three years, from the summer of 1940 to the spring of 1943, when he died, denied the chance to see the turn of the tide and the beginning of the end of the Third Reich. He played a Nazi in four of these films. In one, *Above Suspicion* (Richard Thorpe, 1943) he played a ‘good German’, who assists the spies played by Fred MacMurray and Joan Crawford. In one of the other three, *A Woman’s Face* (George Cukor, 1942), he played a murderous northern European with designs for world domination based on the plundering of the riches of the weak—and the murder of his young nephew. Like Lugosi and Lorre before him, he went to Hollywood to play that which he was not: evil and reprehensible men.

By way of a summary of this biographical section I now pause here to explain, with the help of Chinn’s *Technology and the Logic of American Racism* (2000), the significance of Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt’s involvement in the collective effort to defeat Hitler on the home front. Before I go any further it is important to acknowl-

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<sup>19</sup> See for instance Divine, 1965, pp. 44-45 on Roosevelt’s cautious approach to foreign policy statements and his reluctance to commit himself one way or another.

edge that all major Hollywood stars contributed in some way or another. Joan Crawford helped run the famous Hollywood Canteen (Considine, 1989: 172). Others, like David Niven, James Stewart or Clark Gable did active duty. But the contribution of three émigrés from two of the enemy belligerent nations (Germany and Hungary) is remarkable, especially in light of the popular discourse engineered by the hugely successful and highly coordinated publicity campaign pursued by the American Red Cross (ARC) throughout the war (Chinn, 2000: 98). Chinn gives a thorough account of the ARC campaign (93-140): minutely detailed in-house publicity guidelines dictated the veritable assault of all media with text and images glorifying the effort on the home front, stressing especially the importance of blood donations. Rather than offer an exhaustive summary of the chapter, I cite here two typical examples, which I then relate to Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt.

Analysing a poster that shows a wounded soldier on the battlefield given blood transfusion by a medic, Chinn writes: ‘giving blood was represented as not simply a way to aid the war-effort, although that was a large part of the campaign. Rather, donating blood was inscribed as a way to be fully an American, even if one could not sign up for active duty’ (*ibid.*: 100). The ARC here relied on a discourse that echoes the myth of a welcoming host nation deployed throughout the period of America’s rapid industrial expansion, which I discuss above. Just as politicians had cultivated the image of a cultural melting pot, a magical illusion of a great coming together of peoples from all nations and races in a collective effort to achieve individual prosperity for all, so now the ARC waved the carrot of the prospect ‘to be fully an American’ through the simple act of donating blood to the fighting forces overseas.

In another typical piece of publicity material, the ARC went as far as to argue that to donate blood was to become an active participant in the war through one’s blood mingling with that of the fighting soldiers (*ibid.*: 102-103). Analysing the image of a woman donating blood on the home front, Chinn writes: ‘the female donor, seemingly removed from the brutalities of war, looks remarkably like the soldier [in another poster showing battlefield blood transfusion], “giving directly and literally of [her]self for our national defense”’ (*ibid.*: 102). The effect of these and other similar pieces of publicity material was to suggest to the public at home the possibility of a metaphorical full citizenship, even of battlefield heroism (albeit in a disembodied manner, through the presence of one’s blood, rather than body) through the act of blood donation. In its publicity campaign the ARC contributed to a discourse that made a distinction between plain US citizenship (holding a US passport) and full citizenship achieved through the donation of one’s blood. That such promises needed to be made in order to press home the significance and benefits of donating blood bears evidence to the fundamental *heterogeneity* of the nation. Had the nation been as homogeneous as the metaphor of the melting pot

suggests (more on this later), there would have been no need to offer to potential donors (perhaps held back by a reluctance to donate their individual blood to the collective cause) the prospect of a higher level of, or more complete citizenship, the sterling seal of approval, of being part of the homogeneous and coherent union of people that notionally makes up the nation.

In light of the accounts of Veidt's commitment to helping his adoptive nation—Britain—in the fight against Nazism, it is probably safe to conjecture that Veidt would have donated blood during the Blood for Britain drive organised by the American Red Cross in 1940-1941 (Chinn, 2000: 97). It seems to me less safe to speculate about whether Lorre donated blood at this time, although he did participate in war bond drives, and frequently appeared on radio programmes designed to raise money or otherwise contribute to the war effort (Youngkin, 2005: 209; 221). Lorre also appeared on Hollywood Canteen, later on during the war (*ibid.*: 221). There is, however, no need for guesswork when it comes to Lugosi. In a highly publicised stunt, Lugosi was filmed donating blood in order to do his bit to help bring about the destruction of Nazism<sup>20</sup> (Lennig, 2003: 327). Lugosi's blood donation, and the contribution of all three to the war effort is hugely significant, and something that I explore here in relation to ingestion and digestion, attempts at integration and exclusion.

Just as the exile partakes of the nourishment provided grudgingly by the host nation, so the host nation greedily takes that which the exile can offer in contribution to the collective good. But it is, by necessity, an unequal exchange. The exile subsists on that which is available to him, even investing new and alien food stuffs with the same tint of nostalgia that surrounds his childhood meals. But rhubarb crumble, or pumpkin pie will never truly take the place of goulash. The vocabulary of xenophobia illustrates this beautifully: they come here, they eat our food, take our jobs and give nothing in return. The immigrant or exile becomes a parasite. The burden on the host nation is exaggerated to the point of absurdity.<sup>21</sup> The exile becomes a bottomless whole, an all-consuming insatiable stomach into which the wealth of the host nation disappears in the nightmare vision painted by (extreme) nationalist discourse.

The contribution the exile makes is, in return, brushed aside, reduced to the negligible or the laughable. This is clearly seen in the news footage of Lugosi's blood donation. Where any other—or rather American—actor would have been presented in the guise of the selfless hero who spares no effort, however painful, to aid the nation, Lugosi's contribution becomes an ‘and finally’ piece, a humorous footnote to the day’s sombre news. The commentator, his voice tensing with

<sup>20</sup>Contemporary newsreel footage of the event, albeit lacking authentication, was available to view on YouTube at the time of writing of this thesis. (‘Bela Lugosi Blood Donation’ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWA3i8ID1XQ> accessed on 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2010)

<sup>21</sup>See any article in newspapers with strong anti-immigration views.

implied laughter, highlights the hilarity of cinema's bloodthirsty vampire giving his own blood to the US fighting troops. It is enough, however, to cast one glance at Lugosi himself: approaching sixty, his features stretched gaunt by years of morphine-abuse, alcoholism and periods of abject poverty alternating with much briefer periods of gastronomic overindulgence, Lugosi is nonetheless wreathed in sombre dignity. He may be playing up for the camera, forever, it seems, under the impression that the viewer laughs with and not at him. For him, however, this is a hugely symbolic moment. He is giving his own Hungarian blood to sustain those wounded in the war that the US is waging against, amongst others, his own Hungarian blood.

Anything other than the deepest sympathy for such a denial of self would be an insult. Under the dictates of nationalist discourse, Lugosi's gesture—giving his own blood to fight his own blood—is the ultimate severance of the ties that still bind the exile to the home nation. There is no way back: he can no longer call himself Hungarian. But the nation cannot acknowledge this sacrifice without exaggerating its ironies. Just as the exile who loves something of the host nation too much, so too, the exile who gives of himself too much becomes a focus of patriotic resentment or ridicule. How could he understand the sacrifice of 'our' boys? How could this display of patriotism be genuine, when it comes from someone so irrefutably foreign? So Lugosi, in the eyes of the host nation, remains a foreigner, and is trapped forever in the purgatory of complete deracination. No longer Hungarian, never to become fully American, he is an exile in perpetuity.

That the potential to become 'fully an American' exists at all, is evidence that there is such a thing as not being fully an American. And the promise itself is exposed for the lie it is by the newsreel footage of Lugosi's sacrifice: far from being accorded the respect and gratitude that his self-denial merits, according to the ARC publicity campaign (Chinn, 2005: 100), he is ridiculed, made a fool of, othered. Indeed, the recognition of the contribution of exiles such as Lugosi would be dangerous in the extreme. The illusion of a coherent, homogenous community united by a shared history, shared values and goals, could not survive the admission that its self-sufficiency is as illusory as its coherence. The melting pot is a powerful and easily misconstrued metaphor. Its significance is not the admission of heterogeneity, but what happens to heterogeneity: it is melted down, erased and eradicated in the crucible out of which emerges the false claim of national unity and homogeneity. Just as the metaphor itself is an empty platitude offering the mirage of integration, so the homogeneity it asserts is a lie that serves those who are within. By implication, it is also the very thing that keeps outside those on the outside, for they can never come to be seen as natural citizens of the nation. They will be forever marked as other by the difference that those who belong will always conceive, even when they cannot perceive it.

## The theoretical context

In the above I set out the main themes of this thesis. I tried to situate my research in relation to the main concerns that have motivated me in pursuit of this project, as well as a common feature of exile: an unreliable digestive system. I explained which period I chose to focus on and why, and likewise explained my choice of exilic bodies. I sketched the biographies of the three stars I picked, in relation to major political, economic and social developments that impacted on their career trajectories. Finally, I turned to the issue of blood to point to the real-life exclusionary practices whose filmic counterparts this thesis hopes to explore and expose. What remains is to set out the theoretical context of this research, from its antecedents and precursors to those critical texts whose limiting constraints it challenges.

For the purposes of this discussion, I break existing scholarship on exile into three main categories. I do not suggest that this is the only way to conceive of these texts, but this division will help me point out the gaps this thesis hopes to plug, as well as the existing work it aims to build on. These three main categories are works exploring the historical context and reasons for the migration and the fate of filmmakers, actors and technicians in exile; works examining the Hollywood system and its workings in relation to émigrés and the fate of émigré filmmakers, actors and technicians in exile; and works exploring the aesthetic and narrative peculiarities of films by displaced or émigré artists. While this thesis adopts aspects of all three without fully embracing them, it hopes to show that fascinating insights are offered by an approach that takes as its focus the body, performance, roles and the body of work of the exilic actor, as I now go on to explain.

Although there is significant overlap between the first two categories (history of exile; studio system and exile), they are sufficiently different to be discussed separately. The first category, in my view, is exemplified by the work of Tim Bergfelder whose chapter, ‘German Actors in Hollywood, the Long View’ in *Journeys of Desire* (Phillips and Vincendeau, eds. 2006: 37-44) aims to unpick the reasons for migration by German actors, from the earliest years of cinema to the present. His view is that although united by a common language, the German émigré community in Hollywood cannot be conceived of as a homogenous whole. The main divide between the various groups of German-speaking émigrés he identifies are their time of arrival. Pre-World War 1 émigrés, such as Adolph Zukor, Carl Laemmle or Louis B Mayer, set up the system itself, becoming synonymous with it. German émigrés in the first half of the interwar period, such as Conrad Veidt, Emil Jannings and Lya de Putti enjoyed intermittent success, but struggled to achieve the status they had enjoyed in Europe. The third wave of migration by German-speaking actors took place in the years running up to the outbreak of

World War 2. They were usually, but not always, political exiles, whose careers were broken by the Nazis' rise to power. They rarely enjoyed the star status of the previous wave of émigrés, but could rely on steady work because of Hollywood's demand for actors in what has come to be known as 'accent parts' (Horak, 2005: 258).

Other exponents of this approach include Jan-Christopher Horak, whose 2005 article 'Sauerkraut & sausages with a little goulash' in *Film History* offers a thoroughly researched and entertaining account of the careers of what Bergfelder calls the German-speaking émigrés from *Mitteleuropa* or Central Europe (2006: 38) in the late 1920s. Bergfelder and Cagnelli's *Destination London* (2008), Morrison's *Passport to Hollywood* (1998) and Graham Petrie's *Hollywood Destinies* (2002), as their titles suggest, trace the migration and contribution of European filmmakers, actors and technicians to the film industries in which they settled. Phillips and Vincendeau's edited collection, *Journeys of Desire* (2006) is the definitive work on the personal histories of émigré actors in Hollywood.

The second category is exemplified by the works of Thomas Elsaesser, specifically his chapter on émigré filmmakers in *Weimar Cinema and After* (2000), 'To be or not to be: extra-territorial in Vienna-Berlin-Hollywood' (361-382), and *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* (2005). Elsaesser's works on émigré filmmakers hope to situate their output in relation to the system in which they found themselves in exile. His chief concern is how émigré filmmakers have succeeded or not to maintain their distinct voices in a system that rates, above all others, those filmmakers who can deliver, on time and under budget, films that appeal to a broad audience. Others in this category include Sarah Street, whose *Transatlantic Crossings* (2002) charts the synergies and tensions between Hollywood and the British film industry, from the earliest years of cinema to the recent past. Ruth Vasey's *The World According to Hollywood* (1997) shifts the focus from the émigrés, and explores, in rich and fascinating detail, the American studios' and distributors' efforts to appeal to foreign markets where they hoped to achieve great profits. Especially valuable is her research on the shifts in attitudes, at an executive level, to representations of foreignness and criminality in the aftermath of the emergence of sound (100-122).

The third category—theoretical works on exile and the exilic inflection of film aesthetics and narrative—is exemplified by Hamid Naficy's *An Accented Cinema* (2001). Naficy's project is to set up the framework for theorizing around the impact of exile on the mode of representation by exilic filmmakers. His focus is primarily the work of Third World artists active in First World countries. The complex, hybrid and accented identities of these filmmakers are reflected in the disjointed narrative and subversive aesthetic quality of their films, Naficy argues (1-17). His focus is on accented, diasporic, exilic and post-colonial ethnic filmmakers firmly beyond the limits of mainstream cinema. Other works in this vein

include Pieterse's *White on Black* (1992) on representations of Africa and black people in popular culture, and Mireille Rosello's *Declining the Stereotype* (1998) on representations of and by North-African minority filmmakers in the French context. Both Pieterse and Rosello consider the function of stereotypes in popular culture and hope to contribute to ways of challenging them. I return to the concept of the stereotype later, but approach it through the work of Sander Gilman, whose writings point the way towards a critical understanding of how stereotypes function, without explicit value-judgements.

The three works I now consider in greater detail in order to situate my research in relation to existing scholarship each represent one of the categories I describe above. They are Phillips and Vincendeau's *Journeys of Desire*, Vasey's *The World According to Hollywood* and Naficy's *An Accented Cinema*. My approach owes as much to the points where it intersects with these three works, as it does to the points of conflict. I argue that *Journeys of Desire* is closest in spirit to my thesis in terms of its focus on exilic actors, their work and roles in Hollywood cinema, but I take issue with its reluctance to engage in detail with the films in which exilic actors appear. Vasey's work shares many of this thesis's concerns with its focus on Hollywood representations of foreignness and foreigners. In some ways, however, it is furthest from my approach in its steadfast concentration on archival material and the stated intentions of studio executives and financiers, refusing to engage in detail with the films and the actual mechanisms of representation of foreignness and their significance. Finally and paradoxically, Naficy's work is both closest to and furthest from this thesis. It was the original critical text that prompted my investigation of exile in Hollywood cinema and has provided me with the vocabulary for a range of key concepts of exile, but its focus, approach and concept of the artist in exile are dramatically different from mine, as I explain later on.

## Journeys of Desire

'*Journeys of Desire* documents, analyses and celebrates the long-standing presence of European actors in Hollywood cinema,' (2002: 3) Phillips and Vincendeau state in the very first sentence of their introduction, and they are true to their word. Motivated by the ambition to provide a comprehensive overview of the 'long-standing presence of European actors in Hollywood', *Journeys of Desire* has an extremely broad scope. It encompasses all major European actors who have worked in Hollywood, throughout its history, from 1920s screen sensation Pola Negri to *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace*'s (George Lucas, 1999) young Obi-wan Kenobi, Ewan McGregor. While this breadth of purview is at the very heart of the work's appeal, it is also the reason why I strain against its limiting constraints in this thesis. The effort to provide a comprehensive catalogue

of émigré actors, and critical reflections that address issues of exile and problems faced by European actors in Hollywood, means that the focus of the work shifts from the exile to the European. In other words, rather than limit its scope to those who ended up in Hollywood with the opportunity of return to the home nation barred to them, *Journeys of Desire* discusses Peter Lorre, a genuine homeless exile, alongside Colin Firth who has appeared in Hollywood films, or US-financed films, but cannot be said to be an émigré, let alone an exile. The inclusion of actors from the UK further confuses things. Without a genuine linguistic barrier, and by virtue of close historic ties between the US and the UK, the roles performed by British actors in Hollywood are distinct from the roles of other European émigré actors. Although it is true that British actors have often been cast in the role of the villain, the strategies of representation that govern their onscreen lives are dramatically different compared to those that apply to émigrés from a linguistic background other than English. As I indicate at various points in this thesis, Hollywood's discourse surrounding Boris Karloff (born William Henry Pratt in England) is dramatically different compared to that applied to Béla Lugosi. To cite another example, Charles Boyer may have been cast as the romantic lead in 1930s Hollywood, but his onscreen persona, his characters' personal stories and histories cannot be compared to those of Cary Grant, or David Niven.

The two chapters of *Journeys of Desire* I would like to consider here are Bergfelder's overview of German migration to Hollywood (37-44) and Joseph Garncarz's contribution on Jewish actors who were typecast in Hollywood as Nazis (103-114).

Where Bergfelder's piece and this thesis are in conflict is in the ways in which they imagine Central European actors in Hollywood as belonging to one community. Bergfelder's thesis is that Germanness is a fluid concept and cannot be limited to a simple national and ethnic category (2006: 37), and should be understood 'as an unstable cultural and linguistic identity' (*ibid.*). He argues that instead of thinking in terms of German émigrés, 'it makes more sense to conceive (in a holistic and comparative way) of an older, more inclusive, identity, around the notion of *Mitteleuropa* or Central Europe' (*ibid.*). The fundamental problem with such an approach to the idea of Germanness is a quite deliberate, if well-meaning, denial of difference. Bergfelder goes to great lengths, for instance, to argue that Adolph Zukor, although born into a Hungarian Orthodox Jewish family, rejected these identities and consciously cultivated a 'sophisticated European sensibility (which translated mostly into a German high-culture paradigm)' (*ibid.*: 39), refusing to acknowledge that this rejection of his native identity is, in itself, part of his identity. In other words, this rejection does not erase Zukor's family background from the make-up of his identity, but adds to it. Although Bergfelder is quite right to conceive of a Central European identity, he is entirely wrong in grouping together these disparate identities under a linguistically-defined label. This homogenising

conception of complex identities crowded into a nationally specific label (however flexible it may be) sets one up for failure, for it threatens to predispose the critic to forget, or worse elide, the very complexity that he or she hopes to explore. Bergfelder's approach would cast Lorre, a German-speaking Hungarian Jew (not Czechoslovak, as suggested in the introduction (*ibid.*: 4); Czechoslovakia was yet to come into being as a state when Lorre was born in the then Hungarian town of Rózsahegy in 1908), as a member of the German émigré community, but not Lugosi, another Hungarian, but not a German-speaker. The other major problem, and this follows from the first one, is that analyzing the films of Central European émigré actors using Bergfelder's definition of that identity would prevent us from drawing conclusions that point beyond a critical understanding of Hollywood representations of *Germaness*, or at best *Mitteleuropäer-ness*. It is for this reason that throughout this thesis I am careful to avoid suggesting that my three stars have a *shared* identity. They do not. The differences between Veidt and Lorre are as great as the similarities between Lorre and Lugosi, and vice versa. To get caught up in a futile debate on their degree of Hungarianness or Germanness would distract us from the issue at hand: the foreignness that Hollywood sees in and attributes to them. It is this label of foreignness, affixed by Hollywood, that unites (Central) European émigré actors, whether German speakers or not. To put it very simply: Bergfelder conceives of Central European actors as belonging to one group because of where they come from; I argue that they belong together because of where they went and how they were received and perceived there. The former is an approach that requires a problematic fixing of fluid identities. The latter allows us to form an understanding of that problematic fixing of fluid identities through an exploration of just how Hollywood goes about paradoxically fixing distinct and different 'foreign' identities as interchangeable.

Garncarz's chapter (2006: 103-114) on Jewish émigré actors playing Nazis in Hollywood is another scholarly text on exile that privileges the historical and the archival over an in-depth analysis of the workings of Hollywood representation of Nazis, and its use of Jewish actors for that purpose. Garncarz finds that on the whole Jewish actors did not mind playing Nazis in Hollywood, providing the roles were complex and prominent enough (*ibid.*: 110-111). I suggest that far more interesting conclusions could have been reached. What he fails to explore is Hollywood's disinterest in specific 'foreign' identities. This oversight is what allows the chapter title's 'Ultimate Irony' (of Jews playing Nazis in Hollywood) to emerge. If we make an effort to reject the essentialist view of exilic actors that foregrounds their ethnic or national origins in our analysis of their work, we can see that British, French, Belgian and non-Jewish German actors, and a whole host of others, also played Nazis, and the irony is revealed as perhaps not quite the 'ultimate' one. The key issue is not that Jewish actors played Nazis in Hollywood cinema, but that Hollywood did not care where émigré actors were from, as long

as they were foreign, for their mere foreignness made them suitable to play the role of the Nazi. This important distinction already helps us see that the label—whether Bergfelder’s concept of German or Hollywood’s imagining of the Nazi—is far less important than the meanings that emerge out of the stories Hollywood weaves around the exilic body.

Hollywood showed a blithe disregard for the personal histories of its émigré actors. It would be futile to speculate why it was that Lorre played a uniformed Nazi only once (in the 1943 Gene Kelly vehicle *The Cross of Lorraine*, directed by Tay Garnett), but it is safe to conjecture that it was not due to his Jewish origins. As I go on to show in my account of Vasey’s research on Hollywood strategies of representation as dictated by the studios’ commercial interests in the next section of this chapter, Hollywood films were often quite deliberately vague about the exact origins of the foreign characters they featured. This was as much due to an effort to avoid causing offence on lucrative markets, as to the nature of American nativist discourse that has positioned the native and therefore desirable norm of the ‘us’ versus the foreign other, the abnormal ‘them’. In this sense, it made little difference whether an actor was non-German-speaking non-Jewish Hungarian, like Lugosi, or German-speaking Jewish-Hungarian, like Lorre, or non-Jewish German émigré British national, like Veidt. The complicated ‘hyphenated’ identities, to use Naficy’s expression (2001: 15-16), are simplified into the far easier catch-all category of the foreign, which cavalierly renders vastly different identitities interchangeable. It is this reductivist view of foreignness that makes it possible for Lorre to play Mr Moto (figs. 1.4 and 1.5) in a series of seven films in the late 1930s with no more makeup than he wore to play the Spanish Ugarte in *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) or the Hungarian Johnny Szabó in *Face Behind the Mask*.

### The World According to Hollywood

Ruth Vasey’s *The World According to Hollywood* (1997) argues that Hollywood sold its product all over the world and therefore had to find a common ground and produce films that would entertain ‘children, their parents, and their grandparents [...] in the North and the South, on the West Coast and the East, and from Capetown to Capri’ (1997: 4). In order to show how Hollywood went about fashioning its output to the tastes and mores of not only its vastly varied domestic audience, but also of those markets where it hoped to distribute the films it produced, Vasey analyses in detail the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America’s (MPPDA) archives. She traces significant decisions on strategies of representation as they emerge in correspondence between studio bosses, the Production Code Administration (PCA) and representatives of foreign governments. Vasey shows that ‘all of Hollywood’s products were under pressure to conform



Figure 1.4: Master of disguise Mr Moto, or Peter Lorre, the face of ‘abstract foreignness’. *Think Fast Mr Moto* (Norman Foster, 1937).



Figure 1.5: Lorre as Mr Moto. The character’s Japanese look is a result of Lorre’s skill as an actor, and not make-up wizardry.

to an increasingly comprehensive set of narrational and representational guidelines' (ibid.: 5) and that 'individual studios faced the challenge of fashioning their product for broad-based consumption, both local and international, with varying degrees of enthusiasm and competence' (ibid.: 4). This present project shares the main concerns of Vasey's book, in that it hopes to show the complex workings of the system and its remarkably unchanging representation of the foreign other. Where it diverges quite sharply from Vasey's work is that this thesis focuses on the films produced and the ways in which they talk to us about the exile, rather than the decisions, made at executive level and implemented to lesser or greater extent by creative filmmakers, that sought to have an impact on representations of the foreign other.

Where Vasey's work seems to fall short is in tracing the effect of the studios' efforts to cater for a broad global audience. She notes that on the whole the studios did not go out of their ways to portray specific groups, nationalities or ethnicities in a favourable light in order to achieve higher sales in specific target markets, but tended to aim to avoid conflict and offense (ibid.: 159). She argues that the advent of sound had the implication that in films, 'the characterization of foreigners became more immediately susceptible to offensive interpretation' (ibid.: 100). As a result, she argues, 'foreignness [...] became abstracted into an amorphous category of the alien, so that specific interest groups could find fewer grounds for complaint. [...] Even geography became less distinct, so that film commerce abroad would not be affected by the casual insult of national stereotyping' (ibid.: 101). On the whole, Vasey offers a meticulously researched account of the motivations behind Hollywood's broad-stroke representation of foreignness and foreign places. What I hope to do in this thesis is to explore the implications and ramifications of Hollywood's representation of the other as simply not one of us. This idea of the conflict between 'us' and 'them' will then become a recurring theme of this thesis.

Before I move on to Naficy's concept of an accented cinema (2002), I would like to pause here and consider one final passage from Vasey's work.

"It would be wise to avoid difficulties [...] by omitting any references in the dialogue that label him as anything more definite than a 'foreigner'." The effect was to remove these generic foreigners from the geopolitical sphere altogether and to give them citizenship of Hollywood's mythical kingdoms. Perhaps the neatest solution of all lay in films like *Dracula* (Universal, 1931), *Frankenstein* (Universal, 1931) and *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Universal, 1932). As James B. Fisher reported in assessing *Dracula*'s foreign angle, "Dracula is not really a human being so he cannot conceivably cause any trouble." (ibid.: 122)

The value of Vasey's contribution in uncovering evidence of Hollywood policy to fudge foreign identities in a strategy of plausible deniability cannot be overestimated. The work's failure to point out the ways in which this representation, rather than offering a less problematic concept of the foreign other, creates a far more insidious stereotype of an amorphous and abstracted (category of) alien, however, is a major fault. The 'ultimate irony' (Garncarz, 2006: 103) of Jews playing Nazis, or the stereotypical representation of Italians as Mafiosi pales into insignificance compared to a representational system based entirely on an unchanging binary opposition between 'us' and 'them'. The task of this thesis, then, is to explore in great detail the workings of this binary and the ways in which it creates a discourse that denies the very humanity of the foreign other. As Vasey herself cites without realizing the significance of her discovery: *Dracula* is quite deliberately represented as not being a human being. If we read *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931), as I do in this thesis, as the story of a failed attempt at relocation and integration by a foreign other, James B Fisher's assertion that 'Dracula is not really a human being so he cannot conceivably cause any trouble' (Vasey, 1997: 122) becomes part of Hollywood's discourse surrounding the exile, which frames them as bestial, subhuman and 'already dead' (Halberstam et al, 1995: 15). And what is even more troubling, is that Vasey includes *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Robert Florey, 1931) in the list of films that attempt to avoid accusations of offensive representations of foreign nationalities and different ethnicities by making the antagonist a non-human character. Dr Mirakle (Béla Lugosi) in *Murders in the Rue Morgue* is most decidedly human. It is the representational strategies, from costume through make-up to the character's actions, and the use of the star body that has become synonymous with *Dracula*, that frame him as non-human.

Important work may have been done, then, in uncovering archival evidence, in charting the process of migration and the destinies of émigré filmmakers and actors in the Hollywood system. Far more work, however, remains to be done in terms of uncovering the hidden meanings of narratives that feature the exilic body. Knowing that studio executives brought pressure to bear on filmmakers to represent certain nationalities in a particular way, to transpose stories that may cause offense when set in a concrete time and place to a 'mythical kingdom' (Vasey, 1997: 115-116) is useful. The extent to which these orders were then translated into representation, and how successful the modes of representation were in communicating these prescribed concepts of foreignness, and perhaps even more importantly, the actual effect achieved are the key areas that need to be addressed. After all, the audiences who daily consumed these narratives would have been quite unaware of the studio bosses' profit-oriented caution surrounding representations of foreigners, but they, nonetheless, were exposed to a particular discourse surrounding foreignness. It is what this discourse was and how it operated that this thesis seeks to unpick.

## An Accented Cinema

Naficy's (2001) invaluable work has, to a large extent, codified the language of theoretical investigations of exile. In the opening chapter, 'Situating Accented Cinema' (*ibid.*: 10-39) he sets out the basic concerns of his work. He identifies the filmmakers he focuses on, and loosely categorises them according to the kind of displacement that impacts on their filmmaking. The three categories are exilic (*ibid.*: 11-13), diasporic (*ibid.*: 13-15) and postcolonial ethnic and identity filmmakers (*ibid.*: 15-17). Naficy notes that the term diaspora, initially applied to the forcible dispersion of Jewish, Greek and Armenian communities from their original environment (*ibid.*: 13), has shifted to encompass a host of other displaced communities and now overlaps significantly with the meaning of exile (*ibid.*: 14), albeit exile continues to refer to individual experiences of displacement.

Naficy goes on to outline the corpus of films that his work takes as its focus, and draws attention to the main issues explored by the accented artists he identifies. 'One of the key purposes of this study is to identify and develop the most appropriate theory to account for the complexities, regularities, and inconsistencies of the films made in exile and diaspora,' Naficy states (*ibid.*: 20). He argues that experiences of rupture and trauma, that are inherent in all migrations prompted by external factors—whether violence, political pressures or economic considerations—are reflected in the works of displaced persons. 'Sadness, loneliness, and alienation are frequent themes, and sad, lonely, and alienated people are favorite characters in the accented films,' (*ibid.*: 27). He writes:

'In traumatic forms of expulsion and exile, especially when they are coupled with racism and hostility in the new country, the certainty and wholeness of the body (and of the mind) are often put into doubt. The body's integrity, requiring a coincidence of inside and outside, is threatened, as a result of which it may be felt to be separated, collapsed, fractured, eviscerated, or pithed.' (*ibid.*: 28)

'Accented films inscribe other amphibolic character types who are split, double, crossed, and hybridized and who perform their identities. As liminal subjects and interstitial artists, many accented filmmakers are themselves shifters, with multiple perspectives and conflicted or performed identities. They may own no passport or hold multiple passports, and they may be stranded between legality and illegality. Many are scarred by the harrowing experiences of their own border crossings. Some may be energized, while others may be paralyzed by their fear of partiality. Their films often draw upon these biographical crossing experiences.' (*ibid.*: 32)

In these two passages Naficy sets out the main themes that he explores in relation to representations of exile by exilic filmmakers. As he notes, narratives of displacement, displaced characters and their attempts at negotiating environments that are hostile to them are recurring elements of the accented cinema. As I demonstrate throughout this thesis, many exilic bodies in classical Hollywood cinema follow similar journeys to the ones traced by displaced and exilic filmmakers. Just as exilic filmmakers see themselves, according to Naficy, as ‘separated, collapsed, fractured, eviscerated, or pithed’ as a result of the destabilization of the wholeness of the body that is the result of the rupture and trauma of displacement (*ibid.*: 28), so too Hollywood cinema shows exiles as carrying bodily inscriptions of the trauma of exile.

What is interesting for the purposes of this thesis is that Naficy introduces two main limiting caveats. First, he identifies the period in which the accented cinema emerges as the 1950s-70s, with a second generation appearing in the 1980s-90s (*ibid.*: 10). Second, his focus is firmly fixed on alternative or non-mainstream modes of filmmaking, arguing that exilic directors active in Hollywood often integrated fairly well into the system, and, like Fritz Lang or Douglas Sirk ‘are usually considered as exemplars of the American cinema, the classical Hollywood style, or the melodrama and noir genres’ (*ibid.*: 19). The ramifications of these self-imposed limits are that Naficy does not engage with pre-1950s mainstream cinema. Tracing the experiences of exile that inform the work of film directors, Naficy does not engage with the ways in which the roles, performances and body of work of exilic actors are informed by or reflect on exile. Further, his scope being firmly fixed on directors working on the margins of the film industry, he does not address narratives that reached a broad audience.

This thesis seeks the answer to two questions prompted by Naficy’s work: can we speak of an accented cinema prior to the period that Naficy takes as his focus; and can we identify narratives surrounding exile and the rupture and trauma of displacement in films produced in the centre, rather than on the margins, and, in the language of auteur theory, by *metteurs-en-scène* rather than *auteurs*? This dual shift of focus would allow us to trace the perception of predominantly European exiles by the host society. This shift to European exiles is significant, because it helps us understand how discursive exclusionary practices work even when difference is not in reality corporeally inscribed. In other words, this thesis seeks to show that the host society relies on a discourse feeding from the language of anti-Semitism, racism, nativism and the patriarchy even in the face of the absence of visible signifiers of difference, such as skin colour.

To an extent, Naficy himself provides an (negative) answer to my second question. ‘In the classical Hollywood cinema, the characters’ accents were not a reliable indicator of the actors’ ethnicity’ (*ibid.*: 24). Suddenly taking the word ‘accent’ literally, Naficy dismisses representations of exiles in Hollywood cin-

ema as a fertile ground for analysis because of the unreliability of the ‘accent’ of Hollywood actors. In this, he makes a similar mistake to Vasey: abstract and amorphous categories of the alien (1997: 101) marked by an unreliable indicator of ethnicity (2001: 24) do not mean that an ideologically conceived discourse of foreignness, exile and displacement is not invoked. Quite the opposite: as I noted in my discussion of Bergfelder’s chapter in *Journeys of Desire* (2006: 37-44), the area that I feel most needs attention is this cavalier approach to foreignness that can be apprehended in not only Hollywood representations of exile, but also in many critical texts on that representation.

There is another crucial benefit to a change of focus from the margins to the centre. As Sander Gilman argues, our identity is formed in relation and reaction to the world around us (1985: 15-35).<sup>22</sup> ‘You hate what society hates. If your body is marked as diseased or foul, you internalize it as unhealthy and you become “unhappy” with it’ (1995: 74), Gilman writes. If we adopt this analysis as one of our guiding principles in exploring representations of exile, we can see how exilic and accented directors’ films reflect on how they are represented, in speech, writing, film, etc., by the host nation around them. This thesis then seeks to take a step back and consider those representations of exile that may have shaped the very personal reflections that can be traced in the films of the accented auteurs that form the corpus of Naficy’s work. Where Naficy seeks to point out the ways in which the exilic filmmakers’ personal experiences have impacted on their own filmmaking, I hope to explore the ways in which mainstream imaginations of the state of exile may impact on the self-perception of the exilic other. My aim is to analyse the way in which Hollywood cinema holds up a distorting mirror to the exile, iterating their difference and failure to integrate, in the vocabulary of Butler’s *Bodies that Matter* (1993).

And finally, although I am well aware that engaging as I do in discourse I am prey to those hidden pathologies (Hayward, 2000: 101) that permeate all codified modes of communication, I would like to point out how Naficy himself inadvertently uses the language of exclusion when discussing accented filmmakers. ‘Accented films inscribe other amphibolic character types who are split, double, crossed, and hybridized and who perform their identities’ (2001: 32). ‘Amphibolic’ has two meanings. In medicine, it refers to that stage of the disease when prognosis is uncertain. In zoology, it refers to the ability to turn forward and backward, like the outer toe of certain birds. The use of a word from the field of medicine or zoology—or both as in this case—inevitably introduces the language of pathology and/or racial difference to the discussion of non-diseased, human bodies. Turning our attention to texts that are part of the normative discourse that

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<sup>22</sup>I explore this in greater detail later on in this Introduction, and return to it once more in Chapter 2.

casts the foreign other as pathological or non-human will help us, if not avoid the problematic vocabulary of exclusion, at least notice when we inadvertently make use of it.

## An imagined binary

In the foregoing I explored existing critical texts on cinema and exile and took a predominantly hostile position towards them. Although I do share the focus on the actor with *Journeys of Desire* (Phillips and Vincendeau, eds., 2006), the period and system in question with *The World According to Hollywood* (Vasey, 1997) and much of the vocabulary with *An Accented Cinema* (Naficy, 2001), I primarily dwelt on the negatives and discussed how this thesis hopes to avoid the pitfalls I suggested these texts fell into. Over the following pages I set out some of the critical texts and theoretical concepts I use in order to explore Hollywood representations of exile.

In order to set out my methodology, I start with a one phrase summary of what I hope to do: this thesis explores the filmic representation of exile in Hollywood cinema. This phrase sets out the main concerns of this thesis. It deals with exile, and explores the representations of exile within the context of the dominant centre for cultural production of the period it focuses on, Hollywood. Because my main concern is filmic representation, I rely on close readings and detailed analysis of key films that feature an exile (one of the three stars I chose to focus on in this thesis) in a prominent or significant role. This focus on close reading allows me to uncover established modes of representing the foreign other, even across genres, stars, directors, studios and periods.

Scholarship on two main areas underpin the close textual analysis of films in the corpus of films that this thesis takes as its focus. These two areas are: the nation, and identity. Bound up with both to lesser or greater extent are issues of discourse, the body and space. I now explain how I bring these together in a methodology that helps me go beyond the historical account of migration of filmmakers to grappling with what Hollywood cinema says about exile and how it goes about doing so.

The issue of nation is inextricably bound up with that of exile. Exiles are banished, or seek refuge from one state and settle in another. The question of what constitutes a state in terms of the ways in which it is represented, is a difficult one. When questions of statehood are raised, a number of other fraught terms and concepts are inevitably invoked. These include nationality, ethnicity, race, language, geography and many others. As Hayward has shown (2000: 89-90) the state has hyphenated itself into the nation, becoming a ‘nation-state’ (*ibid.*), seeking to equate the political system and its apparatus with the organization of

a heterogeneous mass of people and peoples according to a fluid concept that encompasses geographical, cultural and/or linguistic community. This affixing of the state to the nation, whereby it becomes a nation-state, serves power. It is this hyphenation that allows the state to present itself as being ‘of the people, by the people and for the people’. The community thus asserted is, in itself, an illusory one (Anderson, 1991), for in spite of all protestations to the contrary, no nation is homogenous or self-evident. However, in order to create a sense of unity that denies the free flow of exchanges, whether of population, ideas, or culture, that is by no means a new, late-modern phenomenon, a number of discourses are invoked (Hayward, 2000: 88-91). A patriarchal discourse of fertility fetishizes the homeland, investing it with characteristics attributed to the feminine. In this discourse the people of a nation become its children, and the binding concepts of filial responsibility, of shared blood and the connective tissue of the umbilical work to bring them together in an illusory kinship that claims to be natural (*ibid.*: 89). Under threat, these concepts are deployed in a narrative of rape and violation, where the demand of blood—whether the spilling of blood in revenge or the donation of blood in a gesture of self-sacrifice for the common good (as Chinn shows, there is little difference between the two, 2005: 102-3)—can be invested with an emotional resonance that is difficult to defy.

As important as the discourse of belonging and community, is that which this discourse seeks to deny. Difference then becomes that which is beyond, unnatural and/or pathological. Where difference is difficult to deny, whether in the face of a defiant presence through vociferous opposition or an unspoken subversion of the norm, it becomes incorporated into the discourse of unity. This discourse of unity lays claim to that difference as naturally and inherently unique to the nation (Hayward, 2000: 94). This co-optation of difference into the normative can be seen on the small scale in the appropriation of subcultures by the dominant majority (Hebdige, 1979: 92-4), for instance the repackaging of Afro-Caribbean ska music into mainstream culture by British white working-class bands, such as Madness, or the reconfiguration of blaxploitation as toothless mass entertainment by a white filmmaker, such as Quentin Tarantino (all the while asserting affection for a genre whose subversive rough edges he smoothes out to render it comestible by the dominant majority). It can be seen on the grand scale in the fetishization of the whole culture of a dispossessed and marginalized aboriginal population in order to superimpose onto that culture a concept of a nation and a whole population that is entirely alien to it, as in the case of Australia, where Uluru, alongside the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House combine to evoke a sense and image of a nation that excludes the Aboriginal at the same time as it incorporates the symbols of the culture it has displaced.

The discourse of pathology is invoked in the face of the presence of the other within the space of the nation. Before I go any further I need to pause here to

explain the significance of the works of Sander Gilman in the context of this thesis. Gilman's works will help me in unpicking the complex system of representation that makes use of the discourse of pathology. Gilman's project, to trace in all its forms the ways in which the other body is presented as lacking, abnormal, unhealthy or insane in literature, whether the formal and factual literature of medicine or fictional popular literature, parallels the aims of this thesis. I use three works by Gilman more than any other. *Difference and Pathology* (1985) is used to explore the concept of stereotypes in order to give account of the ways in which we construct shorthand images of what constitutes 'us' and 'them'. This, as I go on to explain later, is crucial in understanding the rupture of identity after displacement. Gilman's analysis of representations of the religious and/or ethnic other in *Jew's Body* (1991) and his analysis of the body in crisis in *Health and Illness* (1995) are used to open up my investigation of Hollywood's imagining of the exilic body as a body in crisis. With the help of Gilman's works, this thesis hopes to show the remarkable constancy of the role of a discourse of pathology when we speak of the other.

When confronted with the other present within the borders of the host nation, rather than nightmare images of rape and violation, which are raised in order to engender cohesion in opposition to an external foe, the threat of infection and pathological contact is envisioned (Gilman, 1991: 108). Here the focus shifts onto the body, which becomes, in its idealised state, the unattainable norm that individuals, and often entire peoples are measured against. (Dyer's *White* (1996) for instance shows how technology (lighting and cinematography) is deployed in a discourse aimed at emphasising the beauty and perfection of the white body and the abjection and unviability of the black body.) Fluid and powerful imaginings of the body in crisis are deployed to give examples of that which does not fit. Entire ethnic groups are said to carry certain diseases, as in the representation of the Irish as syphilitic—indicated by their 'snub' noses—in 19<sup>th</sup> century American discourse (Gilman, 1995: 83). In this system, physical deformity comes to indicate moral difference (*ibid.*: 81), and moral difference is in turn inscribed into the body of the other through signifiers of disease: 'like lepers, [the Jews] were marked with inherent signs of their difference as well as those signs (such as the Jew's hat) imposed by the state; they were confined in closed spaces; and they were associated with the transmission of illness—they caused the plague by poisoning wells' (1985: 151). Compelling the ethnic other to carry the mark of the diseased other asserts an equivalence between an imagined difference and the difference inscribed by pathology, which can, ultimately, lead to the grotesque rationalization and implementation of genocide as a collective project that serves the common good.

In a system, then, where the nation is represented as a homogenous body composed of a people united by a shared language, history and culture, the exiles, the

bodies that do not fit—because they do not share the language, history or culture—are caught up in a discourse of ‘health and illness’ (Gilman, 1995). In relation to the healthy body of the nation, which is under threat of contagion, they become the foreign bodies that cause pathology. The body under threat, the host nation, is the host of the disease, whose spread it tries to stop. It does so by deploying its most potent self-defence mechanism: normative discourse. Normative discourse then acts to elide differences whose elision underpins it, and to pinpoint the most minute difference of those who are beyond (differences whose emphatic assertion serves to construct it). What concerns me particularly in this thesis is the way in which the language of exclusion deployed against the exile feeds from the discourse of the patriarchy, pathology and death and bereavement. As I show in this thesis, Hollywood cinema represents the exilic other as unable to engage in iterative performativity or to inscribe a male signifying act in the feminine (Butler, 1993). Throughout the films this thesis investigates, the exiles can be seen failing to make their voices heard, to have their commands obeyed, their begging answered, or their words of courtship received with affection. In spite of being men, and in spite of their best efforts, they fail to turn to their advantage a system of communication that, as Butler has shown, privileges the masculine. Hollywood cinema compounds this representation by showing the exile as pathological and spreading contagion, and by asserting that the exile is ‘already dead’ (Halberstam et al, 1995: 15) and speaking of the exile in the language of death and bereavement (Hallam et al, 1998; Seale, 1998).

This strategy of marking the (male) foreign other as incapable of performing basic masculine functions of signifying, as failing to measure up to an ideal of the healthy body and of belonging to the realm of the moribund and the dead (or perhaps departed), acts to destabilize the identity of the exile or foreign other in the space of the host nation. This idea of the departed needs more than a bracketed comment: applying the language of death and bereavement to the living other present within the space of the host nation frames that other as the soon-to-depart, or hopefully-soon-to-depart, whether that departure is that of the repatriation of the exile, or their extirpation. This discourse, as Gilman notes (1995: 74), inevitably impacts on the self-image of the exilic other, who internalizes the hatred(s) of the host nation, and comes to conceive of him or herself as diseased, indeed. But this image and self-image of the exile as unviable, diseased or dead is rooted in the ideologically inflected and preconceived representation of a body as other.

Understanding the workings of a discourse of nationhood as one that engenders an illusion of homogeneity and coherence through an assertion of shared qualities helps us conceive of the position of the exile as being permanently beyond the norm. When we add to this understanding the knowledge that in spite of the pathologizing normative discourse that frames the exilic (masculine) body as

failing to live up to standards of masculinity and health in the host nation, it is as normal a body as, or no more abnormal than any other, we can see the emergence of an imagined binary between host nation and exile. Just as the concept of the nation is based in an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1991) of language, history and culture, which elides often deeply ingrained internal differences (of language, history and culture), the concept of the host nation when defined in opposition to the exilic or foreign other is based in an imagined binary that pits the healthy ‘us’ of the host nation versus the diseased ‘them’ of the exile. The binary opposition of a community and the individual outsider, however, is imaginary, because the community that forms one side of the binary is, itself, imagined. The realization that a system that falsely imagines itself as one in the face of one it falsely frames as an other, helps us undertake an investigation of representations of these imagined other bodies, the exiles, in mainstream cinema.

Before I go on to explain the structure of this thesis and the way in which the three main chapters follow (from) each other, I need to pause here and explain why I made the methodological choices I have set out, and why I chose not to adopt or to engage only briefly with certain approaches. I have already explained in this chapter, but it is worth repeating here, that the close reading of a broad selection of key texts forms the basis of this thesis. It is, in part, this decision (to investigate the filmic discourse at work and the exilic bodies it makes use of) that prompted me to engage only briefly with archival research and star studies, and only cursorily with Hollywood studio history and production methods, and performance analysis. That is not to say that I do not engage with these approaches at all, or that I dispute their validity as approaches. Neither does it mean that the approach adopted in this thesis is one of textual analysis to the exclusion of all others.

The decision to engage only briefly with star studies and archival research can be traced back to the fundamental concern of this study. This thesis is intended as an exploration of the roles and films of exilic actors in Hollywood, and the ways in which the exilic experience and the exilic body is represented in film. Although the analysis of posters, fan letters, trailers, radio spots and other extra-filmic documents generated by and around stars is clearly a significant area of scholarship, I limit my engagement with these to brief mentions in the biographical sections at the beginning of this present chapter. I do discuss how Lugosi was said to be fascinated by the macabre and the occult in order to inject a frisson of plausibility into the outlandish films in which he appeared, thereby—presumably—boosting their appeal. Likewise, I explore on the basis of three publicity stills the attempts by a Hollywood major to construct three distinct star personae around Peter Lorre, and the ways in which these differed from the ‘face behind the mask’. Similarly, Hollywood production history, or the history of the studios features throughout to situate the films I analyze, but will not take a major role in the analysis of the

films. As I set out earlier in this chapter, substantial work has been done in this field, for instance by Elsaesser (2000; 2005), and my goal is to analyze the way in which the exilic body circulates within the film, rather than the way in which the exilic star circulates within the film industry. To reiterate what I explain at the end of the Introduction of this thesis: my chief aim being to investigate the way in which normative discourse, as apprehended in Hollywood cinema, constructs the exilic body as the other in a binary system of imagined opposition, it is the analysis of the textual that will inform the extra-textual, rather than a close study of the extra-textual being privileged in order to dictate the way in which the text is read and understood.

## The Structure

Three chapters make up the rest of this thesis. The three chapters each take as their focus a key aspect of displacement. Before I go on to set out what each chapter aims to discuss and hopes to achieve, I pause here to explain my understanding of the process that strings them together in this particular order. The three main aspects of exile I discuss are stereotyping, space and madness. I argue that stereotyping is an essential aspect of the emergence of identity in response to external stimuli. It is the process whereby we learn to distinguish between good and bad. Displacement results in a different set of external stimuli, but the exile continues to operate with the stereotypes acquired in the home nation. This results in a rupture, which is played out in a foreign space, the space of the host nation. The space of the host nation, as I go on to show, is an aspect of the normative discourse of the host nation. Operating with stereotypes that no longer function in a space that is hostile to them, the exiles are seen to go mad or be already mad. This madness, whether it is a madness imputed by the host nation to the exile or a madness that sets in as a response to the exclusionary practices of the host nation, is the culmination of the rupture and trauma of displacement. The three chapters then take each in turn, from stereotype through space to madness, these three key aspects to explore representations of exile in Hollywood cinema.

In the spirit of the above I continue to set out my methodology in Chapter 2. I begin by exploring the function of stereotypes through the work of Sander Gilman (1985; 1995). I introduce the concept of the reversal of the ‘us/them’ binary and its impact on identity in exile. Throughout I illustrate my points with frequent references to key films in the corpus. I then weave a thread of further theoretical concepts into my argument: I introduce the idea of the ‘already dead’ and ‘posthuman’ through the work of Halberstam and Livingstone (1995); I complicate the reading of the exilic body with the concept of the ‘biologically dead/socially alive’, which I take from Hallam, Hockey and Howarth’s *Beyond*

*the Body* (1999). In the second half of the Chapter I undertake two case studies to elaborate my points. Close readings of *The Thief of Bagdad* (Michael Powell, Ludwig Berger et al, 1940) and *White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932) aim to show the methodology at work. This section further serves to show how Butler's *Bodies that Matter* (1993) and Lefebvre's (1991) and Foucault's (2002) formulation of the concepts of *savoir* and *connaissance* can further refine my argument surrounding exile in Hollywood cinema.

Chapter 3 takes space as its central focus. It uses the framework established in Chapters 1 and 2, and explores representations of exile in space and in relation to space. Clive Seale's *Constructing Death* (1998) is used to argue that exilic bodies in Hollywood cinema can be seen to use space to communicate towards the outside a safe and socially bonded identity. It further uses Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1991) to argue that space is most productively considered in the context of this thesis as an aspect of normative discourse. In this light, the spaces that the exiles inhabit, occupy or infringe can be understood as forming an integral part of the system that continues—in this Chapter quite literally—to frame them as other and beyond. Baudrillard's *The System of Objects* (2005), and its analysis of interior design completes the picture. Close readings of *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931) and *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Robert Florey, 1932) are used to explore the relationship of the exilic body to the space around them in great detail. Finally Foucault's *Heterotopias* (1967) is used to explore, in relation to the films of Peter Lorre, the concept of the subversion of spaces reserved for the normative body in crisis. This analysis will show how exilic bodies try to establish a more permanent settlement of transitory spaces of recuperation, such as the hospital, or make a life for themselves in terminal spaces, such as the cemetery.

Chapter 4 explores the madness of the exile. It argues that madness sets in as a result of the rupture brought about by the reversal of the 'us/them' binary that is concomitant with displacement, and the failure of knowledge in exile explored in Chapter 2, coupled with the impact of the production of space as part of a normative discourse that functions to exclude the other whose repudiation underpins the emergence of the illusion of a homogenous nation. This madness can be seen in the increasingly desperate attempts by exiles to invest their bodies with signifiers of belonging, in their failure to adhere to a code of conduct dictated by normative discourse and in split personalities. Rather than attempt to diagnose mental conditions in clinical psychology terms, Chapter 4 traces the many exilic failures of reason. *Mad Love* (Karl Freund, 1935) is used to explore the madness of an exile who goes mad because he is perceived as mad. A close reading of *Invisible Ghost* (Joseph H Lewis, 1941) shows the madness that sets in when the exile escapes into fantasy from the realization of the failure of his attempt to integrate into the host nation. *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Robert Florey, 1932) is revisited to explore the madness of one who fails to understand that his reasoning is nonsense

because his thesis cannot be meaningfully articulated in the normative discourse of the host nation. I suggest a way of reading the body of Frankenstein's Monster, in the films in which Lugosi plays the role of Ygor, as an intriguing imagining of the true body of the nation. Finally I return to *Nazi Agent* (Jules Dassin, 1942) to offer a close reading of the split personality of Otto Becker/Hugo Detner (Conrad Veidt) as a conflict between the diverging loyalties to home nation and host nation.

## CHAPTER 2

### IF THAT'S ME, THEN WHO AM I?

In a scene towards the end of the cult Sci-Fi series *Battlestar Galactica* (2004-2009), Starbuck (Katee Sackhoff) is confronted with her own corpse. She stares uncomprehendingly at her own mortal remains and mutters: ‘if that’s me, then who am I?’ This question seemed to me to encapsulate the chief concern of my thesis surrounding the representation of exilic bodies in Hollywood cinema. I imagined an exile, watching himself on screen, calling into question the identity he knows as his own, in response to the identity he is told he has by Hollywood. This chapter, then, investigates this idea of the conflict between the conceived (by the exile) and the perceived (by the host nation) identity of the exile.

At the end of *Nazi Agent* (1942, Jules Dassin) Conrad Veidt’s Otto Becker / Baron Hugo von Detner stands on the deck of an ocean liner staring at the Statue of Liberty. He is on his way to Germany to face the wrath of Hitler for the failure of a sabotage ring, which he headed. As Detner, he is the defeated monster, the spectre of invasion and infiltration banished whence he came. As Becker, he is also the triumphant hero, the man who banished that monster. We watch and weep (if one is as easily moved to tears as I am) as the sight of that powerful symbol of freedom from tyranny, the Statue of Liberty, reinforces his resolution to return to Germany and be held accountable for the failures that he willingly brought about. We wish we could be as noble and brave as he is. We also watch and rejoice that this loathsome man, this embodiment of malice, is headed for almost certain death at the hands of his monstrous master. This ability to stand for both, to invite identification and repudiation in equal measure is the key to our understanding of the exilic body in Hollywood cinema in the 1930s-1950s.

*Nazi Agent* is a straightforward propaganda piece, made to sway the American public towards a favourable opinion of joining World War II on the side of the Allies. It is also a remarkably complex text that can help us begin the process of unpicking the significance of the exilic body in Hollywood cinema.

It is the story of identical twins, the mild-mannered philatelist Otto Becker and the imperious and cruel Baron Hugo von Detner (fig. 2.1). Becker has long ago left Germany and now lives quietly in American suburbia, surrounded by his books and stamps. Detner is Nazi Germany’s High Consul in America and head of the sabotage ring that seeks to destabilize the region in an effort to tie down America



Figure 2.1: Hugo (left) and Otto (both Conrad Veidt) confront each other in *Nazi Agent* (Jules Dassin, 1942).

at home to prevent it from joining the war. Detner picks Becker's stamp shop as an ideal mail distribution centre for his espionage work and blackmails Becker into giving his spies free run of his shop and home. Becker, a loyal if recent American citizen, bristles at this and asks his good friend, an American professor, to mail a letter in which he tells all and exposes his twin brother to the authorities. The professor is murdered, the letter intercepted, and Detner confronts Becker. The two fight and Becker—as shocked as Detner—shoots and kills his brother. With only moments to think before Detner's thugs turn up at the scene, Becker assumes his dead brother's place. He puts on his clothes, shaves off his beard and assumes his brother's manner and gait to fool even his own and his brother's closest associates. He goes on meticulously to dismantle the sabotage ring, before exposing himself to the American authorities not as Becker, but as Detner, the Nazi Agent. Convinced that his return to Germany and execution as Detner would be of greater propaganda value in his adopted home, the US, he refuses to claim the plaudits he deserves, and condemns himself, as Detner, to death.

It is a succinct narrative on the inner conflicts of an exile forced to choose between his native and adoptive homes. It is also a powerful narrative of the rupture that is brought about by displacement. The exile is split into two: the man who wholeheartedly embraces his new country, putting down fresh roots of friendship; and the man who embraces a fierce nationalist pride for the country he left behind, attempting to recreate the motherland (or in this case the Fatherland)

in his new surroundings, even if that means the destruction of the host. The two selves are clearly separated. As long as the two do not meet, they both operate more or less normally within their own environments. However, when one seeks to coerce the other into collusion, in other words, when one oppositional force threatens to outweigh and overpower the other, the two selves violently collide. It is at this point that the exilic posthuman body is born, as I go on to make clear later in this chapter.

## Stereotype, identity and displacement

Before I go on to discuss the concept of the posthuman in relation to the exilic body, I here explore the significance of stereotype and stereotyping in the formation of identity and the rupture brought about by displacement.

In *Difference and Pathology* Sander Gilman argues (1985: 15-35) that stereotyping is an essential part of a healthy individual's interaction with their environment. It evolves at the earliest stage of childhood when the child begins to learn the difference between self and the world. The child learns to understand the world as separate from his or her body, and to identify sources of threat and sources of nurture and warmth according to stereotypes, dividing the world into categories of good and bad. Stereotyping is a remarkably complex process: it allows the child to construct easily referenced mental images of sources of threat or comfort ('fire: bad' or 'smoke: good', in the words of Frankenstein's monster), but it also offers flexibility in the designation of the labels 'good' and 'bad'. Thus a source of pain and suffering, the dentist, for instance, can be understood as 'good', and a source of pleasure, tobacco, for instance, can be understood as 'bad'. As the examples suggest, stereotyping remains with us throughout our lives, and can apply to not just people and objects, but also concepts. It is the process whereby we respond to external stimuli, and decide whether they are a threat or not. Gilman argues that in order to make sense of the difference of the other (or one's difference from the other), we project our own 'bad' selves on to the 'bad' other in the instance of a negative stereotype (that which we fear we may not help becoming), and our 'good' selves on the 'good' other in the instance of a positive stereotype (that which we fear we may not be able to become). This helps us make sense of the world around us, interact with others and confirm our own place in society according to shared shorthand mental images of the other. In short, it divides the world into a binary of us and them (1985: 17). Gilman argues that the basic categories into which stereotypes can be divided (those of race, illness and sexuality) 'reflect our preoccupation with the self and the control that the self must have over the world' (*ibid.*: 23).

He further argues that 'stereotypes arise when the integration of the self is

threatened. They are therefore part of our manner of dealing with the instabilities of our perception of the world. This is not to say that they are positive, only that they are necessary' (1991: 13). He goes on to say that we must make a difference between 'pathological' and psychologically necessary stereotyping (*ibid.*). For the purposes of this thesis, however, it is not important to differentiate between good and bad stereotypes. For the exile, all stereotypes applied to him by the host nation are equally destabilizing and debilitating. Stereotypes, whether they happen to apply to the exile or not, will force the exile either to conform (for instance pretend to be Count Dracula for the amusement of his fellow students if he is a Hungarian attending school in England) or to rebel against them (for instance strive for locally specific sartorial excellence to put the lie to insinuations of 'bad breeding'). From the point of view of the host nation, all stereotypes of the exile, from the seemingly most innocuous to the most blatantly hurtful, are equally useful in maintaining a solid self-image as a nation, and containing the other through discursive practices. For example, the assertion that foreign footballers in the Premier League play with flair but often dive is a seemingly innocent statement, but it implies that English players, by contrast, play stolid but fair football, an image that the host nation benefits from. An example of blatantly hurtful stereotypes would be the British National Party's view that non-white UK nationals are 'racial foreigners', implicitly denying the claim to Britishness of members of ethnic minorities, while suggesting an equivalence between race and nation in an effort to maintain an image of the nation as hegemonic, and homogenously white. All of these examples are stereotypes. The mechanisms at work are the same. The difference is measured in the effect, in reactions, in the fears and (self-)hatreds they engender. We can see representatives of each category at work in the films I analyse. For this reason, in the context of my thesis, stereotyping will simply mean the necessary and largely unthinking (and therefore often hurtful, indeed) process of identifying sources of threat and nurture in our everyday interaction with others.

An approach informed by Gilman's thinking surrounding stereotypes and healthy bodies and minds could help us engage with representations of the foreign other in Hollywood cinema in a more meaningful way. Understanding stereotypes and our predilection for thinking about the world in a strict binary system can help us explode that very binary system. An exploration of mainstream cinema's representations of the other can shed light on the way stereotypes work in filmic discourses, and can point us towards a more meaningful engagement with seemingly two-dimensional representations of immigrant, exilic bodies. It will allow us to move beyond simple statements about the fairness or maliciousness of certain representations (in other words it helps us move beyond value judgements) and could help us understand how these representations work. Not only does such an approach allow us to talk about the ways in which immigrant bodies are deployed in a hegemonic discourse about the other, but it also helps us un-

pick the meanings bound up in the often tortured body of the immigrant other: what happens to a healthy mind if the world surrounding the individual is flipped and the stereotypes the exilic individual constructs do not fit into the dominant us/them binary? In other words, what happens when the ‘us’ becomes ‘them’? How does the immigrant, exilic or diasporic body and mind react to the reversal of the protective binary system of stereotype-construction?

To return to *Nazi Agent* and Becker/Detner on the deck of the ocean liner: he embodies a dual representation typical of exilic bodies. He is the loathsome Nazi infiltrator, the terrifying spectre of invasion, occupation and miscegenation; and he is also a loyal and proud citizen of the USA. One self, Becker, maintains the pretence that the ‘us/them’ binary has remained valid despite his displacement. In other words he refuses to contemplate the possibility that his concept of ‘I’ may no longer be part of the ‘us’ of the host nation. His unassuming life in American suburbia, interspersed with lively exchanges about stamps with his friend Professor Sterling, indicates a desire to fit in without rocking the boat, as if sub- or unconsciously aware of the precariousness of his psychological balance. Indeed, as his friend’s name seems to indicate, he seeks legitimacy, the ‘sterling mark of approval’. His passion for stamps is perhaps an indication of an obsession with travelling and journeys. It is not so much an indication of homesickness, but a constant reminder of the simple fact of displacement. After all, a stamp, like an exile, is the product of one country, which then makes its journey to another, where it will forever remain, with little or no possibility of a return home, symbolising both displacement itself and its irrevocability. Return home is only possible as part of a stamp collection, or in the exile’s case, in a casket. Quite fittingly, a stamp is also a stereotype: an endlessly reproduced abstract image invested with meanings that transcend it.

The other self, Detner, refuses to accept the reversal of the ‘us/them’ binary and seeks violently to impose the conditions under which his identity was originally acquired or constructed. In other words, rather than attempting to fit in without a fuss and accepting the new circumstances as a given, the exile, here, attempts to force his new environment to comply with his idea of an idealised homeland. Detner’s vicious self-control, the military discipline which he forces on his self reflects his own ambition of imposing such discipline on his host country. The restrictive formal clothes he wears at all times, the hair flattened against his scalp, the monocle that requires a constant balancing act, all indicate a man consumed by the desire of controlling every aspect of his self, as well as a mad drive to impose this control on all around him.<sup>1</sup> When he is in Becker’s cosy drawing room, Becker’s adored canary ceases to trill. Like the canaries that ceased to trill once they ran out of oxygen at the bottom of a mine, so Becker’s canary is

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<sup>1</sup>For more on madness and exile, see Chapter 4.

suffocated by the self-destructive conflict of the two selves. Detner's control of his self pierces Becker's pretence of normality in a world that regards him as other and abnormal.

Once the two selves enter into conflict and one is pitted against the other, the rupture brought about by displacement is made manifest. The selves struggle for dominance and one suppresses the other. It is here that the exilic body becomes a posthuman body.

## The exilic posthuman body

I start this next section of the current chapter with an analysis of the AIDS body by Halberstam and Livingstone (1995: 15), which I find particularly useful in establishing the main points of my argument about the exilic body and its construction by normative discourse. That is not to say that I seek to equate the AIDS body with the exilic body. However, there are sufficient similarities between the ways normative discourse constructs both that warrant such a comparison. Sexual difference and the perceived signs and effects of that difference are key components of a heteronormative patriarchal discourse that positions both the AIDS body and the exilic body as irrevocably 'beyond the human loop'.

The AIDS body, for example, crumbles and disintegrates with the disease, but as Wojnarowicz shows, it also produces fear in those who do not have AIDS; it not only disintegrates, in other words, it produces disintegration at large. Disintegration as a political strategy attacks the oppressive imaginary gulf between the eternalized and 'safe' body and the body at risk, the provisional body; it is the differential that constantly attempts to construct the Person-With-AIDS as 'already dead', and beyond the human loop. Disintegration operates like a virus and infects people with fear of AIDS, exerting a weird kind of power... (*ibid.*)

If we substitute the 'AIDS body' with another, admittedly different, but similarly marginalised body, the 'exilic body', we get the germ of a rudimentary framework for theorising around the discourses that construct and exclude the immigrant other. The exilic body is often subjected to intense trauma, which results in 'crumbling' and 'disintegration'. In *The Face Behind the Mask* (1941, Robert Florey), Peter Lorre's newly arrived Hungarian immigrant, Johnny Szabó is badly burnt in a fire. His face is so disfigured that he inspires horror in almost all who lay eyes on him. He causes 'disintegration at large' of the illusory certainty of the invulnerability of the human body. He needs to wear a mask, constructed by a plastic surgeon from photos dating from before the fire, in order to go out



Figure 2.2: Johnny wearing the mask that covers his monstrous, exilic face.

in public. In other words technology is employed to reconstruct a face that corresponds to the exile's pre-displacement and pre-rupture identity, to a face that was the product of the innumerable effects and influences that shape identity in the exile's original context, the homeland (fig. 2.2).

The mask does little to lessen the horror he inspires: it hints at the undisplayable and monstrous real face it hides. This mask is the link between representations of exilic bodies as monsters (Béla Lugosi as the Ape Man or Frankenstein's Monster) and exilic bodies as waxworks (Conrad Veidt in *Nazi Agent* or Béla Lugosi in *The Raven*). The exilic body terrifies not necessarily by exposing its abject horrors to the safe and sound host body, thereby threatening the integrity of that body. More pertinently, it inspires terror by hinting at the horrors hidden under a rigid, unyielding mask. Johnny's mask in *The Face Behind the Mask* hides a no less disfigured face than that of Otto Becker, hidden behind the mask of his own skin, a mask that is perhaps all the more terrifying for its self-imposed inflexibility. Indeed, when Becker assumes his twin's identity, he clasps a hand to his face, twisted in pain, as if suppressing the expressivity and warmth of his old face and imposing an immobile mask on himself (fig. 2.3). If it were to break, tear or slip off, the face it had covered would be revealed as far worse than anything we could have imagined. The monstrous and deformed face of Johnny Szabó is then, paradoxically, closely aligned with the stony, blank face of Becker/Detner through the mask the former wears.



Figure 2.3: The moment identity is split: Otto clasps a hand to his mouth after impersonating Hugo, his twin brother for the first time, seconds after he has killed him.

Following on from the above we can see how the exilic body disintegrates and through its disintegration engenders fear in the ‘safe body’. It is an unsafe body precisely because its identity was constructed under an ‘us/them’ binary that is invalid in the body’s new post-displacement context, in the host nation. This out-of-context and therefore unstable identity is contained—barely—by a threatening body, a body that is constructed as ‘already dead’: it is insignificant, excluded from society, banished to the margins. So it is with Johnny. The face behind the mask, then, is a face that is permanently marked as other—perhaps also suggesting that as much as integration into the host nation is impossible, re-integration into the home nation is equally unfeasible. It is this irreversibility of the rupture of displacement that turns the naïve immigrant into exile: marked as diseased, banished forever beyond the human loop, nobody’s ‘one of us’, and everyone’s ‘one of them’. His face disfigured, his funds depleted, without a job and without a friend, except, perhaps, for the Irish immigrant policeman Lt Jim O’Hara (Don Beddoe), he is a walking corpse. When a good-natured low-life stops him from killing himself, all he does is extend Johnny’s suffering. He gives him hope that he may still find himself a place in society. A hope that is hardly worthy of the name.

Becker, too, is ‘already dead’ in *Nazi Agent*. When the two selves, Becker and Detner fight, and Becker wins, the body that emerges from that fight is ‘al-



Figure 2.4: The mask slips. Dr Vollin (Béla Lugosi) in *The Raven* (Lew Landers, 1935) slips into madness.

ready dead'. The violent conflict between Becker and Detner is an acting out, or perhaps performance, of the oppositional forces continually pitted against each other within the exilic body. As I explained earlier, Detner is the embodiment of the exile that refuses to assimilate into the host country and hopes to remould it in the image of the idealised homeland. Becker is the embodiment of the exile who quietly seeks to fit in. One perpetrates violence on his own self, the other on society at large. When the two fight and just the one gets up again, the winner, or survivor, is neither wholly the one he had been, nor utterly different from the one that has died. It is neither the mild-mannered philatelist, nor the vicious spy, but something else, something in between: alive, yes, but also dead.

This conflict is, perhaps not very subtly (and thus that it has remained unremarked on is all the more surprising), represented as an actual fight between *identical* twins in the instance of *Nazi Agent*. The same conflict is often the key moment in other films dealing with the trauma of exile: the moment when the self is marked as 'already dead' and therefore as a source of threat to the healthy (read: non-immigrant) body.

Dr Vollin's transformation from reclusive and mysterious benefactor of mankind into unhinged, sadistic, murderous madman in *The Raven* is a similar conflict of two selves pitted against each other. The triumph of one—in this instance of the self that refuses to assimilate and hopes to remake the host country in the image of the idealised homeland—is played out as a complete transformation of the exilic

body. Gone is the mirror-smooth masklike face. In its place there appears a satanic face creased with a grimace of pure malevolence (fig. 2.4). The effect is that of a mind o'erthrown, and insanity is an indicator of a diseased body, a body ‘beyond the human loop’ (Halberstam et al, 1995: 15). As Gilman argues, normative nationalist discourses situate a diseased mind in a diseased body: ‘the mark of the healthy body is the happy soul—*mens sana in corpore sano*—or perhaps, closer to the reality, the mark of the unhealthy body is the sick soul—*mens non sana in corpore insano*’ (1995: 74). There is no need for immediately recognisable external markings of disease—the disease need not be inscribed in the face or body of the sufferer—to construct the exilic body as one that disintegrates and therefore one that produces disintegration at large (Halberstam et al, 1995: 15).

In order to unpick the significance of the concept of the ‘already dead’, I here pause to discuss the way in which death studies and more specifically the work of Hallam, Hockey and Howarth (1999) and Seale (1998) may be useful for theorizing around representations of the exilic body in mainstream cinema. Hallam et al discuss the mechanisms at play that allow us, the living, to process death and dying, to cope with the sight and notion of the dead and dying body. The aspect of their work that is most pertinent to my reading of exilic bodies in Hollywood cinema of the 1930s-50s is their discussion of the way in which practices or ritual and discourse construct and position the body of those dying of progressive brain disease (1999: 1-19).

They argue that people living with or dying of various forms of dementia (for instance Alzheimer’s), are constructed, through established rituals and discourse, as ‘socially dead/biologically alive’ (1999: 3). They introduce this term in order to bridge ‘gaps in a matrix of body/selves’ (*ibid.*) that see dead and alive as mutually exclusive, complementary terms. Mainstream discourse consigns these decaying bodies to the category of ‘dead’ by labelling them as vegetables and zombies, denying their very existence while they are still alive. Conversely, the label ‘socially alive/biologically dead’ (*ibid.*) refers to those bodies that have long died, but continue to exert great influence over the lives of the living. These bodies are also labelled ‘vampires’ (*ibid.*), for they feed on the life-force of the living. In less mystical terms: they are alive as long as there are those alive who continue to live their lives in the shadow of the deceased. Examples of the former (biologically alive, yet socially dead) are found usually in the films of Peter Lorre: petty criminals, insignificant wannabes, dying has-beens; examples of the latter (biologically dead, socially alive) abound in the films of Béla Lugosi: vampires, reanimated corpses, megalomaniac quasi-supernatural mad scientists. They share one thing: they are seen as bodies whose death is inevitable, a foregone conclusion. Their friends often shake their heads sorrowfully, mourning the men they had been, muttering ‘he’d be better off dead’, indicating that in effect they already are dead.

Before going any further, I would like to explain here why I am using the concept of the ‘already dead’ rather than the ‘uncanny’, and why I favour an approach informed by death studies and body theory over one heavily reliant on psychoanalysis as it is applied to the study of cinema. In her opening chapter in *Phallic Panic* (2005: 1-26) Barbara Creed gives an authoritative account of the uncanny and the concept of the *unheimlich*, tracing the evolution of the term from its origins to its relevance to horror cinema. She identifies the root of the term in *Heim* or home. She argues that with its basis in the idea of home, *unheimlich* suggests that which is like the home, but not the home. She further notes that *heimlich* means hidden or obscured, and therefore, she argues, *unheimlich* combines in a single term feelings associated with the home turned unfamiliar or the home revealed as non-home. At first glance this seems a solid framework for a study of the exilic body in Hollywood cinema. It would allow us to read the rupture brought about by displacement as the coming to the surface of the repressed knowledge that the home (the host nation) is not the home, but an eerily familiar yet alien land. Exilic bodies, in this framework, are uncanny bodies wreaking havoc in an uncanny land.

This approach to the exilic, however, would require a limiting psychoanalytic reading of the exilic body as suffering castration anxiety, having womb envy and attempting to allay these fears through the usurpation of the feminine generative role. It would further require a reading of the home as an uncanny land, in other words, a reading of the context of the emergence of the viable identity (which I termed ‘us’), as a representation of the psychological trauma of the exile (which I have referred to throughout this chapter as ‘them’). And indeed, the exilic bodies—especially Béla Lugosi’s spurned mad scientists and monstrous creatures of the night—inhabit a demimonde of subterranean laboratories, bat-infested caves, cavernous castle halls and the sewers of the big city. Their victims are often women, and the violence they perpetrate is often sexual and not infrequently motivated by a thirst for knowledge about the anatomy of the other. Yet this would leave films like *The Face Behind the Mask*, *Nazi Agent* or *Three Strangers* without our purview, failing to address the implications of violence directed against society or the self (rather than the feminine) in a society which we recognise as the context of the emergence of ‘us’.

These narratives would, I contend, yield far richer pickings, when read as representations of unviable bodies and identities searching for viability in a context that denies the very viability they crave. Their trauma does not come from a ‘phallic panic’ but a panic induced by the realization that their body and identity are unviable, *even though they have done nothing wrong*. They have not entertained incestuous desires, they did not envy the womb, they did not cower in fear at the prospect of castration by the father—at least no more than any other man. These bodies are masculine for the most part and patriarchal on the whole and should be

corporeal, yet they are not. Their masculinity is often denied and their corporeality undermined—not because of phobias, transgressions, illicit desires, castration anxieties, but—for the simple reason of an identity that is not compatible with identities constructed through nationalist normative discourses current in the host nation. If home is where the identity is constructed, then the host nation is not the ‘home become unfamiliar’, but a ‘non-home’, an ‘away’ where the fully-formed identity of the exile is not viable. This denial of the viability of the exilic body manifests itself in a filmic discourse that constructs the exilic not as uncanny, but as ‘already dead’.

These bodies then, constructed by 1930s-1950s Hollywood cinema as ‘already dead’ seek a solution to their problem: they attempt to reconcile the reversal of the us/them binary with the identity that had emerged in the context of their pre-displacement environment. This project is, of course, doomed to fail. Identity is fragile. It needs constant reaffirmation of its own soundness in order to function. Where this constant reiteration of the viability of one’s identity is impossible, one’s identity will begin to crumble and disintegrate. As Butler argues:

The political terms that are meant to establish a sure or coherent identity are troubled by this failure of discursive performativity to finally and fully establish the identity to which it refers. Iterability underscores the non-self-identical status of such terms; the constitutive outside means that identity always requires precisely that which it cannot abide. (1993: 188)

Although Butler is not talking about identity in exile, her argument is particularly apt. She suggests that the construction of identity is a careful balancing act, one that can never be assumed to be completed. Not only is the exile’s identity under threat in a hostile environment, identity is fundamentally fragile, always under threat, unless its viability is constantly reaffirmed.

Whilst the exile craves the reiteration of his belonging, of his ability to participate in discourse, of possessing a sound identity, his new, post-displacement environment, the host country, maintains its and its citizens’ identity through the constant (re)iteration of the norms that define it as a nation, and its citizens as *its* citizens. And this (re)iteration of the norms that construct the identity of the nation and its citizens, by definition, exclude the other, the ‘constitutive outside’. This discourse positions the exile as the ‘them’ in the ‘us/them’ binary, designating it as the constitutive outside that must be repudiated in order to confirm the viability of the identity of the host country’s citizens. The exile, who through displacement becomes the constitutive outside to the ‘us’ of the host nation, is denied participation in discourse and a solid identity underpinned by the reiteration of its acceptability. He then seeks violently to remake the host country or himself in a bid to fit in, or make his environment fit him.

It is at this point, the point of rupture of the fragile balance of identity brought about by displacement, that the posthuman exilic body is born. In a bid to resolve that which cannot be resolved, the exile steps or drifts (depending on whether the reaction is one of active and conscious rejection *of* ‘us’ or the passive inability to resist rejection *by* ‘us’) beyond the human loop. This rupture brought about by displacement and the concomitant movement beyond what is considered human is what makes the bodies of the characters played by Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt in 1930s-50s Hollywood cinema posthuman as well as exilic.

## A zoo of posthumanities

Halberstam and Livingstone define the posthuman body as, amongst other things, ‘a contaminated body, a deadly body, a techno-body; it is as we shall see, a queer body. The human body itself is no longer part of “the family of man” but of a zoo of posthumanities’ (1995: 3). It is important to pause here and unravel the significance of the word ‘zoo’ in this definition of the posthuman body. There are two fundamental implications of the word: one is a denial, or at the very least questioning of the ‘humanness’ of the posthuman body; the other is an idea of putting on display and quarantine.

In *Bodies that Matter* Butler argues that ‘abjected beings [...] do not appear properly gendered; it is their very humanness that comes into question’ (1993: 8). Abjection, the outward—though sometimes unseen—mark of the threat to the integrity of identity and one’s sense of self, is a key aspect of the posthuman exilic body. Sweating, dripping, limp bodies, bodies with prosthetic limbs (even heads, as in *Mad Love*, (1935, Karl Freund)), transplanted and synthetic organs, decaying bodies, stiff, lifeless, undead bodies, masks and clothes that hide imperfections, horrific scars and unhealed wounds are typical of representations of the exile in Hollywood cinema of the 1930s-50s. These are all attributes that complicate Hollywood’s discourse surrounding the exile and the exilic experience. Apart from contributing to a sense of the ‘already deadness’ of the characters by emphasising decay, decomposition and deformation, they help to position the exilic body ‘beyond the human loop’ and, as a result, question the humanness of the exile.

Tellingly, the animal doppelganger is a recurring figure in the films of Béla Lugosi. In *The Ape Man*, *Murders in the Rue Morgue* and *Return of the Ape Man* it is an ape that does his bidding and mirrors his position in, or rather outside, society. In *The Devil Bat* (Jean Yarbrough, 1940) the electronically magnified bloodsucking bats, voiceless flying techno-mammals of the twilight, echo Dr Caruthers’s liminal position on the fringes of society. In *Dracula* the Count can turn into a wolf or a bat, blurring the boundary between what is human and what is animal, quite explicitly denying the Count’s humanness. These animal doublings

or mirrorings of the exilic body can only navigate the margins: they come out at night, moving stealthily, soundlessly on deserted, often fog-wreathed streets. They use alternative means of getting around their environment. They fly, crawl up drain pipes, sneak through underground tunnels always hiding in the shadows. By serving to question the humanness of the exile, they also point to the exilic body's ability to navigate the—quite literally—no-man-land, the border-zone between the inside and outside of the ‘human loop’. It would be wrong, however, to read these animal doubles/incarnations as some liberating sign of the ability to subvert the space of the host nation. As I show in Chapter 3 on the exilic space, the exilic bodies’ movement in animal shape through a space that is produced as normative discourse (Lefebvre, 1991) is a manifestation of their inability to participate, rather than their ability to subvert. This is a crucial difference, and one that I explore more fully in Chapter 3.

Where Lugosi’s characters are often explicitly aligned with the animal world, Lorre and Veidt are more subtly, but no less firmly, positioned beyond the human loop. In a series of eight *Mr Moto* (1937-39) films Lorre solves crime, karate-chops bad guys and brims with oriental mystery as the eponymous agent of the Japanese government (in later films, as Interpol agent). These films, with their unabashed racism and (by today’s standards) staggeringly crude imperialist narratives (about the need to contain indigenous liberation movements, for instance), went a long way towards irrevocably equating Lorre with the role, and all the stereotypes gleefully applied to Far Eastern peoples, from cunning to inscrutability, from devious intelligence to a persistent inability to master ‘proper’ grammar,<sup>2</sup> and from physical inferiority to inexplicable feats of strength. All these stereotypes remain with Lorre throughout his Hollywood career, from *Mad Love*’s brilliant but deeply weird and puny surgeon to *Quicksand*’s (Irving Pichel, 1950) devious and sinister but ultimately ineffectual games arcade operator. These qualities ascribed to Lorre’s characters serve to put him beyond the loop of the host nation, and by extension beyond the human loop itself.

Ugarte’s (Peter Lorre) futile resistance in *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) as the gendarmes come to arrest him at Rick’s Café Américain illustrates just how many ways he is beyond the loop. Ugarte is first introduced in a brief exchange with Rick (Humphrey Bogart). Ugarte asks Rick: ‘You despise me, don’t you?’ Rick’s astonishingly hurtful reply is: ‘If I gave you any thought, I probably would.’ It is little wonder then that Ugarte gets precious little help when he runs out of options and the police close in around him. Ugarte begs Rick to help him escape (fig. 2.5). In response, Rick intones his favourite mantra: ‘I stick my neck

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<sup>2</sup>This inability to master proper grammar while scattering pearls of wisdom makes Mr Moto a closer relative of Frankenstein’s monster ('Friend good!') than of another foreign detective, Poirot, say, whose conversation is peppered with Gallicisms, but remains, on the whole, grammatically correct, if idiosyncratic in its leanings toward the archaic.



Figure 2.5: Rick (Humphrey Bogart) sticks his neck out for nobody, especially not Ugarte (Peter Lorre) in *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942).

out for nobody'. In fact, Ugarte's is the only body he does not stick his neck out for. That Rick should help Viktor László (Paul Henreid) shows just how high exiles must aim if they are to be recognised as valuable: Ugarte, a self-serving black market profiteer (no different than Rick, really, only smaller, shabbier, less bitter and, perhaps crucially, not American) is not worth saving. László, the saint-like intellectual leader of European (but not Jewish) resistance against Nazism, survivor of countless concentration camps, chivalrous and understanding husband, noble and self-effacing champion of liberties is worth saving. Albeit grudgingly. It is, perhaps, a measure of just how eminently exilic Lorre is: in comparison with other exilic bodies, his will always come out worst. Not only does Rick not help him, his pathetic attempt to resist arrest is quickly over as the policemen close in on him and lead him away, never to be seen in the film again. He does not even have the chance of a heroic way out: a shootout with police in which to die as a man of action. Instead, he is put in jail and killed behind the scenes, with Claude Rains's Captain Renauld and Veidt's malevolent Major Strasser insouciantly discussing whether to report his death as suicide, or 'killed trying to escape', surely, the most humiliating and dehumanising end in Lorre's entire career.

Veidt, too, is denied his claim to humanness. It is perhaps in one of his films that this denial of the humanness of the exile is most tellingly enacted. At the end of *The Thief of Bagdad* (Michael Powell, Ludwig Berger, et al, 1940), his plot to usurp the throne of Bagdad in tatters, Jaffar (Veidt) takes flight, quite literally,

on the back of a flying horse. The flying horse he escapes on is a mechanical (machinic) horse he had gifted to the Sultan of Basra whose daughter he hoped to wed. This horse machine, a heartless embodiment, a machinic assemblage of inorganic parts, is a mirroring of Jaffar. Held together by the sheer power of Jaffar's will it is, in a way, an extension of Jaffar, its heartlessness suggesting a fundamental cruelty and an irremediable lack that applies as much to its master, as itself. As Jaffar flies over Bagdad, the rightful heir to the throne, Ahmad (John Justin), the King of Bagdad whose throne he usurped, takes back not only his rightful throne, but also his rightful bride. Abu, the thief (Sabu) shoots an arrow into Jaffar's forehead. As Jaffar dies and falls out of the sky, the horse falls apart, destroyed bit by bit. With Jaffar dead, his powerful mind no longer willing the parts to work, the machine itself falls apart. This disintegration, or more to the point the disintegration caused by the extermination of the exilic body through the double destruction of heart (taking away the love of Jaffar's life) and mind, further equates that exilic body with the machine. Just like Jaffar's unfathomable power of will invests the machine with life, so does the machine invest Jaffar with the machinic in an interlinking where the existence of both depends on the other.

All three bodies, Lorre, Lugosi and Veidt, through a vast variety of incarnations are consistently positioned beyond the human loop. This positioning beyond the human loop, however, entails an element of putting on display, of holding up for others to see as a warning of what happens to those who seek inclusion in a system that defines itself through their rejection. The films then form part of the performance and reiteration (Butler 1993: 188) of the impossibility of the 'constitutive outside' (*ibid.*) finding a way to become a part of the 'inside'. All three actors frequently play people in the public eye: those who perform, whether it be roles, surgery, public duty or miracles. Writers (Lorre as Cornelius Leyden in Jean Negulesco's *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944) for instance) and actors (Lugosi as the actor hired to play a vampire in Todd Browning's *Mark of the Vampire*, 1935) both perform the roles assigned to them by society, and replicate the power relations they experience. These roles, then, are inevitably in dialogue with the position of the actors who play them within Hollywood's rigidly hierarchical system. In other words, Leyden is as much performing the role of detective on the trail of the mysterious arch-criminal Dimitrios (Zachary Scott), as he is performing the role of itinerant, homeless wanderer, a man exiled from everywhere and pursued everywhere.<sup>3</sup> Lugosi's actor hired to perform Count Mora both plays the vampire, and is the vampire. These performers are, then, used as much by Hollywood to perform the role of the outcast and the misfit (in the sense of not fitting), to perform

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<sup>3</sup>Throughout the narrative Dimitrios, believed to be dead, is in fact pursuing Leyden who believes himself to be tracing the movements of the dead master criminal. It is in fact he who is being traced by Dimitrios.

the impossibility of assimilation into an unyielding and seemingly hegemonic national body, as they perform their own exilic trauma, the ruptures of dislocation and the pain of imperfect relocation. Again, the exilic body stands for both: it is both warning sign and tragic hero. Ugarte elicits in us simultaneous feelings of contemptuous pity and uncharitable relief: poor sod, he tried, but he could not but fail; thank goodness, I know better than to try where he failed. This, not insignificantly, echoes Gilman's description of good and bad stereotypes: that which I fear I cannot become; and that which I fear I cannot help becoming (1985: 23).

The failure of assimilation (although not necessarily the demise) is generally played out in full view of the environment of the exile. Ugarte's arrest is witnessed by all those who matter (I use the term fully aware of its ramifications) in the city of Casablanca. Dr Mirakle is booed and hissed at in his very first public appearance at the travelling freak show, signalling the inevitable failure of his plan to prove mankind's descent from the ape in an effort to explode the binary that positions him as ape-like and therefore not human. A public failure is crucial to Otto Becker's (Veidt) disruption of Baron von Detner's (again Veidt) Nazi sabotage ring in *Nazi Agent*. Jaffar's death in the skies above Bagdad could not be more public or, indeed, more spectacular. Just like the word 'zoo' implies, these bodies are isolated and displayed for observation, for study and for instruction: the other can try, but will never succeed in participating in the life of the host nation.

There is another aspect of 'zoo' and display that has a major significance in the context of this study. This aspect is that of the space of display and is one that I discuss in Chapter 3, which takes the issue of the exilic space as its main point of focus. The exilic body is presented by Hollywood in a space specific to it. The exilic body is shown surrounded by signifiers of its original habitat, if you like. The subterranean research laboratories or dungeons of Lugosi, the chrome and steel boxes, whether submarines or Bauhaus buildings of Veidt, and the seedy urban underbelly, the sewers, buckets of blood and rat-infested alleys of Lorre are as much part of the putting on display suggested by 'zoo', as their futile growls and doomed attempts to rattle the bars of their individual cages.

The three bodies, the various characters of Lugosi, Lorre and Veidt, then, form a zoo of posthumanities: they are posthuman bodies, techno-bodies, queer bodies, contaminated bodies, bodies containing a multiplicity of selves and identities (Halberstam et al, 1995: 3), in short: bodies that do not fit. Their futile attempts to find a way in, a chance to participate in discourse is performed time and again in Hollywood films of the 1930s-1950s. They are doomed to fail, of course. The host nation cannot tolerate these odd bodies, bodies that serve as a constant reminder of the abstract, constructed and illusory nature of the image and idea of the hegemonic body of the nation (Hayward, 2000: 91). Some remake themselves in an attempt to fit in. Some remake the host nation. The rest of this chapter will consider how these posthuman bodies, rebelling against a normative discourse that

denies them participation in life, no less, seek to remake a hostile host nation in what I call the image of an idealised homeland.

## Can't join them? Beat them!

In the foregoing I explored the mechanisms that drive the exilic narrative in Hollywood cinema of the 1930s-1950s. We saw how the displacement and subsequent relocation of the exile turned on its head the effects of stereotyping. Displacement constituted a rupture with the stereotyping that works to establish a stable identity. Relocation brought with it a reversal of the ‘us/them’ binary, where the exile’s ‘I’ in the sense of ‘one of us’ became the host nation’s ‘one of them’. At this point the identity of the exile became undermined and destabilized to the point where an attempt had to be made to resolve this break. It is one of these strategies of reaffirming one’s identity as stable and safe that I explore in greater detail in the remainder of this chapter.

As I explained earlier, one of the strategies is remaking one’s own body in order to fit into the human loop, or the ‘us’ of the host nation. This strategy is fraught with danger. There is no guarantee that it will ever work, particularly as external markers of difference are often the result of ceaseless assertions of *internal difference*. What I mean by that is that one’s nose may be the epitome of straight noses, if one hears often enough that it is a typically Jewish nose, one will begin perceiving it as such. Or, as Gilman puts it: ‘You hate what society hates. If your body is marked as diseased or foul, you internalize it as unhealthy and you become ‘unhappy’ with it’ (1995: 74). This is a closed system in which it is impossible to tell which one comes first: the mark, or society’s (and one’s own) hatred of it. One may try to alter one’s appearance, but that is no guarantee of a change in society’s perception of one’s body. To cite a telling example: no matter how many times Michael Jackson underwent cosmetic surgery (or was thought to undergo cosmetic surgery as in the case of the pigment deficiency that slowly bleached his skin), his blackness and nostalgic reminiscences about his youthful African-American looks remained key reference points in discussions of his artistry, talent and achievements.<sup>4</sup> To put it simply: one can change how one looks, but it is far more difficult to change how society sees one.

Another stumbling stone is that the only guidance in this remaking of the exilic body to fit the normative discourse of the host nation is the exile’s interpretation of that normative discourse. This interpretation is frequently hampered by insuf-

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<sup>4</sup>See, for example, Germaine Greer’s article, ‘Like Orpheus, Michael Jackson was destroyed by his fans’ printed in *The Guardian* on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2009. The piece focuses on Jackson’s boyhood looks, high-pitched voice, and is accompanied by a photo of the singer in his teens. (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2009/jun/26/michael-jackson-death-in-1a>)

ficient mastery of the language of the host nation, and by an all too literal reading of normative discourse that often results in an overinvestment of the exilic body with excessive signs of masculinity and power that immediately put the lie to the exile's assertion of belonging. The exile seeks to establish his right to belong by stressing his masculinity in line with heteronormative, patriarchal discourse, but outward signs cannot grant him acceptance, precisely because the difference goes deeper than his skin.

On the basis of the above, remaking the host nation in the image of an idealised homeland, then, seems not such a drastic measure, nor such an unrealistic goal. In what follows I analyse the exilic bodies that undertake this mammoth task.

## Jaffar and the limitations of willpower

*The Thief of Bagdad* was a spectacular Technicolor production by Alexander Korda's London Films studio. It was one of Korda's biggest successes, matching the very profitable *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933), which made £500,000 in its first world-wide release (Christie, 1985: 44), and 'was UA's top-grossing film out of twenty released in 1940, earning just over a million dollars in domestic rentals' (Street, 2002: 58). It is the story of Ahmad (John Justin), the King of Bagdad whose throne is usurped by his Grand Vizier, Jaffar (Conrad Veidt; fig. 2.6). Jaffar hopes to marry the daughter of the Sultan of Basra, the most beautiful woman in the world. The dispossessed Ahmad is joined by the lowly thief Abu (Sabu), who helps him in his quest to recover his throne and his love, the Princess of Basra (June Duprez). After a series of fantastic adventures, Abu and Ahmad succeed in finding their way back to Bagdad and rescue the Princess. Ahmad then confronts Jaffar, who escapes on the back of a flying horse. Abu shoots him in the head with an arrow-gun and Ahmad, reunited with his love, takes his rightful place on the throne of Bagdad.

What is interesting in relation to critical readings of *The Thief of Bagdad* is that they tend to favour an exploration of representations of the East in Western culture over any other approach. Nadel considers the film briefly in Bernstein and Studlar's *Visions of the East* (1997: 184-203). Eisele, too, writing about the genre conventions of the 'eastern' in a *Cinema Journal* article of 2002 pauses to discuss the film cursorily, chiefly in relation to the original 1924 film by Raoul Walsh (74; 79). Jaikumar in *Cinema at the End of Empire* (2006) offers sensitive and insightful readings of the films and roles of Sabu, but *The Thief of Bagdad*, with its Arabian, rather than Indian setting, gets fewer mentions than, for instance, *The Drum* (Zoltán Korda, 1938), which is set in the Raj. Further, Jaikumar's focus is the process of decolonization, and how anxieties surrounding loss of control on the one hand, and impending socio-political changes on the other, informed the films



Figure 2.6: The picture of evil—as imagined by the normative. A thoughtful and not at all unkind-looking Conrad Veidt as Jaffar in *The Thief of Bagdad* (Michael Powell and Ludwig Berger, 1940).

made both in the imperial centre, Britain, and the colony, India (ibid.: 1-4). What these pieces have in common is that they look at the film as a representation of the other. While unquestionably these *are* in a manner of speaking representations of the other, films such as *The Thief of Bagdad* are also often representations of the nation where they were made. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of Korda's *The Thief of Bagdad*. It is a film that went into pre-production as war loomed on the Continent and premiered in London in the midst of Nazi bomb raids. It is the story of a benign kingdom usurped by a foreign parvenu, corrupted, compromised, transformed into an empire of terror, echoing not only the rise to power of Hitler in Germany and the birth of the Third Reich, but also the deep concerns of Britain about the possibility of sustaining a democratic system in the face of Fascism and Nazism running rampage throughout Europe. It would be limiting to read this film, then, as one that reflects solely on the Middle East and its peoples. It may prove, at the least, equally as productive to consider *The Thief of Bagdad* as a filmic response to a particularly tense international situation and, crucially, one that explores threats to the nation transposed to an exotic setting that allows for a calming distance from the all-too terrifying possibilities of succumbing to totalitarianism.

Although made in England, *The Thief of Bagdad* has much in common with Hollywood cinema. So much so that, as Street shows (2002: 58), it was one of

the top-grossing films of 1940 on the US market. Indeed, with the eminently recognisable backdrop of the Grand Canyon, where some of the outdoor scenes were shot, it is easy to mistake it for an American film. This kinship was by no means accidental: Alexander Korda's ambitions for the US market meant that the films of his studio placed an emphasis on the spectacular in an effort to improve their chances at the American box office. There are further similarities that, to an extent, displace the film from the British canon. *The Thief of Bagdad* is a loose remake of Raoul Walsh's 1924 silent spectacular starring Douglas Fairbanks. The use of Technicolor itself dictated a reliance on the technology, expertise and creative talent of Hollywood. Associate producer William Cameron Menzies,<sup>5</sup> for instance, is to be credited with the look of the film as much as the uncredited set designer, the youngest Korda brother, Vincent. Natalie Kalmus, of the Technicolor Corporation, was also involved in the project. Menzies may have been brought in by Korda in an effort to pre-empt Kalmus's likely attempts to stamp the Technicolor Corporation's aesthetics on the film, without much sensitivity to script, story or performances.

The film's Hollywood flavour is reaffirmed by the near-universal silence surrounding the film in British film historiography. Even Glancy's (1999) *When Hollywood Loved Britain: the 'Hollywood' British Film 1939-1945* ignores the film completely. Ashby and Higson (2000), Sargeant (2005), Barr (1986) and Drazin (1998) also ignore the film. Aldgate and Richards (1999), Murphy (2001), Armes (1978) and Low (1979) afford it the most fleeting mention. In a recent article Drazin gives an overview of Korda's Technicolor films. *The Thief of Bagdad* appears, almost as an afterthought (2010: 18). The most exhaustive analysis of the film in overviews of British cinema is the paragraph devoted to it by Landy (1991: 110), who remarks on the film's focus on the spectacular and the problematic representation of foreigners and women (Sabu and Duprez), but, puzzlingly, has nothing to say about Veidt.<sup>6</sup>

It is the critical silence around the film, and more generally around the star body of Veidt that I seek to redress here. While it may be a stretch to argue that Jaffar is the hero of the piece, I here consider Jaffar as victim, as rejected, denied and excluded other. I read Veidt's star body as an exilic body, and analyse Jaffar, his actions, motivations and representation through a cultural studies approach concerned above all with exile. In the first part of this section I consider the ways in which the voice of the normative (the white British male) comes to dominate

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<sup>5</sup>William Cameron Menzies was a well-respected production designer who was considered one of the best technicians when it came to colour photography and the production requirements this technology presented (Higgins, 2007: 172-174).

<sup>6</sup>Drazin (2010: 18) does remark on the evil of Veidt's Jaffar and goes on to say that Veidt would later create the role that has come to epitomize Nazi evil on screen, but his purview being a primarily historical one, he does not take this further.

the discourse and drowns out the voice of all others, especially the exile. I seek to show how the filmic narrative privileges the normative over the exile, and I touch on the problematic assumption of the neutrality of the camera-narrator. In the second half of this section on *The Thief of Bagdad* I move on to consider the nature of knowledge in exile, the factors that destabilize that knowledge and the ramifications of a rupture brought about by displacement on the reliability of the exile's knowledge. I then consider the exile's attempt to engage in normative discourse and iterative performativity to cause things to be within the host nation.

The film begins with the return of Jaffar from a voyage. The crimson sails of his galleon billow in the wind as the ship glides into Basra harbour. Jaffar, in a red turban, his face covered by a red scarf, looks out across the colourful city with hungry eyes. He gives the impression of a man who wants to have it all. The city, its riches, its people. On his way back to the palace, he overhears the plaintive calls of a blind beggar for 'alms in the name of Allah'. He orders his guards to escort the beggar to the palace. There, the beggar begins his sad tale about a kingdom lost, a love lost and eyesight lost, all to the evil Vizier, Jaffar. We then witness the story unfold as recounted by its putative protagonist, the cheated, dispossessed Ahmad. He begins by describing himself: 'There was once a king: son of a king and of a hundred kings; his subjects countless; his wealth untellable; his power absolute'. Quite an introduction to give oneself! Having established his own illustrious pedigree, Ahmad then begins his woeful tale of dispossession. There is something troubling about this structure, however. We accept Ahmad's story and the 'real' (as presented by the film in the sequences set outside of Ahmad's tale), as equivalent. However, we do not witness Jaffar's evil outside of Ahmad's account. Sinister, yes, unpleasant, yes, but Jaffar cannot be said to be evil, or unjustified in his actions outside the tale within the film, with one exception that I come back to later. This unquestioning acceptance of Ahmad's account, our unhesitating belief in Jaffar's evil points to the power of normative discourse to control us, to dictate our likes and dislikes (Gilman, 1995: 74), even when we look at ourselves.

Practically the whole of the film's first half is told by Ahmad who was witness to little of what he recounts (and almost none of Jaffar's evildoings). If in our analysis of the film we do not lose sight of this crucial detail, we can begin to see the fault lines on the body of a narrative that masquerades as hegemonic in more ways than one. There is the hegemony implied by the suturing effect of continuity editing; and there is the illusory hegemony of a film that is in part told by an unidentified narrator (the camera or director, if you like) and in part told by a character within the film, with his own interests and agenda to follow. In the spirit of Dyer's *White* (1996), then, the white British male narrator of large swathes of the film poses as equally 'neutral' and unproblematic as the unidentified camera/director narrator. I pause here to unpick this illusory hegemony, this

white male agency that masquerades as the norm in order to show the complexity of normative discourse. I then go on, armed with an awareness of the pitfalls of an insufficiently thorough engagement with the text, to explore how Jaffar addresses his total inability to fit into what I argue is an imagining of the host nation.

The two Jaffars, the man and the man as portrayed by Ahmad, are seemingly identical, but there are fundamental differences. Jaffar as represented by Ahmad is a cold, manipulative man who follows a devious plan to dispossess the rightful ruler of Bagdad, usurp his throne, woo his love and conquer the world. First, he turns the people of Bagdad against their King by implementing excessively harsh laws that punish even the tiniest transgression, whether in action or speech. (By comparison, the Sultan of Basra who has his subjects executed on a whim, is presented as a well-meaning old fool, rather than a bloodthirsty tyrant.) He then tricks the young King into mingling with his people, hoping that they would recognise the King and take awful vengeance for the atrocities committed by Jaffar in his name. When the King passes undetected (something that Jaffar could not do, as I discuss later), Jaffar orders that he be rounded up along with a group of mutinous malcontents and casts him into the dungeons, ordering his execution for the morning. After Ahmad's escape, Jaffar follows him to Basra, where he ingratiates himself to the Sultan by presenting overly lavish gifts before he demands the Sultan's daughter's hand in marriage. The narrative structure (we first see Ahmad meet and fall in love with the Princess, before Jaffar's arrival), suggests that once more, Jaffar is seeking to take that which is not his, but Ahmad's. While Jaffar is in audience with the Sultan, Ahmad interrupts and prepares to expose the usurper. Jaffar casts a spell on him, blinding him, and turning Abu into a dog until Jaffar finally holds the Princess in his arms. Here Ahmad's tale ends, and we join the narrative unmediated by any character in the film.

Unmediated Jaffar, however, is a very different man compared to the one presented by Ahmad. It would be an exaggeration to suggest that he is a man who inspires immediate and unreserved confidence, but neither is he an evil, bloodthirsty tyrant. We are introduced to Jaffar briefly in the first scene of the film, where we are invited to observe the colourful, bustling metropolis of Basra. We see Jaffar order his guards to escort a blind beggar and his dog to the palace, where the lowly guests are cared for, fed and watered and generally well treated. We have no time to develop an understanding of the man, however, as Ahmad takes the stage and takes over as narrator. The next time we see Jaffar outside Ahmad's tale is much later in the film. When on board the ship that carries them from Basra, Jaffar enters the berth of the Princess. First, he attempts to overcome her revulsion by forcing her to his will, but he stops. 'No...', he says. 'I have powers that could force you to my will. But I want more than they can give.' This is not a bloodthirsty rapist, then. Neither is he particularly cruel. But he is immediately and finally rejected by the Princess. Little wonder then that he summons the pow-

ers of nature to blow off course the boat in which his rival for the Princess's heart, Ahmad, and Abu follow his ship.

There is one incident, as I suggested earlier, where Jaffar as represented by Ahmad and the real<sup>7</sup> Jaffar overlap, although, with some magnanimity, we could understand Jaffar's motives, especially when considered within the context of patriarchal normative discourse. Having failed to win the Princess's heart, Jaffar tries to understand her reasons for steadfastly refusing his courtship. 'You behave like a slave girl,' he tells her, implying that he senses that she submits to him, rather than accepts him. 'You could command me...', he sighs into her ears, simultaneously suggesting a romantic bent, and belying a lack of insight into power relations between the sexes in a patriarchal system. (This is a crucial flaw as I go on to explore later on: Jaffar cannot possibly fully dismantle a system, or absorb that system, if he cannot fully understand it.) She asks him to take her back to Basra. Ensconced within the Sultan's palace, the Princess takes refuge in the garden, once a bucolic haven of bliss, now a 'place of desolation,' according to the Sultan. She begs him not to allow Jaffar to take her back to Bagdad. Jaffar's response, to murder the Sultan in cold blood, is the one instance where Jaffar's evil arguably overlaps with that of Jaffar as represented by Ahmad. But only if we accept that the Princess's rejection of Jaffar, within the patriarchal system in which both operate, is fair. After all, this is a man who has done nothing or very little wrong up to this point when viewed from within the patriarchal system. In other words, I am not here arguing for a total absolution of Jaffar's sins. I am simply suggesting that by the standards of the mores of the world in which he lives, as presented by the filmic discourse, itself both part and product of patriarchal discourse, Jaffar is unfairly judged by his fellow characters. He has charmingly and politely sought the hand in marriage of a Princess, surely a prerogative of the regent of a kingdom. She, at this point, along with everyone else bar Ahmad himself, is unaware that Jaffar had usurped Ahmad's crown. Yet, she in turn treated him with nothing but hatred and revulsion. Even before he had a chance to present himself to her, she escaped, exclaiming 'I will never marry him! I would rather die!' Of course, this is *her* prerogative, but I am trying to contextualise her reaction, rather than offer a feminist reading of the text. That is not to say that a feminist reading of the film would not offer fascinating, rich insights. What I am trying to establish here is that patriarchal normative discourse uses the female figure to position the exile within the hierarchy it represents. Thus, while it would be hard to condone cold-hearted murder, one could understand how Jaffar felt he had no other alternative but to remove all obstacles in his way.

The distinction between Jaffar and Jaffar as represented by Ahmad serves a

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<sup>7</sup>To describe this Jaffar as 'real' is, undeniably, problematic. This is Jaffar as represented by the camera-narrator, and I use 'real' as a convenient, if perhaps problematic label.

double purpose. First, it allows us to expose the hidden mechanisms that control our reading of the film. It sheds light on our assumption of equivalence between Ahmad's tale and the tale as told by the narrator of the film itself. This, in itself, indicates a problematic illusion of hegemony: an unquestioning acceptance of the white/British/local male voice, and the knee jerk rejection of the exile. Second, it shows that there is a key difference between Jaffar, and the idea of Jaffar formed in the minds of those around him (Jaffar as represented by Ahmad). The implications of this gap point beyond the mechanisms that govern the power relations of the sexes within a patriarchal order. In other words, Jaffar is outside the human loop (Halberstam et al, 1995: 15), not just the masculine one. Third, and this follows from these two points, it helps us expose the complex layering of exclusion and a hierarchy constructed by patriarchal normative discourse, which uses the feminine in order to represent the apartness of the exile, inscribing in the exilic body a *conceived* difference in the absence of *perceivable* difference.

This makes it all the more important to examine mainstream cinema's representation of the exile: an understanding of the hidden mechanisms that govern representations of the exilic body could further shed new light on the ways in which patriarchal discourse uses the feminine figure. Armed with this knowledge, and the suspicion that the Jaffar unmediated by film itself is even less 'beyond' or evil, a new reading of the film becomes necessary in order to explore the complex and hitherto unexamined way in which mainstream cinema, especially Hollywood, represents the exilic body.

As I show in what follows, in all Jaffar does, his one motivating factor is to combat universal prejudice, automatic exclusion and rejection, in the only way he feels will bring results: to remake society in the image of an idealised home, one where he is accepted, loved and respected.

## A tale of two thieves

The film's title in itself gives us a hint as to the true protagonist(s). There are two thieves. One who hails from Bagdad (Sabu, thief of/from Bagdad), and one who steals Bagdad (Jaffar, thief of the throne of Bagdad). The comparison of the two may seem forced at first sight, but it is more than justified. Of all the major characters in the film, only two speak with an accent that is not the King's English.<sup>8</sup> Again, these are Jaffar, who speaks with a crisp precise Germanic accent, and Sabu, who has a puzzling slightly Central European accent. Once more, it is these two characters, these exilic bodies that are in some way aligned with the animal kingdom. First, Abu is turned into a dog by Jaffar—perhaps an indication of

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<sup>8</sup>The only other character that speaks with an accent other than the King's English, is the Djinni (Rex Ingram), who speaks American English.

Jaffar's assessment of his own standing in the eyes of those around him. Second, Jaffar is dehumanised through comparisons with the machinic horse, an animal held together by the sheer power of his will. The two exilic bodies, then, represent two different strategies of survival in a hostile host nation. One, Abu, steals small things. He seeks to navigate the margins, to subvert the small rules of life in the host nation in order to find for himself a space he can call his own. In this he most closely resembles Peter Lorre's petty criminals and subservient little men. This strategy is one that I explore and analyse more fully in Chapter 3. The other thief, Jaffar, steals big things. He seeks to liberate himself from the oppression of normative discourse by attempting to recreate his homeland by usurping and transforming the host nation. In this, he resembles Lugosi's monsters and mad scientists (more on this in Chapter 4). This transformation, he hopes, will result in the recreation of the conditions under which his can be a secure and stable identity.

Where it seems quite safe to read Abu as an exilic body, I suspect it is not quite sufficient to state that Veidt is an exilic actor and therefore Jaffar an exilic body, and I feel the need to pause here to explain how Jaffar is constructed as an exile by the *mise-en-scène*. I have already discussed the film's opening scene, describing Jaffar's arrival in Basra harbour on board his ship. I now return to the scene and examine the use of colour, which, I contend, serves to isolate Jaffar as other.

The immediate impression the film makes is one of an explosion of colour. The brilliant deep indigo of the sea, the rich crimson of the sails, even the warm brown and tan of the timber exhilarate to this day (one can only imagine with jealousy how cinemagoers unused to such vibrant colours would have experienced this opening sequence, and indeed the rest of the film). The ship glides into harbour, and we see a city, a cacophony of colours: yellows, reds, greens everywhere. This visual assault (redoubled by the blaring soundtrack of a song about men returning from the sea) is giddyng.

Alone in this cavalcade is Jaffar, clothed in sombre black. His head is covered by a red turban, his face by a red scarf. These are the only splashes of colour on an otherwise monochromatic frame. One reading of this sobering interruption of black within an overabundance of colour—a reading drawing on Patch's (2010: 74) interpretation of Batchelor's *Chromophobia* (2000)—would be to suggest an apartness from the 'foreign [...], the primitive, the infantile, the vulgar, the queer or the pathological' of colour (Batchelor, 2000: 22-23). However, in a film where the concerns of an insular nation threatened by an external aggressor are made manifest through the reimagining of the nation as a colourful exotic kingdom assaulted by the forces of evil, this reading must be reversed. It is then the *monochromatic* that comes to stand for other, as opposed to the colourful 'norm'. The red of the turban and scarf, then, rather than suggesting a destabilizing aspect, an undercurrent of the foreign and/or primitive usually indicated by colour (*ibid.*: 22-23), suggest a claim to inclusion in the norm. The scarf, however, is drawn

over Jaffar's mouth. When he speaks, he has to lower the scarf. He cannot speak through the red, the colour as symbol of belonging, precisely because he does not belong. And indeed, the moment he opens his mouth and speaks, and we hear the harsh voiceless sibilants and plosives of Veidt's German accent, Jaffar is finally and irreversibly unmasked (quite literally) as an other masquerading as 'one of us'. In contrast with Jaffar, whose inability to integrate is perhaps mirrored by his failure to incorporate colour into his monochromatic frame, Ahmad, once reinstated as rightful king of Bagdad, appears before his subjects in luminous white clothes mottled with splashes of colour. His rationality (as indicated by the white of his attire) is tempered by signs of belonging: the spots of bright colour that dot his royal robes.

Jaffar is reaffirmed as a man apart by the narrative: the story of two men vying for power is told in flashback by one of the two rivals. Jaffar is denied the right to tell his own story, and the neutral account (at least one that is less biased than the unreliable narrative of one with a vested interest in the story, but one that for all its pretence of neutrality is a voice belonging to white patriarchal normative discourse) is delayed until halfway through the film, once an illusion of equivalence has been established between Ahmad's tale and the tale told by the camera-narrator. In other words, just as Jaffar cannot speak through the scarf that is a prop in his masquerade of belonging, so his exilic (accented) voice cannot be heard over that of the white male repository of agency, at least until his evil is fully and finally established in the viewer's mind.

Here I consider the ways in which Jaffar is represented, and unpick his strategy of remaking the host nation in the image of an idealised homeland. From early on Jaffar is introduced as a thinking man. An early hint is the close-up as he removes his scarf and gives a few quietly-spoken orders. He exudes a cerebral intensity with his rigidly held, controlled body and darting, piercing eyes that suggest a powerful insight and a keen mind. It is immediately clear: this is a scheming man, a clever and dangerous man to boot. This early impression is reinforced by the conversation he has on the ramparts of Bagdad castle with the young king. A man is executed in the square below and Ahmad, disgusted by such violence, turns on Jaffar and with unconcealed dislike in his voice, he asks what the man had done. Jaffar tells him that the man was guilty of thinking, a crime 'quite unpardonable' in a subject. Jaffar, then, is a man who appreciates fully the significance of thought and its relationship to power. He continues: 'Men are evil. Hatred behind their eyes, lies on their lips, betrayal in their hearts.' This is a strange rant coming from a man in a position of great power. He then tries to pass on his knowledge to the king: 'There are but three things that men respect: the lash, that descends; the yoke, that breaks; and the sword that slays. By the power and terror of these you may conquer the Earth!' These words afford us an insight into the soul of the man (or at least into the soul of the man as represented for us by the white British

man). He is a man betrayed, misled and loathed. He craves respect, but gets none. He feels his only resort is violence and terror. He is, also, as I suggested earlier, a thinking man. He is acutely aware of the importance of knowledge in the delicate task of maintaining a balanced and viable identity in the face of threats to bodily and mental integrity. But he bases his conclusions about the three things that men respect on his own identity. He understands that he is not accepted, and knows that only violence and the threat of violence can maintain his position in society. The king, Ahmad, however hated he may be as a tyrant in whose name horrible atrocities are daily perpetuated, is accepted by the people as in keeping with the norm.

When the Sultan of Basra boasts to Jaffar of his cutting-edge mechanical time-keeping device, Jaffar warns him: ‘If people once begin to know the time, they will no longer call you the king of time. They will want to know how time is spent.’ Again, Jaffar shows that he has a keen understanding of the relationship between knowledge and power. Yet, he never succeeds in presenting his power as being ‘natural’ in the way that Ahmad can. Because he himself does not naturally belong—being an exilic other body—his power cannot be, or at least seem, natural. In order to show how Jaffar’s understanding of his predicament is undermined by his ignorance of the mechanisms that govern existence within a patriarchal system, of the power and effect of normative discourse, I here turn to critical works on knowledge and in particular the distinction between *savoir* and *connaissance*.

In a footnote in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault argues that *connaissance* is the relation of subject to object and the rules that govern that relation (2002: 16). In other words it is all the knowledge (data, tradition, practice, discourse, etc.) bound up with a particular object. For Foucault then *connaissance* is specific to the object of knowledge, but also to the subject, arising as it does at the specific moment of this knowledge being called upon by a particular subject in relation to a particular object. *Savoir* stands for all the conditions under which *connaissance* can be said to exist (*ibid*). *Savoir* is a general knowledge, an abstract and flexible knowledge that is necessary for specific knowledge of something. But even this general and flexible knowledge (the totality of one’s learning) is specific to a time and space. For Foucault, the *savoir* necessary for the *connaissance* of a particular disease, for instance, differs depending on the time and place of the analysis of that disease. A 17<sup>th</sup> century *savoir* could not adequately underpin the *connaissance* of 21<sup>st</sup> century diseases. His concept of knowledge then is one where knowledge is temporally and spatially determined.

Lefebvre, however, conceives of a *savoir* that is universal. For him, *savoir* is a knowledge that serves power (1991: 10). It is one of the means by which the ruling class asserts and maintains its hegemony.<sup>9</sup> It is a knowledge that is intrinsi-

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<sup>9</sup>Presumably ‘ruling class’ here refers to *any* ruling class, but one could mischievously suggest

cally bound up with the exercise of power and as such is hidden but present in all discourse. One of its many forms is ‘received wisdom’ (*ibid.*: 367), customs and traditions and the dictates of common sense that masquerade as innocent gems of wisdom and as such often go unquestioned. *Connaissance*, however, is a critical knowledge that refuses to acknowledge power, but also a kind of knowledge that exposes the connection between power and *savoir*. *Connaissance* is the critical knowledge that permits an insight into the practice of power through discourse. Lefebvre’s concept of knowledge aims at universality—as does his theory of space in general—and his distinction between *connaissance* and *savoir* is an ‘antagonistic, hence *differentiating* distinction’ (Lefebvre’s emphasis, *ibid.*: 10), suggesting that for him, Foucault’s formulation is both specific and non-differentiating. Indeed, Foucault’s formulation is one where the dividing line between the two is not as clear: *connaissance* cannot be achieved without *savoir*, and both are fundamentally context-dependent. Lefebvre’s formulation may be universal, and his distinction clear, but the two are not quite as clearly opposed as Lefebvre makes it out. For Lefebvre’s system to work for a critical analysis of the relationship between knowledge, power and subject, especially when that subject is an exilic one, we must contextualise both *savoir* and *connaissance*. The one true difference between the two formulations is that for Foucault *savoir* is what permits *connaissance*, for Lefebvre, *connaissance* permits a critical understanding of *savoir*. Ultimately, however, Lefebvre’s *savoir* is not opposed to Foucault’s. For both, *savoir* is the knowledge accumulated through learning, interaction, experience, in short: life. *Connaissance*, again for both, is the specific application of that knowledge in a self-aware and critical manner in order to understand and make sense of particular problems. Both are useful in the context of this thesis, and what differences there are, do not interfere with a critical reading of the nature of knowledge in exile.

If we conceive of stereotype formation as an aspect of the acquisition of *savoir*, we can see how through relocation, the reversal of the ‘us/them’ binary is concurrent with a similarly debilitating destabilization of *savoir*. In terms of identity, awareness of the self, *savoir* (whether understood as the totality of learning or the knowledge that serves power) is geographically determined: a Transylvanian landowner has accumulated a significantly different mass of knowledge compared to, for instance, an American rancher, despite both being farmers. And this mass of knowledge includes, inevitably, the mechanism of stereotype-formation, the individual’s means of making sense of the world around him or her. It then follows that through relocation, *savoir* is destabilized concurrently with the reversal of the ‘us/them’ binary. The exile then seeks to understand his environment through an

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that for Lefebvre this universal claim is particularly true of the way bourgeois hegemony is asserted and maintained.

‘other’ or ‘exilic’ *connaissance* that operates alongside a *savoir of elsewhere*. The conclusions that the exiles reach about their own situation, then, cannot but be faulty, leading them to certain failure in their goal of achieving acceptance into the host nation, or of remaking the host nation in the image of the homeland, both tasks that require an understanding and knowledge (*connaissance* underpinned by *savoir*) of the host nation and its normative discourse.

I now return to the film, and Jaffar’s failure properly to master the different types of knowledge necessary for acceptance in the host country. As I discussed above, Jaffar shows a keen understanding of the mechanisms of power. He is acutely aware of the relationship between *savoir* and power. The trouble is that his *savoir* is not the *savoir* of the host nation. For instance, he firmly maintains that ‘men are evil’. A *connaissance* (critical knowledge/understanding) based on his general knowledge of the world. But Ahmad’s reaction makes it clear: Jaffar is fundamentally wrong. Ahmad goes on to say: ‘I learned that night not that men are evil, but that he was evil’. Jaffar’s conclusions are therefore false and undermine his efforts to achieve control of, or power over the host nation. This is most tellingly illustrated by the scenes where Jaffar uses his powerful mind to control those around him.

Jaffar cannot use performative discourse, in other words he cannot cause members of the host nation to become what he speaks, precisely because his knowledge is not applicable in the host nation. Operating with a *savoir* amassed elsewhere, his attempts at discursive performativity (Butler, 1993: 12) cannot succeed. Just as he cannot speak through the colourful mask because the other cannot speak like ‘us’, so he cannot cause things to happen by speaking them. When the Sultan takes the flying horse for a ride above the city, Jaffar thinks, rather than utters the command. When he blinds Ahmad, he does so silently (fig. 2.7). The spell is represented as a slowly descending shadow that draws a veil of blindness over Ahmad’s eyes. When he seeks to bend the Princess to his will, he does so, again, silently. It is only when he turns Sabu into a dog, and when he summons the forces of nature that he speaks the command. The exile can wield iterative performativity, the power of speech, to control the exile or nature, but he has no such power over those from the host nation. He can control the exile, because he has knowledge of the exilic experience. He can control nature, because the other is represented as primitive and therefore close to nature, by normative discourse (Gilman, 1985: 79-93). He cannot, however, control members of the host nation because he cannot speak in the voice of the host nation.

Jaffar’s astonishing willpower then must not be read as an ability above the norm. He has no superpowers. Quite the contrary. He has no powers, and therefore must rely on subversive forms of control. Like Dracula in exile who must turn into a bat or a wolf to navigate a space that is hostile to him, Jaffar must exert his control over those around him without recourse to a normative discourse (which



Figure 2.7: Jaffar silently casts the spell that blinds Ahmad (John Justin).

is one of the manifestations of *savoir*) that he cannot master. He cannot command others verbally because he cannot conquer the *savoir* of the host nation. This inability to command in speech is indicated by the accent that always and immediately identifies the exile as other, as incomplete, as incompetent. It is also this inability that always preys on the mind of the exile, but whose concept they cannot quite grasp. Jaffar does not realize, only suspects his inadequacy. When the Princess once more refuses him, he whispers: ‘you could command me’. He fails to understand<sup>10</sup> that such a submissive attitude towards the feminine is in conflict with a patriarchal system that is based upon the denial of feminine corporeality.

The scene where Ahmad first encounters the Princess gives us a good example of the ‘norm’ when it comes to interaction between the sexes in the context of the film. Ahmad climbs into the forbidden garden, and peering down from amongst the foliage of a tree he espies the Princess. She, in turn, spots him. She takes him for a genie. He does not correct her mistake. Crucially, their interaction is mediated by the reflective surface of the pond in the garden. She talks to his reflection, and he talks to his own reflection, which, with his complicity, appears as a genie, a spectre. In other words, this is a *mise-en-scène* of a patriarchy that, in Butler’s analysis, ‘claims to be self-constituting’ (1993: 39). As if her argument had been inspired by this scene, Butler writes: ‘disavowed, the remnant of the

<sup>10</sup>Similarly, as I discuss in Chapter 4 on the madness of the exilic scientist, Peter Lorre’s Dr Gogol, ‘who conquered science,’ cannot conquer love. The exile then knows that he has failed, but he compounds this failure by failing to grasp why or how.

feminine survives as the *inscriptive space* of that phallogocentrism, the specular surface which receives the marks of a masculine signifying act only to give back a (false) reflection and guarantee of phallogocentric self-sufficiency, without making any contribution of its own' (ibid). The Princess is disavowed, indeed, sequestered within the confines of a bucolic garden that is completely removed from the space of interaction, the 'social space' (Lefebvre, 1991: 14-6) of the nation. Further, this abundant garden signifies her closeness to nature, and, by extension, her disavowal by a social space dominated by men. She survives as a meaningless, powerless figure, an immaterial surface to be inscribed with meaning through a masculine signifying act. And indeed, it is this projection of the male onto the feminine figure (as played out in a conversation where the male seducer is in effect seducing his own reflection that speaks in the voice of the feminine) that sparks the Princess into a semblance of activity. From this encounter on, her activity consists of running away from Jaffar, and then falling into a sort of coma from which only Ahmad's return can rouse her. It is worth noting here that while Jaffar, in his own words, 'has eyes only for [her]', Ahmad had 365 wives as King of Bagdad. Still, or perhaps precisely because of this, Ahmad is the one that can endow her with meaning, while Jaffar can only induce a defiant stupor. In other words, Jaffar, the exilic other male, cannot inscribe this feminine figure with a masculine signifying act. Quite the opposite: he only succeeds in causing the Princess to retreat into a form of suspended animation to prove fully and finally Jaffar's inability to exercise the power that he craves.

Jaffar, willing to submit his will to that of the Princess, cannot understand her revulsion. Of course, this revulsion is not her own, but that of the patriarchal discourse that paints the nightmare vision of an exile hoping to find acceptance through the conquest of the feminine. Nor can he understand that he cannot win her love. He says: 'I have powers that can force you to my will, but I want more than they can give'. He understands (for he has *connaissance*) that he could force her. He also understands that to use his powers to force her to him would be, paradoxically, an admission of his own powerlessness, his inability to inspire her love. But he fails to understand (for he lacks the *savoir* necessary to reach this realization) that she will never bend to his will, precisely because he is exilic, and other.

Jaffar's intentions in his pursuit of the Princess are clear from the start. He arrives in Basra bearing magnificent gifts for the Sultan. He first ingratiates himself to the father, then demands the hand in marriage of the daughter. Taken aback, the Sultan asks why. This raises two issues. The fact that the Sultan is shocked by Jaffar's plan to propose to his daughter points to the host nation's instinctive rejection of the exile, especially when it comes to such direct modes of integration. Further, that the Sultan should ask why he wanted to marry his daughter indicates that it seems to him inconceivable that an exile could be entertaining notions of fathering

a child in the host nation. But Jaffar's plan is even more sinister: he hopes to 'set up a dynasty'. That, in Jaffar's own words, is 'quite unpardonable' in an exile. It is when she hears this that the Princess jumps to her feet and prepares for flight to safety from such a threat to her, and by extension—again within the context of a nationalist patriarchal discourse—to the nation's bodily integrity and hegemony.

Jaffar further miscalculates his chances of successfully remaking Bagdad in the image of an idealised homeland. While he succeeds in turning the people of Bagdad against their cruel king, he cannot take his place and claim to be a natural ruler. He can taint the king by association, but he cannot present himself in the king's place as a rightful ruler. He is rebuffed by the Princess, rejected by the Sultan (who agrees to shelter the Princess from him), and is never accepted by the people, who all accept Ahmad, when he appears among them as an ordinary man. In other words they reject the real Jaffar, and while they hate the *idea* of Ahmad (cruel, merciless tyrant), they embrace the real man (wise, warm and truly regal). Apart from his mistake in thinking that with the triple terror of the lash, the yoke and the sword he can conquer Bagdad, let alone the Earth, he fails to realize that his power cannot seem to be natural. His guards are all dressed in identical uniforms. All of them appear as a faceless double of Jaffar himself. They stand tall in dark, monochromatic clothes, their heads covered by a turban, their faces by scarves that always echo Jaffar's appearance. Rather than remaking the homeland, these Jaffar-lookalikes serve as a constant reminder of the spreading disease of the other on the body of the nation. Here patriarchal discourses and the discourse of disease meet in a nationalist nightmare of miscegenation, invasion and corruption. The national body reacts quickly: roused by the return of Ahmad, the usurper is summarily ejected from the throne, the palace, the city and life itself. Reason returns to its throne as Ahmad takes his rightful place. A local king for local people.

### *White Zombie*: the failure of exilic discursive power

*White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932) was one of Lugosi's early forays into film-making on Poverty Row. Coming soon after the success of *Dracula* and *Murders in the Rue Morgue* at Universal, appearing in such a low-prestige production, however, did little to enhance Lugosi's career or his standing amongst his peers (Lennig, 2003: 159). Made on a relative shoestring (just 50,000 dollars<sup>11</sup>) it is nonetheless an effective chiller, due in large part to its genuinely scary silent, shuffling zombies. Despite being ostensibly incomparable to *The Thief of Bagdad*, the two films share a surprising number of themes and concerns, as I go on to make clear. That there are any similarities at all, is remarkable, because the two

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<sup>11</sup>According to the Internet Movie Database ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)).



Figure 2.8: A set in the Halperin brothers' *White Zombie*, borrowed from Universal.

films have very little in common at first sight. *The Thief of Bagdad* was, as I noted above, a big budget production by Alexander Korda, one of the foremost film producers in the world at the time, who specialised in prestige productions. As I set out earlier, it was made in 1939, with production starting just months before the invasion of Poland by Hitler's Germany, and the planned location shooting in North Africa was scrapped in favour of the South coast of England and the Grand Canyon in the US. *White Zombie*, however, was released in 1932, when the Great Depression was beginning to ease. It was made by a small independent production company, on a limited budget, with limited resources and second-hand sets, some of which had been used in Universal's horror films of the previous years (Lennig, 2003: 160; see fig. 2.8). *The Thief of Bagdad* was loosely based on the story from *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, while *White Zombie* has no such illustrious literary antecedent, and was one of Hollywood's first Poverty Row nasties. In spite of all these differences, the two films display a strong similarity in their treatment of the exile. While from here on I keep comparisons to a minimum, I do consider *White Zombie* at some length to show the constancy in Hollywood's imagining of the exile as having no power, voice or right to life.

My approach to *White Zombie* is much the same as the approach I used for *The Thief of Bagdad*. Therefore I consider the figure of Murder Legendre (Béla Lugosi) in light of Gilman's writings on stereotyping (1985) and the representation of the other as pathological. I use my synthesis of Lefebvre (1991) and Foucault's



Figure 2.9: Murder Legendre (Béla Lugosi) drinks to the destruction of his enemies in *White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932).

(2002) concept of *savoir* and *connaissance* to show how the exile is denied participation in discourse, and I make references to Butler's *Bodies that Matter* (1993) in my analysis of the exilic body, the feminine body that the exile hopes to subject to his control, and the zombified body of the exile's enemies.

Much like *Dracula*, *White Zombie* begins with a coach ride through an alien landscape. Neil (John Harron) and Madeline (Madge Bellamy) are on their way to the plantation of Monsieur Beaumont (Robert Frazer) a wealthy landowner they had met on their voyage to Haiti. Their progress is suddenly halted when their way is blocked by a funeral that is being conducted in the middle of the road. The coach driver, a superstitious local (the uncredited Clarence Muse, who was typecast in this kind of role), explains that the dead are usually buried in the road, because that is the only safe space on the island from those who would dig up and reanimate corpses as zombies. Clearly, something is desperately wrong in a land where the dead are buried in the middle of the road, instead of the cemeteries. That something desperately wrong, I argue in what follows, is the presence of the exile. Already the film establishes a space where the cemeteries, the spaces reserved for the disposal of the dead, have been subverted by some unknown and dangerous persons as a site for unnatural practices and dangerous, arcane knowledge.<sup>12</sup>

Neil manages to soothe Madeline's nerves with a light-hearted remark, but

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<sup>12</sup>More on cemeteries and other heterotopias (Foucault, 1967) and their subversion in Chapter 3.

clearly, they are both troubled by what they have just seen. After forcing its way through the funeral crowd, the coach continues towards the mansion of Monsieur Beaumont. Here, we see a pair of daemonic eyes superimposed over the image of the coach continuing along the road. The eyes are opened wide, their whites gleam with menace, set in an otherwise black face. The effect is eerie. As the image of the eyes fades away, it leaves the troubling imprint of terror caused by a malevolent presence. The coach draws to a halt next to a man standing by the road. The man is Murder Legendre, played by Lugosi (fig. 2.9). The first close-up we see of Legendre is an overexposed image: under a wide-brimmed black hat is a face bleached white by the light, making his features indistinguishable, in spite of the night-time gloom. An extreme close-up follows, which leaves only Lugosi's piercing eyes in the frame. His eyebrows are twirled into a diabolical point at either end. Taken together, his long black overcoat, his large felt hat, the widow's peak and twirled eyebrows combine to recreate the stereotypical representation of the Jewish male in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century cartoons (see for instance *plate 11* in: Gilman, 1985: 65). The point, I argue, is not that the film represents Jews as evil. I do not read *White Zombie* as an anti-Semitic text. Rather, and this is a subtle but important distinction, the film engages in a nationalist discourse underpinned by the repudiation of the other, and relies on stereotypical representations of the Jewish male as a straightforward signifier of difference. In other words, the film does not suggest that Legendre is dangerous because he is Jewish, but that Legendre, like the Jews, is different and therefore a source of threat. In his analysis of anti-Semitic discourse surrounding the threat of the Jews (1991), Gilman makes the point that this threat is the threat of the infectious touch of the pathological other and the subversive potential of the hidden or incomprehensible language of the other.

Madeline stares at this strange, silent man (more apparition than man, perhaps). Legendre places a hand on the coach's windowsill. Madeline's flowing silk scarf hangs over the side, and as the coachman, spooked by the appearance of a grim line of shuffling zombies, drives off, Legendre keeps hold of the scarf and pulls it from around Madeline's throat. As the coach rattles off into the night, Legendre brings the scarf close to his face as if to inhale Madeline's scent, then slowly stuffs it in his coat. As the coach drives off, Madeline tells Neil: 'it felt like hands touching me'. The scarf then becomes a forcibly taken favour, a token of violent fantasy, rather than of chivalrous affection. Further, it suggests that Legendre adheres to a code of conduct—reminiscent of mediaeval modes of being and wooing—that is alien to Madeline and modern tropes of masculinity. Operating in line with the modes and mores of a different culture, in other words operating with what I called 'a *savoir* of elsewhere', Legendre is immediately and irrevocably positioned as utterly foreign and dangerous to boot. Just as Jaffar is introduced in *The Thief of Bagdad* in an emphatic foregrounding of his hungry eyes, an item

of clothing and his difficulty in speaking in the voice of the normative, so too Legendre is here introduced as having daemonic eyes, taking as a favour an item of clothing that is not offered as such, and as not participating in discourse.

When Neil and Madeline arrive at Beaumont's mansion, we learn of Beaumont's true purpose in offering his hospitality to the young couple. He invited them to get married at his home, because, he hopes, this will give him the opportunity to court Madeline and convince her to marry him, instead of Neil. We also learn that should his plan fail, he is hoping to strike a deal with Legendre. Before I go on, I need to pause here to consider the figure of Beaumont. He is by no means a unique character, but one that could confuse the picture if we misread his role. Beaumont is, without doubt, a negative character. He entertains base feelings for Madeline and is willing to go to almost any length to possess her. What is crucial, however, is that Beaumont is not an exile. Rather, he is the villain who, despite his villainy, remains one of 'us'. Just as Rollo (Edward Brophy) the knife murderer in *Mad Love*, Captain Renault (Claude Rains) in *Casablanca*, Edmund Bateman (Karloff) in *The Raven* or Basil Rathbone's Baron Frankenstein in *Son of Frankenstein*, Beaumont is a member of the host nation who has strayed beyond the norm. However, and this is a very important point, Beaumont has the chance to redeem himself by destroying the exile whose evil machinations he had abetted out of selfishness. Just as Rollo gets to participate in the destruction of Lorre's exilic madman in *Mad Love* (in the form of his expert knife-thrower's hands which had been transplanted onto the arms of Colin Clive's tormented pianist), Beaumont, Bateman and Renault find redemption in helping with, or actively bringing about the destruction of the exilic villains they had helped loosen onto the host nation. These moments of redemption, which often come at the cost of their own destruction, transform what would have been a well-deserved and ignominious death into a heroic one and mark their reintegration into the host nation as useful members of society.

Just like Jaffar in *The Thief of Bagdad*, Legendre is a strange man who uses occult knowledge to bend others to his will. Legendre has learned the secret art of reanimating the dead. Not only can he reanimate them, he can also control the living dead. This ability to control the dead suggests an affinity with the dead. It frames Legendre as another zombie, for he is certainly not a member of the normative, and in this sense cannot be alive. And indeed, when Madeline stares into a glass of wine on her wedding night to foresee her future, after pretending to see love and happiness, she actually sees the glaring eyes of Legendre staring up at her from the glass. She stutters: 'I see... death', and collapses. Once more, then, we see a film that frames the exilic other as already dead (Halberstam et al, 1995: 15). Showing no sign of awareness of being positioned by normative discourse as being beyond the norm and therefore beyond the realm of the living, Legendre tells Beaumont, with a hint of macabre humour, the zombies 'work faithfully; they're



Figure 2.10: Legendre shows his anger when his handshake is rebuffed by Beaumont (Robert Frazer).

not worried about long hours.' And indeed we see the zombies at work in his sugar mill. They wordlessly work the machinery and when one falls into the sugar cane grinder, the others just carry on as the victim is shredded without uttering a word of complaint. Later in the film he introduces his zombie servants to Beaumont. 'In their lifetime they were my enemies,' he says, before listing their names and professions. His zombie entourage includes a 'witchdoctor, once my master, his secrets I tortured out of him.' The others are the former minister of the interior, Richard, the brigand chief Gartier, a captain of the gendarmerie, and Chauvin, the former high executioner, who had once come close to executing Legendre. He may command the dead, but he cannot command the respect of those around him. When Beaumont visits him at his sugar mill, Legendre extends a hand in greeting. Beaumont looks at the extended hand and refuses to shake it. In one of the film's most powerful moments, Legendre pulls his hand back, slowly balling it into a tight fist (fig. 2.10). He is then a prime example of the rejected, despised exile who hopes to remake the nation in the image of the idealised homeland by exerting an unnatural control over those who exercise power. In other words, just as Jaffar hopes to establish a dynasty and in the process usurps Ahmad and tries to woo the princess, so too Legendre hopes to gain control of the nation by usurping the nation's figures of authority and constructing a new, alternative nation, that includes him as its natural citizen.

Where Jaffar could be seen as an exile trying to subvert the political system of the nation by usurping the throne and attempting to establish a dynasty that would inextricably tie him into the fabric of the nation's political make-up, Legendre can perhaps be understood as trying to subvert the economic system of the host nation. Rather than attempt to gain direct political control, Legendre is inserting himself into the economic structures of the host nation, which would give him no less a control of the nation as a whole. His sugar mill is then a 'dark Satanic mill', a grotesque imagining of the capitalist system that, according to Marxist thought, usually strives to elide the relationship between labour and the goods produced, and more crucially, between the worker and those who exploit them. Here, Legendre's attempt to adhere to the code of conduct of a capitalist economy exposes the obscenity of the system itself. His workers are mindless automatons, whose back-breaking labour props up the system that exploits them. As I go on to show in Chapter 4, exilic attempts to comply with the demands of a patriarchal system, as interpreted by the exile, result in a misapplication of conventional signs of belonging. This misapplication in turn brings to light the hidden pathologies (Hayward, 2000: 101) inherent in all forms of discourse designed to underpin that system. This is seen in *White Zombie* in Legendre's all-too literal exploitation of his silenced workers. Where the silencing and exploitation of the workers in the capitalist system is a metaphorical description of real inequalities of exchange (of labour, goods, power), in Legendre's sugar mill the metaphors are interpreted literally. Attempting to emulate the system that he hopes to find purchase on, he exposes for all to see the ugly face of that system.

Beaumont realizes that his chances of winning Madeline's affections are slim, and for this reason enlists the help of Legendre. Legendre's solution is to make Madeline a zombie, thereby achieving full control of her will. As we shall note, where Jaffar in *The Thief of Bagdad* refused to bend the princess to his will, Legendre is quite happy to attempt to do so. I now pause to unpick the process of zombification and its ramifications in some detail to show the fascinating similarities between two seemingly different imaginings of the baleful effect of the exile on the host nation.

On the night of Neil and Madeline's marriage at Beaumont's mansion, Legendre sneaks into the mansion's grounds. As Neil and Madeline drink a toast to their marriage, watched with greedy eyes by Beaumont, Legendre begins his magic spell. He takes a candle from one of the lamps illuminating the garden. He blows out its flame, wraps it in Madeline's scarf and proceeds to carve a wax effigy of the woman. He then holds the wax figurine in the flame of the other lamp and slowly melts it while staring intently toward the mansion, where Madeline suddenly collapses at the table, apparently quite dead. The whole scene is eerily similar—in terms of the manner of the casting of the spell—to the scene where Jaffar blinds Ahmad in *The Thief of Bagdad*. Like Legendre, Jaffar casts

the spell that blinds Ahmad without speaking a word. As I noted in my analysis of *The Thief of Bagdad*, Jaffar cannot control the normative white body of Ahmad in speech. Unable to engage in iterative performativity, or cause things to be one thing or another in speech, an ability shared by all who are not excluded by the norm (Butler, 1993: 12-16), Jaffar and Legendre cannot make members of the normative obey the commands that they utter. Just as Jaffar, so too Legendre lacks the power to turn Madeline into a zombie in speech, and resorts to mystical gestures and a penetrating, or perhaps paralysing, gaze. And, once more, just as Jaffar failed to inspire anything in the princess other than a defiant stupor, so too Legendre fails to achieve any meaningful control over Madeline, barring sending her into a comatose state. When she is reawakened as a zombie and installed in Legendre's castle, he cannot control her the way he can control the other zombies. When he commands her to stab Neil, she rebels against his will and refuses to strike.

While he may not be able to control woman, Legendre can achieve the temporary destabilization of the patriarchal order through his attempt to control the feminine. This is perhaps best seen in the scene where Neil, driven to despair by the loss of his bride, goes to the local tavern to get drunk. As other patrons dance around him, Neil sits alone at a table, clearly drunk. In his alcohol-deepened grief he sees the image of Madeline reflected on the wall of the tavern. He stumbles to the wall and attempts to embrace the image of the wife he had lost, but grasps nothing but the wall. He is dishevelled, dirty, uncoordinated, a man effectively destroyed by the loss of the woman he loved. It is perhaps a scene that is best understood as a mise-en-scène of the destabilization of the patriarchal order. Neil cannot continue to function without his wife, for his identity as a man—in Butler's analysis (1993: 39)—is predicated upon the suppression of the feminine, the denial of feminine corporeality. For if his identity is underpinned by the denial of her viability, his identity as man cannot be maintained when she no longer exists. After all, if man is that which is not woman, then if woman is nothing, man becomes negative nothing: nothing. The projected image of Madeline is then a reminder of that which he cannot do: reduce the feminine to mere surface, one to be filled with meaning through a male signifying act (*ibid.*). Where Ahmad in *The Thief of Bagdad* seduced his own reflection when he spoke with the princess mediated by the reflective surface of the pond, thereby performing the patriarchal ideal of gender relations, here Neil performs the disintegration of the masculine engendered by the loss of that 'impossible necessity' (*ibid.*), woman. It is the preacher, and his explanation that Madeline may still be alive, simply under the control of a witchdoctor, that restores activity and agency to Neil. In other words, the information that his wife still exists, imparted by a member of the clergy, one of the key players in a patriarchal order, reinstates the protective binary (man, good, because man not woman, in Frankenstein's Monster's language) and restores Neil's

identity.

The following scenes, where Neil and the preacher trek to Legendre's castle, use a series of shots and transitions in a way that I feel illustrate the point I have just made. When Neil and the preacher come within sight of the castle, Neil is overcome by fatigue. He is lying under the cover of an improvised tent by a small camp fire at the foot of the jagged rock out of which Legendre's castle juts out high above the sea. As the preacher walks off to find a way up to the castle, we see a wide shot of the promontory. A wipe moves in from the top left corner and we see Madeline, superimposed over the wide shot, standing on a balcony, dressed in spectral white. She seems quite weightless. Another wipe moves in from the bottom right corner, and Neil appears. We now see the two lovers, separated by distance, but united in a single frame. Neil is heavy, weighed down by fatigue. But he is also heavy in the sense that his corporeal weight is emphasised: he is lying down, perspiring and feverish, in short, abject. The loss of the feminine has undermined his identity as active male, and has rendered him abject and therefore repellent. In sharp contrast stands Madeline, in the opposing corner of the frame, light as air, or rather, pure light. She is then a vision of the feminine ideal in patriarchal heteronormative discourse: the shimmering virginal figure that lacks matter and, of course, agency. Regaining control over her body—and in the process breaking the false control (I say false control for she is in effect, like the princess in *The Thief of Bagdad*, in a defiant stupor, not under any meaningful control) that the exile has exerted over her—would, and indeed will, restore Neil to full health and viability as man.

Here I would like to consider one final aspect of the film: the silencing of the voice of the feminine. In order to unpick this, I turn to Hayward's analysis of Benmussa's critique of the intensity of the inert feminine body (2004: 30-31). As Simone Benmussa, writing about performance and femininity, argues (1993: 151) silence and non-movement are intense states of being. They are intense because they hint at the turbulence beneath (*ibid.*: 153). In a moment of silence, or an arrested movement, the focus shifts from the surface we see or the voice we do not hear, to the inner movement and the inner voice that must be there. In this sense, then, Madeline's refusal to obey Legendre's commands, her moments of silence and inertia, become moments of power, where she defies the attempted control over her body by the non-normative male who seeks to usurp the place of the normative. The approval of the patriarchy of this disobedience of the exilic interloper is made plainly manifest in the scene where Legendre tries to command Madeline to stab the prone Neil. Her body shakes with the effort to resist the command. In spite of herself she raises the dagger high above her head. As her resistance wavers and she begins the downward strike, a man's hand—presumably that of the preacher—reaches out from behind a curtain and grabs her arm. The long arm of patriarchy then comes to the rescue of the feminine whose defiance

of the commands of the exilic other is on the verge of wavering. The feminine can then defy the exilic other up to a point and for a finite period. Ultimately, it is the normative male that must come to her rescue in a reiteration of the primacy of the normative male as the sole repository of agency.

This empowering silence of the feminine, which offers sufficient respite from the influence of the exilic other until the normative male can come to her rescue, raises another significant issue in relation to the exilic subversion of the normative. Madeline is not the only one to find oblique modes of resistance in silence. Legendre, too, resorts to the same strategy in his attempt to remake the host nation. I already gave account of the process of casting the spell that turns Madeline into a zombie: Legendre performs the ritual voicelessly. The intensity of his gaze, coupled with the absence of speech, marks the spell as occult and dangerous, an immediate threat to the normative precisely because it uses a non-iterative or subversive mode of performativity. Whenever Legendre commands his zombies, he does so by slowly and solemnly interlocking his hands, closing his eyes, and becoming perfectly still. Just as the feminine, in Benmussa's critique (1993: 151-3), resists the patriarchy in moments of defiant inertia, so too the exile seeks to subvert the normative by turning into a virtue his inability to speak properly or move naturally in the space of the normative.<sup>13</sup> But these moments of defiant inertia are toothless in the face of the violence perpetrated by the normative upon those who dare attempt to subvert it. As Legendre commands his zombies to cast his enemies—the preacher and Neil—off the rampart of his castle, he is knocked out by a strike of the preacher's cosh. Read in this light, the exile, like the feminine, may try to subvert the normative through non-violent modes of resistance, but the normative (that is the host nation) will eliminate all threat of subversion with extreme violence. Just as Jaffar is killed by an arrow through his brain, destroying mind and body in one swoop, so too Legendre is killed, his attempt to remake the host nation foiled once and for all through the utter destruction of his body. In a final bitter symmetry, they both fall from a great height, becoming, in the process, exilic successors of Icarus: men who had aspired to greater heights than the laws that govern their existence would allow.

*White Zombie*, like *Dracula* had done before it, delivers a powerful warning to exiles who presume to graft themselves onto the body of the host nation. Although the other's presence may destabilize the patriarchal order, in the long run, the patriarchy, with the help of the clergy, will reinstate that order through the destruction of the exilic other.

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<sup>13</sup>I return to this idea of subversive modes of negotiating the space of the host nation in Chapter 3.

# CHAPTER 3

## HOW THE DEAD LIVE<sup>1</sup> OR THE EXILIC SPACE

In the final scenes of *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Robert Florey, 1932) Béla Lugosi's mad scientist Dr Mirakle is on the verge of a breakthrough. He has finally acquired the test subject he needs for his experiment: Camille, a girl of pure blood. He is ready to plunge the needle and inject the girl with ape blood in order to prove, once and for all, that man is descended from the ape. At the eleventh hour, however, he is foiled. Camille's suitor, the vapid medical student Pierre has led the police to Dr Mirakle's doorstep. The police break down the sturdy doors to Dr Mirakle's underground laboratory and invade his lair, the laboratory where he has toiled obsessively on finding the proof for evolution. As the police finally break into the mad doctor's home, Erik, the smitten gorilla strikes down his master and kidnaps the unconscious girl. A rooftop chase ensues, and finally Pierre shoots the ape and frees his girlfriend. The scene, and the film as a whole, is rife with symbolism (some heavy-handed, others more subtle) and I shall seek to unpick these in Chapter 4 on the madness of the exilic scientist. What I feel necessary to discuss here at length, however, is the exilic lair, its representation and significance as an aspect of a discourse that constructs the exilic body. In my consideration of the exilic space I rely heavily on the theoretical work of Henri Lefebvre, the writings of Jean Baudrillard as well as Clive Seale's work on death studies, which, as I will show in what follows, is helpful in opening up some of the concepts in my understanding of the exilic space.

As I have shown in greater detail in Chapter 2, the exilic body is constructed as already dead by Hollywood's filmic discourse. This already deadness is repeated, emphasised, driven home by a variety of means. Snippets of dialogue ('he'd be better off dead' is a recurring phrase across the corpus of films I analyse), the mise-en-scène (crypts, coffins, sewers, cemeteries appear in virtually all the films) and the plots themselves (exilic bodies seeking mastery over death, or the wholesale destruction of mankind are typical concerns) all construct the exilic body as dead. Of course, matters are a little more complicated: the exilic body is generally dead

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<sup>1</sup>I take the title of this chapter from Derek Raymond's novel of the same name (1986, London: Secker & Warburg).

in one aspect, but very much alive in another. This is where death studies has been useful to my understanding of the exilic body: I have shown that some exilic bodies are biologically dead, but socially alive (like the vampire in *Dracula*), while others are biologically alive, but socially dead (like Lorre's pathetic Rick-wannabe Ugarte in *Casablanca*). Indeed, there are eerie parallels between the discourses of death, dying and bereavement, and Hollywood's discourse on the exile and his place in society. Both seek to make sense of the terror inspired by that which we cannot understand, namely our own inevitable destruction on the one hand, and on the other the threat of our destruction by the threatening, alien other.

In the introduction of a chapter in which he discusses the conditions under which elderly people live alone in the final year of their lives, Seale writes:

In spite of symbolic attempts to transform death into hopes of immortality, to create a sheltering canopy of culture against nature, for people facing death these human constructions appear fragile. Disruption of the social bond occurs as the body fails, self-identity becomes harder to hold together and the normal expectations of human relations cannot be fulfilled. In particularly debilitating diseases shame at this failure all too easily surfaces since barriers of privacy may be broken in invasions of intimacy necessary to maintain a leaking, decaying body, which mirrors a disintegrating sense of self whose boundaries are increasingly beyond control. (1998: 149)

There are a number of significant points here that I try to unpick one by one before relating the whole to my understanding of the exilic space.

Seale argues above that discourse surrounding death and dying involves a symbolic attempt to lessen the horror inspired by the inevitable end of life. He suggests that culture's purpose is to separate us from nature, to create what he calls a 'sheltering canopy', one that cushions the blow. Exilic bodies excluded from social participation, constructed by normative discourse as subhuman and bestial are also, by extension, excluded from participation in culture. They are therefore forced outside the reach of the sheltering canopy of culture. For them, then, the horror of death is not lessened through rituals. Indeed, they usually have what appears to be a very callous approach to death: Dr Mirakle, when he is finished with one of his test subjects (a diseased prostitute who dies in his laboratory), simply flushes the corpse into the Seine through a purpose-built evacuation chute. This utterly emotionless and disturbingly pragmatic way of dealing with death indicates Dr Mirakle's position beyond the human community. He feels no empathy, indeed he cannot feel empathy, for he is utterly excluded from the community, and the social bonds that sustain it. In another film, *The Corpse Vanishes* (Wallace Fox, 1942), Dr Lorenz (again, Béla Lugosi) tries to keep his ancient wife youthful by kidnapping brides from the altar, inducing a state of coma and extracting fluids

from their bodies, which he injects into his wife, restoring her former beauty and grace. When one girl finally succumbs, he kidnaps another. For him the dying body is a non-renewable resource, the dead body just that: waste to be disposed of. He, like Dr Mirakle, does not share the community's concern for the 'proper' disposal of the dead body. In *Mad Love*, again, we meet an exilic body that sees resource where others see a corpse to be properly buried: Dr Gogol (Peter Lorre) saves a patient's career in music by replacing his shattered hands with those of a recently executed murderer. The murderer's body is seen by the exile as a collection of spare parts (a machinic assemblage, perhaps), not as the sacred earthly remains of what was, once, a human being. As I explore in the section on Lugosi of this chapter, sacredness is a status or quality bestowed through discourse. Being denied the right to participate in normative discourse, the exile cannot render anything sacred. Just as the exile is excluded from all aspects of the 'norm', so he is barred from participation in a form of worship that could be acceptable within the host nation. Further, the exile's position outside the community, and therefore outside what we understand as culture means also that for him there is no soothing transformation of 'death into hopes of immortality': constructed as dead by the dominant discourse of the host nation, for the exile, life after death is a terrifying reality, rather than a comforting belief. For him, to continue using Seale's words, 'these human constructions appear fragile' (*ibid.*: 149), ludicrous, even. Without the comforting concept of life after death, excluded from the social bond necessary for the maintenance of a sound identity, for the exile death is a matter of fact; terrifying, crippling, devastating fact.

'Disruption of the social bond occurs as the body fails,' (*ibid.*) Seale writes. These go hand in hand in the case of the exilic body. Bodily failure—deformity or mutilation—and a disrupted social bond are more or less constant obstacles. In *Face Behind the Mask* Johnny Szabó suffers disfiguring burns to his face, which makes him unable to work (people will simply not hire him because of the way he looks), which, in turn, forces him to sever his relationship with his fiancée in Hungary, convinced that he will be unable to care for her if she makes the journey to join him in the US. Bodily failure, here, results in a breaking of the social bond. However, the reverse is also true. Johnny finds himself beyond the human loop when he sets foot on American soil: his only significant human relationship is stretched to breaking point (he left his fiancée behind), he is penniless and jobless. He is forced to take lodgings in a shabby rooming house, which burns down the first night he stays there. He suffers horrific burns in the fire. In other words, the breaking of the social bond (emigration) has resulted in debilitating bodily failure.

Johnny Szabó is by no means alone. Béla Lugosi's Dr Brewster is forced to hide in his underground laboratory in *The Ape Man* after his gait is affected by a dangerous experiment on gorillas. As much as his bodily failure disrupts the social bond here, his decision to sequester himself in his laboratory and search

for that elusive proof of evolution results in the failure of his body. Isolated by the nature of his work and his bloody-minded commitment to his experiments, he breaks the social bond, keeping his wife and research partner at arm's length. This isolation in turn forces him to experiment on himself, which then results in the mysterious affliction that bends his spine, inscribing upon his body his move beyond the human loop and his perilous quest for dangerous knowledge. The broken bond, then, is both the result and the catalyst of bodily failure.

As a result of this disrupted social bond and bodily failure, as Seale argues, 'self-identity becomes harder to hold together and the normal expectations of human relations cannot be fulfilled' (*ibid.*: 149). Indeed, the banishment, or simply the non-existence of family relations is a common feature of Hollywood films about exilic bodies. Johnny Szabó severs his ties with his fiancée after his accident, further isolating himself in a hostile environment. In *Nazi Agent* Otto Becker cuts off all contact with his family, including his twin brother, after his emigration to the US. Lugosi's characters are, generally, portrayed as bodies that are utterly alone. They often cannot be said to belong to a family because, as I have shown in Chapter 2, they are post-human, and therefore not of the family of man. They are a product of science (Frankenstein's monster), of mystical forces (Count Dracula) or of grave accidents (Dr Brewster in *The Ape Man*).

As if to compensate for this lack of a social bond, a regular feature, in this corpus of films, is the surrogate family. The exile, suffering from a disrupted social bond and bodily failure, often surrounds himself with similarly-afflicted bodies. In *The Corpse Vanishes* Dr Lorenz kidnaps brides from the altar, whom he has drugged with the scent of an orchid he hybridised 'somewhere in Europe', as one of the characters puts it. He is assisted in his crimes by a surrogate family of queer<sup>2</sup> bodies: a haggard old woman and her two sons, a malicious dwarf and a hulking bestial brute who rapes (at least that's what the direction less than subtly implies) the comatose brides at night. Dr Lorenz is contemptuous of his 'little family', as he puts it. He regularly beats the brute, and when the brute's mother asks him 'Why do you beat my son so hard?', he replies 'because he's a beast, an animal! Some day I'll have to destroy him!' Dr Lorenz here replicates the power relations he experiences: he subjects his 'little family' to the same humiliations, dehumanising practices and discourse that bound him as subhuman, other and already dead. He also inadvertently forecasts his own fate: some day he'll be destroyed by a society that can no longer tolerate his attempts at sustaining the pretence of a meaningful, socially bonded existence within the community.

This pretence is predicated on the maintenance of a seemingly normal existence within a seemingly normal space. Like the elderly who live alone in their

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<sup>2</sup>I use queer here in Halberstam's sense of alternative or subversive compared to the ideal dictated by normative discourse (2005).

final months, they communicate towards society their ability to function by maintaining an ordered living space, or by barring entrance to that living space and sequestering themselves within a space that allows them respite from the relentless demand for normality beyond it (Seale, 1998: 152-7). Seale shows how those living alone in the final months of their lives, as debilitating diseases increasingly prevent them from fulfilling the tasks necessary for the successful maintenance of the social bond, respond to society's demand that they remain self-sufficient. Some respond by exaggerated efforts at keeping up appearances, cleaning, tidying, washing and in general keeping their living quarters ordered even as their bodies fail. Others retreat into utter solitude, refusing the outside world access to a household that is increasingly falling apart. A third response, Seale notes, is to lose oneself in an obsession, channelling increasingly desperate energies into the completion of one final project, however odd it may be (whether a jigsaw puzzle, an embroidery, a stamp collection, or indeed proving the theory of evolution), in order to assert, if to no-one else than oneself, that one retains the ability to carry out complex tasks. All three strategies can be found in various exilic bodies in Hollywood films of the 1930s-50s. Dr Lorenz for instance, to stay with *The Corpse Vanishes*, lives in a creepy mansion where his privacy is jealously guarded by his surrogate queer family. When an inquisitive journalist (Luana Walters) who has intuited that Dr Lorenz is behind the mysterious disappearance of the brides' corpses comes snooping, Dr Lorenz's driver and dwarf surrogate son refuse to take her to the mansion from the train station. Access to Dr Lorenz's house, with its secret corridors and passageways, hidden cellar and underground operating theatre, would confirm to a fully-functioning member of the community the doctor's dangerous existence beyond the human loop. Similarly, *The Raven*'s Dr Vollin lives in carefully guarded isolation in a sprawling villa with a sinister torture dungeon, rooms that move, secret trapdoors that inexplicably connect seemingly remote rooms in the house, rooms whose walls collapse and heavily reinforced windows and doors that can be hermetically locked, keeping out the uninvited, and trapping within those who have learned too much about Dr Vollin's lair. Like Dr Vollin, *Mad Love*'s Dr Gogol lives in jealously protected privacy. Only his mad, alcoholic house-keeper is allowed access to his living quarters, where his 'Galatea', a wax-works of a Grand Guignol actress becomes the literal object of his increasingly unsettling desires. In *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, Lugosi's Dr Mirakle obsessively pursues his goal of proving the theory of evolution, and even as the police break down his laboratory's doors he tries to complete his experiment, screaming 'hold them off till I'm ready' at his servant János, showing that attainment of knowledge is the final thing that truly matters to him, having devoted all his resources and energies to one final all-important project.

The common thread through these different strategies of maintaining a pretence of the social bond is the use of the construction of space to communicate

towards the host nation a safe and secure identity and an ability to function in keeping with society's requirements. The sturdy doors and thick walls of Dr Mirakle's lair, the eclectic, yet sterile space of Dr Vollin's home, the charitable hospital with its emphasis on cleanliness and the scientific restoration of order to diseased bodies that forms the bulk of Dr Gogol's house and the unapproachable, secure mansion of Dr Lorenz all communicate towards the outside a wholeness that is not there, a safeness and usefulness that is denied by society.

The exilic lair, then, operates like Lefebvre's representational space (1991: 40) in the sense that the exilic lair, by virtue of being the space the exile lives in, expresses the character, the history, the influences, fears and desires of the exile. It is, however, also a representation of space. It is a carefully constructed, thoughtfully designed space that is intended to communicate certain ideas to the observer and/or user. As Lefebvre notes, the representational space rarely forms a 'coherent whole' with the representation of that space (*ibid.*). In other words, the conceived (representation of space), the ideology that space is designed to convey may not overlap with the lived or representational space. The producer of the space may intend to communicate a certain ideology or concept through the space conceived, but the lived space, or the manner in which the body interacts with space, or the way in which the space operates on and around the body, may be in conflict. The gingerbread house of the fairytale is a good case in point: as a representation of space it suggests nurture and safety; as a representational or lived space, it is a space of death and horrors.

This analysis of the exilic space is further complicated by the duality of its representation: it can be read both as a representation by the exile, and as a representation of the host's idea of and discourse surrounding the exile. It is this latter, space as part of normative discourse, with which this enquiry is particularly concerned. In other words, what I aim to unpick here in some detail is the way in which the exilic experience is represented by the normative discourse of the host, how normative discourse frames, positions and constructs the exile in space. In what follows, then, I focus on representations within Hollywood's normative discourse of the representational spaces of exilic bodies in order to unpick how Hollywood imagines the exilic other through the spaces it imagines the exilic other as inhabiting.

### **The exile moves in: *Dracula* and the exilic space *par excellence***

In many ways, *Dracula* is a proto-text in Hollywood's filmic discourse on the exile. It is the earliest film in the corpus, as well as the film that most clearly and least equivocally expresses the idea of the exile as already dead. It is the film

in which Van Helsing (Edward Van Sloan) announces that Dracula is ‘Nosferatu, the Living Dead’, explicitly spelling out the host nation’s view of the already deadness of the exile.<sup>3</sup> It is also the film in which the exilic space is most vividly described, and its transposition on to the landscape of the host nation is given special emphasis. From this film on, the exilic lair is already established within the space of the host nation in Hollywood films about exilic bodies. For this reason it is important to devote some considerable space here to an analysis of the representation of the exilic space in *Dracula* and to point out the ways in which the film dictates subsequent representations of the exilic lair.

As Renfield’s (Dwight Frye) stagecoach lurches comically towards the Borgo Pass in Tod Browning’s *Dracula* an eerie and oppressive atmosphere settles over the coach and its passengers. The locals’ conversation turns towards the approaching nightfall and their anxiety seems to infect Renfield. Dracula looms large: absent (or at least unseen), his name unspoken, he dominates the land. The tone of this opening scene is tainted by the funereal aura of the undead Count. The locals at the Hungarian inn chatter excitedly and cross themselves with relief as the stagecoach disgorges its passengers, thankful that they reached the safety of the inn before twilight on Walpurgis Night, when daemons roam the land freely. The first minutes of the film establish Dracula as a character that will dominate the action, whether physically present or not. It is clear that Dracula, and fear of what he might do, determines the daily rituals of the community: they beg Renfield to follow their example and spend the night in the safety of the inn, rather than travel on during the night. They are dismayed to learn that he insists on continuing on his journey towards a midnight rendezvous with Dracula, and crossing themselves incessantly they retreat to the inn, its physical defensive structures reinforced by garlic, crucifixes and wolf-bane. Although dead, the Count is very much alive from the point of view of those whose lives are spent quaking with fear in the shadow of his lair.

Renfield carries on towards the Borgo Pass and his undead host’s home. The countryside through which Dracula’s carriage speeds is filled with terrifying noises, turkey-sized bats and all the portents of evil. It is then a fitting environment in which to find Dracula’s castle: a vast, crumbling monster of a building. It is wholly in keeping with its environment. It seems to project out of the rock around it, its turrets echoing the poplars that reach toward the sky around it. The surrounding countryside seems to continue within: its cavernous hall is overrun by cobwebs. It teems with animal embodiments of death and decay: rats, spiders, armadillos and bats. A vast, curving staircase reaches up into the gloom above. The

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<sup>3</sup>It is important to note that while Van Helsing is supposed to be Dutch, his is not an exilic body. Not only is he played by Edward Van Sloan, an American actor, he is also shown as a useful member of society (one that defeats the evil other), and while he may be said to masquerade as an exilic body, does not share the vast majority of the traits of the exilic body I discuss in this thesis.



Figure 3.1: Dracula bids Renfield (Dwight Frye) welcome to his humble abode.

whole space seems suffused with evil (figs. 3.1 and 3.2). Renfield appears all the more out of place in his proper English suit, with his forced smile faltering on his effeminate face. As if out of nowhere, the Count appears on the staircase, bearing a candle and dressed in immaculate, Continental evening dress. Where Renfield is utterly alien to his surroundings, Dracula seems (and, of course, is) at home. The strange cadence of his speech, the excessively formal attire, the arrhythmic movement of his body are fully in keeping with the space he inhabits.

Dracula greets Renfield and leads the way, up the stairs, towards the room he has prepared for his guest. Renfield, momentarily becalmed by his host's cordial greetings, is terrified afresh as he sees Dracula pass through a thick curtain of cobwebs without disrupting a single thread. Renfield gingerly cuts a swathe through the web with his walking stick and follows his host. Clearly, Dracula is master of his domain: he moves as he pleases, no physical obstacles can limit him within his own space. Renfield, however, cannot navigate effortlessly the space of the other. It is perhaps this realization, this temporary immersion in a space he does not understand that later unhinges his mind. His madness is a minor echo of Dracula's profound otherness in exile.

Dracula leads Renfield into a large room. A roaring fire crackles in the ancient fireplace. A bed is made and dinner, laid out on a small table in the middle of the room, awaits Renfield. The room, with its cheerful fire, the dinner on the table, the little touches that make it seem more welcoming, is in stark contrast with the rest



Figure 3.2: Home sweet home. Dracula's castle with its decidedly beastly décor.

of the building. As if Count Dracula, anticipating the trauma of displacement, had prepared a space for his English visitor that would lessen the impact on Renfield of his temporary otherness in a strange land. It is a gesture that is not afforded the Count once he has relocated to England. This room, then, is a sanctuary for the visitor who is constructed by local discourse as alien and other. The room, in this sense, acts as a counterpart of the exilic lair. Its effect on Renfield is immediately evident: he is becalmed by his surroundings, his initial nervousness is gone. This renewed confidence is, however, misplaced. When he accidentally pricks his finger with a paperclip and draws blood, Dracula, suddenly bloodthirsty, moves in. As Renfield sucks the blood from the tiny wound, the crucifix he had been given by one of the peasant women at the inn dangles loose from his neck. Dracula recoils in horror. Renfield, misreading the Count's reaction for squeamishness at the sight of blood—a fatally silly mistake that suggests his inability to read his alien environment—assures Dracula that it is but a small scratch. The friendly atmosphere of the room might give Renfield some comfort, but he remains an alien in a strange land and is clearly not equipped with the knowledge necessary to navigate it. This inability to navigate the space of the other is a key concern of the film, and is explored more fully in the part of the film dealing with the Count's move to England.

The cosy room in which Dracula interviews Renfield about the arrangements for the leasing of Carfax Abbey reveals much about Dracula, and the way the

normative discourse of the host nation imagines the exile. In order to unpick this more fully, I turn to Baudrillard's *The System of Objects* (2005) and its analysis of interior design. Baudrillard argues (2005: 77-81) that modern interior design is based on the correct admixture of the old and the new. He suggests that new, functional furniture communicates the usefulness and productivity of the house dweller, achieving meaning in the productive interaction between owner and object (ibid.: 17-20). These modern, functional objects then point to the future. Antique furniture, pieces of art and decorative items, Baudrillard goes on to argue, however, serve to ground the individual in a sense of the past (ibid.: 77-81). These are designed to communicate one's roots, one's established, firm and secure identity to both the visitor/outside and oneself. It is in the careful and balanced mixture of the two, of the functional and forward-pointing and the decorative and genealogical that a safe and sound identity emerges. Applying these ideas to the interior design of the exilic lair underpins other elements of my analysis of the exile in Hollywood cinema.

To return to Renfield as the 'spider spins its webs for the unwary fly' (Lugosi as Dracula), the room is furnished sparsely, chiefly with heavy wooden items: a coffin-like escritoire, a squat dining table decorated with elaborate carved motifs, a heavy chair by the fireplace and a large bed. There are also suits of armour, heavy draperies and various candelabra teeming with tall, elegant candles. The table is laid with an ancient silver dinner set. Even the wine on the table is 'very old wine'. The furnishings then lean towards functional objects, albeit outmoded, antiquated ones. Paradoxically, however, these functional objects have no function for Dracula, apart from communicating a safety and humanity that is not there. And indeed, for a while, Renfield is taken in by the room's apparent cheerfulness. The viewer, however, knows that the Count does not use this room to sleep in: he sleeps deep in the bowels of his Castle, in a coffin. The part of the Castle inhabited by the Count is unfurnished. There are no attempts at communicating safety or humanity there. The cheerful and cosy room then (which is like a vast hangar compared to the living spaces in, for instance, Dr Seward's house later in the film) is part of a performance of respectability, of the existence of a firm social bond that fixes Dracula as knowable and safe. The rest of the Castle, as indeed the Count's English residence Carfax Abbey, put the lie to this apparent conformity. Elsewhere, the Castle is populated by nothing but signifiers of filth, putrefaction, decay; in brief: death.

Once relocated to England, it is the Count's turn to face his inability to navigate a space that is alien to him, a space constructed in keeping with a normative discourse that excludes him. It may be tempting to read the Count's ability to fly in the shape of a bat or to take the form of a wolf as a sign of his boundless power, but when considered in light of the dehumanising discursive practices of those around him, the Count's nocturnal movements in animal form suggest an attempt

to subvert a space that is not amenable to him. Further, it would be misguided to attribute Dracula's eccentric manner of navigating the space of the host nation to any great power that might reside in him, when in every respect—bar the original decision to relocate to England—he lacks agency: even the introduction to Dr Seward and his company, which he engineers, is only possible through the usherette he hypnotises, for he himself could not effect it. In every other development, Dracula is a passive sufferer of his hosts' actions directed towards his exclusion and final extermination. Where members of the host nation come and go as they please—even Renfield, although he does need to be guided by his simpleminded keeper, Martin—Dracula cannot. He cannot venture outside his lair during the day: the conventional period of social interaction is barred from him in another iteration of the broken social bond. Like those inflicted with a severely 'leaking, decaying body' (Seale, 1998: 149), he is shunned by a society that reminds him at every turn of his otherness. He cannot set foot outside his lair during the day, and even when he is free to move around at night, he cannot move about like others. He enters the Seward household by a variety of means, but never by the front door: he lands on the balcony in the shape of a bat, he enters by the French windows and side doors, despite the fact that, at least at first, he is a tolerated, if not welcome, guest. In other words, just as Renfield was unable to move freely within Castle Dracula (for instance he could not pass through the cobwebs without disturbing them, unlike his host), Dracula in exile cannot move freely within the space of his hosts.

His own residence, Carfax Abbey—which he leases although he clearly has the funds to buy it, thereby suggesting a temporariness of residence at odds with his stated intention of relocating to England—is a building utterly isolated from its surroundings. Even more significantly, it is a building that we never see from the outside. Thus, the exilic lair is one that is not situated within the space of the host nation, underlining the isolation of the exile and the host society's rejection. On the inside, Carfax Abbey is a clone of Castle Dracula. Its front door opens onto a cavernous hall dominated by a sweeping, steep staircase. It is blanketed in dust, its walls crumbling, its interior infested with a plethora of repugnant vermin. It is home away from home for the exile, as mediated through the normative discourse of the host nation. Dracula sleeps during the daylight hours in a sort of catacombs below the Abbey. That his hiding place should so resemble catacombs is quite significant in itself, bringing to mind as it does early Christian burial sites from the period when Christianity was still a persecuted minority religion. A catacombs means both hiding place and burial site: a space of concealment of oneself from persecutors, and a space of concealment of the awful reality of death through a representation of space that promises eternal life after death. The space Dracula is represented as inhabiting in exile, then, constructs him as a minority, 'one of them' amongst 'us', one whose identity is predicated upon a different system of



Figure 3.3: The intruding exilic other (Béla Lugosi as Dracula) is unseen in the mirror as he is erased from the patriarchal exchange between father and daughter in *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931).

values, morals and beliefs than those of the dominant majority who shape normative discourse and use normative discourse to shape the community. Further, the catacombs, by pointing to a finite and closed period in the history of Christianity also bind Dracula and his time in England as finite and closed-off, a cul-de-sac. Again, to rely on Baudrillard's critique of interior design, the interior of Carfax Abbey can be read as a space that, by virtue of its reference to a time (and space) firmly rooted in the ancient past but without a referent in the present, let alone the future, contributes to the construction of the Count as being of that past, and therefore 'already dead'.

The scene, where Dracula first meets Van Helsing, illustrates quite succinctly the way in which normative discourse constructs the exile as not present within the space of the host nation. A series of shots show the Count in the company of Mina and her father in the Seward mansion. Mina and Dr Seward are clearly reflected in the mirror, as he puts pressure on her to leave the room, as recommended by Van Helsing upon hearing the maid announce the Count. The Count, however, cannot be seen. The shot explicitly denies the Count's materiality and corporeality, while serving as a visual confirmation of his exclusion from the exchange between father and daughter (fig. 3.3). The shot's implications, when considered in light of Butler's *Bodies that Matter* (1993), reach far further. A man

who cannot cast a reflection in the mirror cannot be said to possess a material body. Matter is necessary for the absorption and reflection of light. Thus the absence of reflection indicates an absence of matter. In terms of representation, by quite literally erasing the Count's body from the situation, the shot suggests that the Count is physically immaterial, and cannot be said to be present in the space of his host. Where the Count was felt to be all-pervasive and omnipresent in the opening sequence of the film, capable of astonishing feats of strength (both mental and physical) here his presence, and by extension his existence is categorically denied. In short, the normative discourse of the host nation—both that of the filmic characters and the filmic narrative itself—acts to erase from society the body of the exile, the other body amongst us. This elision of the other, a denial of the existence, or at least presence, of difference is essential for the construction of the illusion of a homogenous national body (Hayward, 2000: 98). At the same time, however, the Count's very presence, even in immaterial, spectral form, indicates the gaps and fissures on the hegemonic body of the nation: normative discourse inevitably refers to the other by denying his existence (Butler, 1993: 39). It is here that Van Helsing's definition of Nosferatu, as the living dead, gains significance: Dracula is that paradoxical creature, an other body, whose simultaneous absence and presence within the space of the host nation points up the vulnerability of the imagined homogeneity of the nation.

Aspects of the treatment of the exilic space in *Dracula* inform Hollywood representations of spaces occupied by exilic bodies. 'Occupy' is a particularly apt word, here, I feel. Exilic bodies do not inhabit a space, precisely because they are excluded and prevented from participating in communal life. Their presence in the space of the host nation is at best barely tolerated, but more often illicit, ignored and ill-fated. In the next part of this chapter I explore representations of other exilic spaces, from Otto Becker's (Conrad Veidt in *Nazi Agent*) stamp shop, and his twin brother's Art Deco apartment, through Dr Vollin's (Lugosi in *The Raven*) labyrinthine mansion to the temporary residences, the ephemeral spaces of refuge (caves, sewers, transient hotels) and solid spaces of containment (jail cells, most often) between which Lorre's characters usually flit.

## Exilic interior design

After *Dracula*, films dealing with the trauma of exile tend not to start by locating the exilic body in the homeland. The move to a host nation usually takes place before the narrative begins. *The Face Behind the Mask*, for instance, begins on board the ship that carries the enthusiastic immigrant Johnny Szabó (Peter Lorre) to a land of opportunity and freedom. Most other films in the canon start at an even later point: the exile is already installed, to lesser or greater extent, in the host

nation. *Nazi Agent*'s Otto Becker (Conrad Veidt) runs an established collectible stamp and book shop. Dr Vollin (Lugosi), the tortured torturer of *The Raven*, is an established and respected—if distrusted—surgeon, whose foreign origins are never alluded to, despite his thick accent. What they all share is a problematic position, both spatial and social, within, but more often on the outskirts of the host nation. This part of the current chapter focuses on the ways in which the stereotype of the exilic space set down in *Dracula* is used in subsequent Hollywood narratives of exilic dislocation and rupture.

First I consider *Nazi Agent* (Jules Dassin, 1942) and its representation of the exilic space. I start here because, by virtue of its representation of the rupture of displacement in the form of competing exiled twins, the film offers not one, but two exilic spaces that are both diametrically opposed, yet connate, like two faces of the *same* coin. Both exilic spaces speak of apartness, a failure to fit in, in spite of vast efforts to do just that (albeit one's attempt to fit in is a calculated ruse to provide cover for his clandestine activities as head of Nazi Germany's sabotage network, while the other's is rooted in a denial of his heritage as part of his rejection of Nazism, and with it, all things German). This film then, is an ideal starting point for an analysis of Hollywood representations of the exilic space in the post-*Dracula* era, that is, in a time when Hollywood was systematically engaging with the complex theme of immigration and exile and its effects upon exile and host nation without necessarily or explicitly putting displacement and relocation at the heart of the narrative.<sup>4</sup>

In *Nazi Agent* twins Otto Becker and Hugo von Detner (both Conrad Veidt) live in very different environments. One, mild-mannered philatelist Otto Becker lives in a small flat above his stamp shop, while the other, imperious Nazi high consul Hugo von Detner lives in a large, luxurious and very modern apartment in a New York hotel. The different environments tell us as much about the conflict between the twins as does their dialogue, and are in some ways, far more revealing.

Otto Becker's stamp and book dealership and his flat above at 112 South, 18<sup>th</sup> Street in a quiet New York suburb, is furnished well, but modestly, with book cases, leather-upholstered chairs and framed stamps on the walls. The only things that hint at Otto Becker's more distinguished origins are a landscape painting in a heavy gilt frame and an ornate ormolu clock on the mantelpiece. The one specific reference to Germany is a beer stein, displayed next to the clock. It could be read as a nostalgic object, a physical connection with the abandoned homeland. As a vessel for beer, it could be understood as a source of comfort, both

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<sup>4</sup>*Nazi Agent* is ostensibly about attempted Nazi sabotage of America's war efforts, not the effects of displacement on the exile. However, by spinning its story around German twins in the USA, it inevitably addresses issues surrounding displacement, exile and the rupture brought about by these.

physical and spiritual: alcohol numbs the pain of displacement, while beer itself is so closely associated with the German character that it could be said to stand in for German blood itself. There are, however, a few problems with this reading of the significance of the beer stein. First, Otto Becker does not drink alcohol (early on it is established that Otto has always preferred a glass of milk to alcohol, while Hugo drinks brandy), therefore it would be a leap of logic to assume that he harbours nostalgic feelings about beer, or even about the stein itself. Second, Otto has completely renounced his German nationality and identity: when told by Hugo Detner that he would serve his country (meaning Germany), Otto swears to do just that and go to the *American* authorities and warn them about Hugo's plans and his subversive political goals. The beer stein then is no more (or indeed less) significant in this context than a souvenir, an object of some nostalgic meaning, but primarily invested with the memory of a place visited and left, of having-been-there-and-left. In other words, like the stamps, it becomes an eternal reminder of displacement itself. It is not the object that has greater meaning, but Otto Becker's relationship with what it is a reminder of: displacement from a homeland to which he cannot return, except to die.

Otto's home then is a quietly furnished suburban home. A cosy house that doubles as small business and private home. That it should be both shows Otto's purpose and desire for permanent settlement in this environment. In its overall effect, the house brings to mind ideas associated with the old-fashioned values of small-town America: homeliness, sobriety, modesty. Electrical appliances are noticeably absent. There is a telephone in the book shop, but we do not see any other electrical appliance in the house. There is no gramophone, not even a radio. All this points to an interior arrangement that speaks of roots and belonging. It is a backward-looking interior, in terms of its emphasis on traditional items of furniture that seek to anchor the occupant in a sense of the past, while the complete absence of modern objects, ones that gain significance in their functionality, suggests that this attempted graft onto the body of the host nation is doomed to fail. In terms of the interior design of his home, there is no indication of productivity, of usefulness to the nation, or of a sense of future. And indeed, he is primarily useful from the point of view of the sabotage ring. Because to the eyes of fellow-foreigners Otto seems to have blended seamlessly into his environment, his stamp shop appears to be a perfect cover for their clandestine post office. Hugo, being an exile himself, fails to notice the inaccuracies, the 'un-American' elements (the absence of indicators of modernity and productivity) in the fabric of Otto's carefully constructed American home.

The difference between Otto and Hugo's attitude towards stamps goes to the very heart of the difference between the two in terms of their strategy of survival

in the host nation.<sup>5</sup> For Otto the stamps, like the beer stein, signify displacement itself. By virtue of their function (money tendered for delivery, often across borders and even oceans), stamps speak of journeys, and more specifically of journeys from which there is no return. They may be nostalgic objects that afford a fleeting connection with a place left behind, but for Otto, who collects them irrespective of their country of origin or destination, their significance lies in the fact that they embody the memory of displacement. For Hugo, however, stamps have a very specific function, but one that is still in conflict with their intended use. They are a means of secret communication for the Nazi sabotage ring. They therefore have arbitrarily assigned, specific meanings. The stamps then, for Hugo, are iconic, their meaning completely unconnected to their original function and significance. Instead of suggesting the fact of displacement, the different stamps mean different things, all of them fundamental to the operation of a sabotage ring. It follows then, that where Otto seeks to communicate a rootedness in America, a commitment to the American way of life in spite of lacking those very roots that he tries to represent through the objects with which he surrounds himself, Hugo uses his environment in a subversive way. And indeed, Hugo's purpose is to subvert the established order of the host nation in order to destabilize its war effort, and ultimately remake it in the image of the idealised homeland, in this instance, the Third Reich. This attempt to subvert and remake is reflected in Hugo's functional and luxurious hotel apartment, and his similarly modern and opulent office in the German Consulate.

Hugo's residence in the Park Regent Hotel in New York is a spacious and luxurious apartment, furnished with settees, armchairs and low tables, a grand piano, prints and paintings on the wall and a plaster reproduction of the head of Venus de Milo. The apartment has a large number of built-in closets and a walk-in wardrobe. The bathroom opens from a vestibule that seems to communicate a dryness and softness (fluffy carpets, soft furnishings) that is inherently in conflict with the bodily functions that are performed in a bathroom. The apartment then is a representation of space that aims to communicate something at odds with the way it is lived. Its functional spaces are hidden or camouflaged, while its conceived spaces masquerade as functional ones. The bathroom, as I noted above, is hidden, and its decoration and arrangement go against the ablutions that it is home to. By contrast, the sitting room, by designation a functional space, is a representation of space. What I mean by that is that it is a space designed to communicate Hugo's standing, power and honour, and this is its chief purpose, rather than functioning as a 'space to sit'. This is mirrored by Hugo von Detner's secret goal of bringing America to its knees through sabotage and espionage. He

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<sup>5</sup>I discuss the stamps here because, mounted and framed, they form an integral part of the interior décor of Otto Becker's home.

is a man who is presenting a certain façade to the outside world, but his real motives are hidden beneath a mask of respectability. He even verbalises this: when confronted with Otto's reluctance to hand over control of his stamp shop to the Nazi sabotage ring, Hugo threatens to unmask him as an illegal immigrant. Otto vows to go to the police, but backs down when, sneering, Hugo asks him who they would more likely believe, an illegal immigrant who acquired US nationality with forged papers, or the High Consul of the German Reich? Implied in the question is the admission that he may be in the wrong, but it also suggests a confidence in the credibility of the false image he projects.

The conflict between representation and underlying truth is even more apparent in Hugo's office at the consulate. The office is furnished in a style that evokes a European modernist architecture. An elegant, elongated wooden suite with chequered upholstery is arranged under the window. The impressive office desk, which combines a chromed metal frame with heavy wooden surfaces is a typical Bauhaus item. An African-inspired female bust on a low coffee table in another corner further contributes to the overall atmosphere of the room. Thinking about the interior design in the spirit of Baudrillard (2005) there is a careful admixture here of the old and the new, of warm and cold materials and textures, of function and decoration (15-22; 77-81). This calculated alternation of opposing textures and materials—warm wood with cold metal, geometric design with soft fabric—creates an atmosphere of productivity, industry and usefulness. However, by virtue of the fundamental shallowness of this calculated atmosphere-production, the interior design also points to the underlying hollowness of the whole construct. After all, this is the headquarters, the command centre of the Third Reich's sabotage ring in the US. Its chief aim is to mislead, to communicate propriety and respectability, while its true function of sabotage and subversion is closely bound up with issues of power. It is this power that the atmosphere of authenticity, of historicalness and warmth seeks to disguise. In contrast with, say a hospital corridor, with its sterile surfaces, cold colours and functional design, a setting designed to communicate a certain economy of power within which patients are expected to submit completely to the will of their doctors (Foucault, 1979: 138; 144), the office, with its warmth and softness, seeks to convey an idea of friendliness, of approachability and compassion. It then follows that in an environment where the alternation of opposing qualities contribute to the emergence of a sense of warmth or homeliness without any real basis in substance, the façade presented by the actor within is also put to the lie. Just as the African-inspired bust is an empty signifier, an abstract sign that merely alludes to authenticity and historicalness through its plundering of 'primitive' cultures, although a result of modern means of mechanical reproduction (Benjamin, 2004: 791-800), so too the actor within this space is the product of a collection, an assemblage of insubstantial, and unsubstantiated signs of wholeness and wholesomeness.

The comparison of the spaces occupied and produced by the twins in *Nazi Agent* offers us a further insight into the mind of the exile, as imagined by Hollywood. Otto, the anti-Nazi brother has furnished his home in a style that expresses his desire to fit in to American culture. He attempts to assert the existence of the social bond between himself and those around him. He presents himself as a part of the fabric of the host nation through what he imagines to be a typical American suburban home. However, the effect he achieves also brings to mind another aesthetic and ideological point of reference: the *Heimat*. The *Heimat* is the German ideal of the homeland, a concept co-opted by Hitler and the Nazi regime, and at the heart of the Nazis' vision of a happy Aryan people living on a bountiful land unsullied by difference or dissent. Inadvertently, then, through the rejection of modernity (electrical appliances, 'decadent' modern art, etc.) and through the fetish objects displayed around the house (the beer stein with its reference to Bavaria and the Beer Hall Putsch; the landscape painting; and the stamps, categorised and valued according to their place and time of origin rather than destination) Otto evokes a sense of the ideal of the *Heimat*. He does so precisely because he is attempting to recreate, without any real understanding, the image he imagines Americans want him to project as a safe and bonded member of society. However, as I explained in Chapter 2, Otto's *savoir* of elsewhere (or a lifetime's learning accumulated prior to displacement) does not equip him with the necessary knowledge or *connaissance* (the ability to extrapolate on the basis of unknowns encountered in a specific context) to tackle the various problems and tasks he faces in a new environment. He then attempts to construct a domestic space that communicates a fundamentally American concept of homeliness and modest propriety, but, relying on a *savoir* of his *Heimat*, he inadvertently produces something that is every bit as compliant with the Nazi ideal of the home, as it is with the American ideal. There is then a slippage between the expected and actual output of the system of signification that is the exilic lair. And this slippage goes to the very heart of the never-ending trauma of displacement: however hard he may try to communicate belonging, safeness and a socially bonded identity, the exile, by virtue of his insufficient understanding of the host nation, will always fall short of the standard.

Similarly, Hugo's apartment and office at the Consulate are both a convincing representation of his Germanness, and an unintentional revelation of the underlying contradiction between the representational space and the representation of that space (Lefebvre, 1991: 40). The style adopted, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century modernist aesthetic, may be quintessentially German, but, by virtue of the exodus of the Bauhaus collective through the late 1920s and early 1930s to the US, is also an aesthetic system typical of New York architecture and interior design of the period (Betts, 2004: 13). In other words, just as Otto's imagination of the American ideal both falls short of that ideal and evokes the spirit of the very regime he

has renounced, Hugo's environment seems authentic, both in terms of his roots, and in terms of the host nation whose suspicions he seeks to allay by presenting an acceptable façade. If anything, Hugo is more successful than Otto in producing a space that is unproblematic to the American eye and, by extension, far less compliant with the aesthetic and ideological tenets of his homeland. Again, as with Otto, there is a slippage between what the apartment and the office's interior designs aim to convey, and what they ultimately reveal of their user. By virtue of this modernist architecture's combination of an aesthetic of functionality, of the atmospheric alternation of cold and warm materials (predominantly wood and metal) with an aesthetic of historicalness (Baudrillard, 2005: 77), the interiors of Hugo's working and living quarters point to a gap between Hugo's stated ideology and actual practice. He is a man who is prepared to murder his own twin brother in order to further his political cause. He is prepared to sacrifice those nearest and dearest to him, and with it, accepts the consequences of severing family ties, of eradicating (in the sense of destroying the roots of) his own identity. Yet his environment speaks of an aspiration to belong, of a desire for authenticity and a rootedness in history. Of course, this can only be illusory, since he has no roots. This is clearly illustrated by the decorative objects on prominent display: the plaster reproduction of the head of Venus de Milo in his apartment, and the African-style bust in his office. Unlike the stamps on display in Otto's house, the two busts do not fetishize origin. They are reproductions, and therefore do no more than allude to historicalness, by invoking that which they refer to, the Venus de Milo and an African mask. They are then objects without substance, signs without referents. Instead, they mirror Hugo's own position: they reflect back to the observer a surface without underlying substance. They also embody Hugo's desire for irradication (in the sense of becoming rooted), while putting the lie to the image Hugo projects of himself. Further, they perhaps suggest that the masquerade of propriety is difficult to maintain for Hugo. Indeed, by putting on display objects that mirror his own deception, Hugo is expressing the torment of his displacement: like the busts, he is an object of scrutiny, and like the busts, he projects a false image. This may be why the busts are of women. In this process of projecting an image without substance, or in Butler's analysis, of being an inscriptional surface without corporeality (1993: 39), he sees himself mirrored in the bodiless copies of a male artist's imagination of an ideal of the feminine or 'other'.

Ultimately, it is Otto who puts into words Hugo's profound lack of substance: his work done, the sabotage ring dismantled, Otto—for a moment shedding the mask of Hugo and reverting to his own self—laments 'I feel completely empty'. This is a telling paradox. In impersonating his twin brother whom he had killed, Otto both becomes the productive member of society that may deserve the status of fully integrated member of society, and has, once and for all, undone all his

work to set down roots in a new home. He has attained the ultimate exilic status of Nosferatu: both present in the space of the host nation, and absent, an impossible presence that cannot be tolerated. And indeed, as he walks towards the ocean liner that will carry him back to Hitler's Germany and the ultimate punishment for Hugo's failure (and away from the possibility of a reward for Otto's success), the crowds heckle and abuse him. He is then empty, for the body that the host nation perceives does not correspond with the body that he is. And he becomes complete as he departs. The ship slowly sails past Ellis Island, the institutional centre where the rupture of exile is driven home by the immigration officers who catalogue, and often rename, the new arrivals. In a reversal of the process, the rupture of displacement is mended as he slowly drifts away from America on board the liner bound for Europe, where a new rupture awaits.

## The exilic lair as space of relief

We have seen in the first part of this current chapter how exilic spaces tend to operate as sites for the performance of respectability, while inevitably undermining the illusion of respectability for which they are designed to provide a background. Otto Becker's modest bookshop said as much about his modest ambition to become recognised as a member of the community, as it said about his roots (albeit severed ones) in German culture. Similarly, Hugo von Detner's apartment and office communicated the ideas of cosmopolitanism and humanity that he sought to project, while undermining these ideals through an interior design that belied their fundamental lack of substance. In this next part of the present chapter I explore exilic lairs where the site of the performance of respectability is complemented by a hidden space where the exile finds temporary relief from the relentless pressures of conforming to an impossible set of standards. This complementary space, or backstage, if you like, is generally a private and jealously guarded space above or below the representation of space that is designed to allay the fears of members of the host nation. I explore my arguments surrounding this type of exilic lair through a close reading of *The Raven* (Lew Landers, 1935) and the home of Dr Vollin (Béla Lugosi).

In *The Raven* we are introduced to Dr Vollin as he sits behind a large desk in his study, ponderously reciting Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven* to a clearly uncomfortable man. It is Dr Vollin's voice we hear first, while the camera lingers on the shadow cast by a stuffed raven. As the camera slowly pans to reveal the doctor, we are invited to observe his haughty profile. The accented voice then precedes the image of the man, predetermining the viewer's assumptions of the character: foreign first, haughty second. The visitor is an official of a museum, and has come to see Dr Vollin about his famous collection of Poe memorabilia. While Dr Vollin

is happy to discuss his collection, he is not prepared to show his guest the more exceptional items in his private Poe museum. These include a working model of the ‘Pit and the Pendulum’, an elaborate torture device, where a swinging blade descends slowly towards a gurney and the helpless victim strapped to it. Having boasted about this and the other more outré pieces in his collection, Dr Vollin claims fatigue and unceremoniously sends the visitor on his way. Already we can see how Dr Vollin’s study, situated on the ground floor of his mansion, is part of his stage, this site for the performance of respectability, where he appears as eminent brain surgeon, brilliant medical researcher and amateur of Poe and Poe’s macabre imagination. The study, however, has a hidden door behind one of the bookcases, operated by a switch in the drawer of Dr Vollin’s desk. Behind this door, in a vast underground facility, lies Dr Vollin’s exilic lair. It includes an operating theatre, a torture dungeon and various machines that control the different secret passageways, moving rooms and security equipment of the mansion. In the following, I explore the significance of this space as a counterpoint to the areas of the mansion open to the public.

Where Dr Vollin’s study is furnished in a way that seems appropriate for the workspace of a brilliant but reclusive man of science, his underground dungeon suggests a reclusion rooted in an inability to maintain the façade of normality for long. In other words, Dr Vollin needs the torture chamber, his underground operating theatre to escape the pressures of keeping up a seemingly acceptable existence within the human loop. In his study, Dr Vollin is the charming if imperious retired brain surgeon who devotes his time to the study and appreciation of Poe. This love of Poe, I feel, needs further consideration. Poe, a tortured man himself, was the father of American Gothic literature, a man who wrote extensively about the torments of the soul. To Vollin, Poe’s work seems particularly appealing. He seems to relish its macabre themes and lugubrious tone. Rather than experiencing a vicarious torment, Vollin appears genuinely to enjoy Poe’s tales of woe. ‘The Raven is my talisman,’ he tells his guest, the Poe appreciation group’s representative. Death, he later elaborates to Judge Thatcher, father of the woman whose life he saves, does not hold the same significance for him as it does for others. This is a bizarre claim,<sup>6</sup> that perhaps helps us unravel the reasons behind Dr Vollin’s obsession with Poe. What Vollin seems to find in Poe is not vicarious terror, but confirmation that others may share his inner torment. This inner torment perhaps stems from an all-consuming desire for recognition and acceptance. As Vollin explains, Poe was a genius with a will to do something big and constructive for mankind, but someone took his love from him, which turned his mind to

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<sup>6</sup>Albeit a bizarre claim that was, interestingly, a key point even in Hollywood’s publicity strategy surrounding Lugosi’s star persona, which emphasised Lugosi’s leanings towards the metaphysical and the occult. See for instance: Lennig, 2003:188.

torture. The denial of the right to participate in society—through the institution of marriage—caused a rupture in Poe that unhinged his mind, Vollin argues. In short, Vollin claims a fundamental kinship with Poe whose haunting poetry tends to grapple with lost love, and the inability to find solace after a life-changing trauma. Vollin, too, then is in a position of seeking to somehow (re)connect with humanity after a great rupture that forced him into reclusion from society and a haughty refusal to attempt to establish meaningful relationships with others.

Jean Thatcher (Irene Ware) puts on her interpretive dance performance, ‘The Spirit of Poe’ as a special tribute to Dr Vollin, the surgeon who saved her life and restored her ability to dance. Dr Vollin, like so many other exilic bodies in Hollywood cinema, makes the grave error of misreading her gesture of gratitude for a profession of love. Jean Thatcher’s performance, a dance routine accompanied by a man reciting Poe’s *The Raven* in a ponderously hammy tone, suggests to Dr Vollin that she understands his own despair. Her performance of Poe’s bleak fantasy seems to convince Vollin that she has experienced his kind of trauma. After all, her special production of this dance routine involves a mask, an unarticulated expression of deep emotional trauma,<sup>7</sup> and tall candles placed either side of a vast window with a gnarled willow looming outside in a grotesque echo of an altar. Her performance then encapsulates Dr Vollin’s own masquerade (as ‘normal’), unspoken torment of exclusion and his own grotesque worship of Poe. But being the daughter of a loving father and the fiancée of a loving man, Jean Thatcher cannot even begin to contemplate the deep emotional trauma that has drawn an unchanging yet invisible mask over Dr Vollin’s face. It is this trauma, and the mask that Dr Vollin seeks to escape in his underground cellar tribute to Poe. There he allows the mask to slip, as when he entraps Bateman (Boris Karloff), a murderer on the run, in the operating theatre, having altered his facial nerves and muscles to loosen his expression into a face of frozen horror. He then inscribes paralysis, the inability to act, onto the face of a normative body (albeit one in crisis).<sup>8</sup> He laughs at the disfigured Bateman through a small window high up on the wall of the operating theatre. Dr Vollin’s face, creased into a smile of unhinged malevolence as he cackles at the helpless Bateman, reveals the inner torment of a man torn between the desire for acceptance, and revelling in his position outside society, a man who is a ‘law unto myself’.

The dungeon, then, is the complementary space to the site of the performance of respectability consisting of the study and reception room in his mansion. In these rooms there are a large number of old-fashioned portraits on the wall. None

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<sup>7</sup>I refer back here to my discussion of the exile’s inability to speak in Chapter 2 and the sections on *The Thief of Bagdad* and *White Zombie*.

<sup>8</sup>Like Beaumont (Robert Frazer) in *White Zombie*, Bateman is that member of the host nation who strays beyond the norm (in this instance this slipping beyond the norm is serial murder), but finds redemption in the destruction of the monstrous exile.

of the people depicted bear any physical resemblance to the striking-looking doctor. These portraits then seek to communicate an irradication, in the sense of a rootedness, in the human loop that is without basis in fact. The study and the reception room follow the patterns observed by Baudrillard in the bourgeois interior (2005: 30-44), and display a quiet elegance and a restrained luxury through tastefully upholstered armchairs and settees, a cheerfully crackling fire in a large hearth, deep carpets and softly falling curtains that close off and define this bourgeois space. The dungeon, however, houses an embarrassing assortment of interior features that combine to create an eerie aura. The state-of-the-art operating theatre is located in an underground chamber with exposed rock walls in a macabre exaggeration of the atmospheric juxtaposition of warm and cold materials. The metal gurney, the clinical lights jarringly clash with the natural and fundamentally warm quality of the exposed rock in a terrifying and dehumanising admixture of extremes. On the outside of the building the natural stone would suggest an authenticity and security of warmth and rootedness. On the inside, the same feature, in contrast with the medical instruments, takes on an ominous, even frightening quality through an anachronism that works to upset the person who experiences this space.

In the scene where Dr Vollin reveals to Bateman the results of his intervention, he removes the bandages from his patient's face and then quickly leaves the room. Hidden machinery draws a series of curtains aside to reveal a number of mirrors, placed side by side, each framed by a pair of curtains. The mirrors, which in the bourgeois home serve to reflect back to the homeowner his own image, thereby confirming his validity and importance within his own world, here serve to confront Bateman with the inscription upon his face of his diseased soul. This dungeon is, then, a grotesque echo of the representation of space on the ground floor of the mansion: it serves to cause disintegration at large (Halberstam et al, 1995: 15), to destabilize the carefully constructed identities of those who enter, and proffer a macabre subversion of the conventions of interior design that offers the exilic doctor a chance to escape the demands of the relentless normativity above, which have a similar effect on him to the effect the dungeon has on the members of the host nation.

In the film's climactic finale Dr Vollin, with the help of the disfigured Bateman, subjects his houseguests, Judge Thatcher, his daughter Jean, and her fiancé Jerry, to the torments of his Poe-inspired torture devices. These devices themselves work to create a space whose function is fundamentally contrary to the representational space above. By virtue of their function to inflict bodily torment, the torture devices, even as simple features of interior design, serve to create an atmosphere and space that destabilizes the user through the mere threat of abjection, of opening gaps, slicing and rupturing not only bodies, but also identities.

Two of the devices merit further consideration. One is the Pit and the Pendu-

lum. The other is the room with the closing walls. As described above, the Pit and the Pendulum consists of a gurney, to which the victim is strapped, and a slowly lowering, swinging blade that takes exactly fifteen minutes to descend far enough to make contact with flesh. It is Judge Thatcher, the patriarch that Dr Vollin puts in this device. As the blade slowly descends, Dr Vollin, his voice trembling with emotion, shouts: 'I tear torture from myself by torturing you.' Having been told to stay away from Jean, the object of his affections, Dr Vollin takes revenge on Judge Thatcher for excluding him from society. Quite literally, by opposing Dr Vollin's romantic designs on Judge Thatcher's daughter, even declaring them unacceptable (not simply unpractical or undesirable) the judge acts to unpick, or perhaps slice, Dr Vollin's attempted graft on to the body of the host nation. Here, the exile then turns on the patriarch to visit upon his body the torment and rupture of the exile. The mechanism of the torture device mirrors Dr Vollin's own pain: the sense of impending doom, the looming knowledge of the impossibility of integration into the fabric of life within the host nation followed by the very real rupture, the bodily disintegration caused by that knowledge.

The room with the walls that close in is the torture device Dr Vollin uses on Jean and her fiancé Jerry. Once more, his choice of device is telling (by his own account he has built several models). Where he was eager to inflict bodily disintegration on Judge Thatcher, he chooses to subject the woman he once desired and her fiancé to a device that constricts, suffocates and ultimately quashes their bodies. This perhaps tells us, if we follow the argument that as the dungeon works as a grotesque distorting mirror of the representation of space above, the torture devices offer an insight into Dr Vollin's own inner torments, that the torture he has devised for Jean and Jerry reflects his own perception of the space of the host nation. Just as Dracula had found the space of the host nation impossible to navigate in a normal (normative) manner, so too Dr Vollin finds the space outside his exilic lair inhospitable and non-navigable. And indeed, we never see him venture outdoors during the film (although we do see him very briefly in an operating theatre that may be anywhere, and then, again briefly, at Jean Thatcher's dance performance; however, we never see him outdoors, or in transit). He then hopes to make his victims experience the same inability to move in a space that is hostile to them: the walls close in to crush the lovers in a *mise-en-scène* of anxiety, of a mortal fear of destruction engendered by an intangible threat to the integrity of identity. In the end, of course, the lovers and Judge Thatcher escape. They are rescued by Bateman, whose face carries the inscription of a torment that originates in the unhinged fantasy and exilic madness of Dr Vollin, not Bateman's own nature. Ultimately, it is Dr Vollin who is cast into the room with the closing walls and is crushed to death within. He may try to inflict the pain and trauma of exile on the host nation, but, remaining within the host nation, and a space that is constructed by normative discourse, the exile is doomed to failure.

The failure of the exile successfully to subvert the space of the host nation, and with it destabilize the identity of members of the host nation, is encoded into the representation of space the exile conceives to hoodwink his environment, to convince them of his own valid identity as a potential member of society. In Dr Vollin's case, this is the room-that-moves. This room communicates between the first floor of the mansion, and the dungeon below. It does not do so through a door, or a secret passage way, but the entire room moves, as if in a lift-shaft, from the first floor to the dungeon. But the ground floor comprises of an open-plan sitting room and Dr Vollin's study. There is no indication where a lift-shaft might be located, and therefore the room-that-moves is one that does so in defiance of the architecture of Dr Vollin's mansion. It is then a room that establishes an impossible connection between two separate and distinct spaces: one, the upstairs space, is a representation of space—a space designed to communicate the idea of propriety—that masquerades as a representational space, or lived space. But Dr Vollin does not live there, he only uses it to project an idea of a proper and ordered existence. The other space is the dungeon, the true representational space of Dr Vollin's mansion, or the space where he lives and works, and one that puts to the lie the pretence of normality above.

Thinking with Butler (1993: 39), the room-that-moves is an impossible room, and therefore an 'other' room, a protrusion of the exilic space of the dungeon into the representation of (proper) space above. By making possible a circulation of bodies—and indeed spaces—between the exilic space and the space of propriety above, the room-that-moves points to the artificial construct of the space that functions as the site of the performance of respectability. There is a leakage then, an imperfect break between the space produced by the exile in imitation of the normative space of the host nation, and the exilic space that complements it. And indeed, when Dr Vollin pulls the lever that operates the security features of the house (thick steel shutters that seal off the premises), Jerry remarks: 'it's as if we were all in a tomb'. The isolation of the mansion from the space beyond, through the shutters that descend, brings home to members of the host nation the realization that Dr Vollin's mansion is not part of the normative space, but a grotesque space of death that falsely presents itself as a space of life.

The mansion, by virtue of the communication between the exilic lair and the space above, made possible by the impossible room-that-moves, becomes a space of death, a space produced by the excluded other. Further, the site of performance of respectability is revealed as no more than a stage, where the exile performs acceptability, integrity and respectability in order to communicate to the outside a safeness that is always in question. In order to unpick this leakage between the exilic space and the space of (apparent) propriety, we can conceive of this space of performance or stage as a sort of reverse carnival, a temporary transgression from the 'abnormality' of exile into the 'normality' of life as a fully-functioning

member of the host nation. Dr Vollin's performance of normality when interacting with members of the host nation in the rooms of his mansion where he receives guests can be understood as a temporary submission to the constraints imposed by the requirements of normativity. In this reading then, just as carnival in the Bakhtinian sense (Stam, 1989: 98) is a space of temporary transgression that ultimately works to reassert the order against which the participants seemingly rebel, so too this exilic reverse-carnival—the space upstairs—is a temporary entry into the world of the norm, from which the exile must retreat to the relief of the exilic space. However, like the transgression, or rather this entry into the normative is temporary, so is the exilic space itself. In order to explore this temporariness of the exilic space, I need to pause here and consider the thorny issue of the sacred in relation to Dr Vollin's worshipful tribute to Poe.

As I suggested in my reading of the backdrop of 'The Spirit of Poe,' religious and sacral images, albeit distorted and grotesque ones, permeate Dr Vollin's dungeon and Poe collection. The stuffed raven in his office, which he describes as his talisman, is an object he invests with sacred significance and powers. It then becomes icon-like (and Icon-like in the sense of the religious images of the Greek Orthodox Church, for instance): a representation of a body that comes to stand for an ideal, and thus becomes invested with the qualities it represents. It becomes an object of worship. However, this ideal that Dr Vollin worships, rather than hope, or life after death, a greater power for good, perhaps, is Death itself, 'the one certain thing in an uncertain universe,' in Dr Vollin's own words. In this way, he then worships the gap, the absence, that which normative discourse, through the 'sheltering canopy of culture' (Seale, 1998: 149) seeks to deny, namely: Death. His is a heretic belief, an other belief, or rather the rejection of the normative belief as practiced in the host nation. Sacredness is bestowed upon objects and people through a signifying act: the act of declaring them sacred. An ability to participate in discourse is then necessary to be able to cause things to become sacred through discursive performativity. Where Dr Vollin worships Poe and declares the raven his sacred object, the representative of the Poe society collects Poe memorabilia as curios, as objects whose value stems from their association with a man of interest, and their allusion to historicalness, to refer back to Baudrillard (2005: 77). But Dr Vollin mistakenly thinks his collection contains relics, sacred remnants of a saintly man, because that is how he sees these items, and that is how he speaks of them. Yet, in spite of all his attempts to invest the items in his collection with religious significance, for members of the normative they remain collectible curios at best, macabre and distasteful implements of violence at worst. In his attempt to transform symbols of death into objects of worship, Dr Vollin comes to worship an object that for members of the host nation is a symbol of the ephemeral nature of life. This mistaken investment of a symbol of temporariness with meanings that it does not and cannot stand for (i.e., a positive notion of certainty and

permanence) parallels the temporariness of the exilic space. The exilic space is a structure that offers permanent sanctuary in the mind of the exile, but is a perverse and grotesque space of death where living bodies ought not to venture, in the minds of the members of the host nation.

In this reading of the exilic lair I focused on Dr Vollin's mansion and its hidden underground passages. I could have just as easily picked Dr Gogol's home in *Mad Love* (Karl Freund, 1935), where Peter Lorre's similarly unhinged exilic scientist pursues an equally repelled female artist, eventually abandoning his quest to heal broken bodies and turning to torture. Dr Gogol, too, performs normality and acceptability within a space that is constructed to allay the fears of those who enter. His state-of-the-art clinic, where he cures paralysis, performs limb-transplants and pushes the boundaries of human understanding of bodily infirmity and deformity, is a space that speaks of an intense desire to be of use, to be a productive, accepted member of society. His private quarters upstairs, however, with a combination of the sacral (the organ) and the profane (the waxworks of a Grand Guignol actress—another false idol), reveals a hidden persona that is fundamentally alien and unacceptable to the host nation.

Dr Lorenz (Béla Lugosi) in *The Corpse Vanishes* (Wallace Fox, 1941) would have been an equally appropriate example. His secluded mansion mirrors Dr Vollin's upstairs of normality and downstairs of depravity. Here, Dr Lorenz works in seemingly untroubled harmony with another doctor on the medicinal qualities of an orchid he had hybridized. But alone, in his underground laboratory, he has worked on another application of the rare orchid: he has isolated a compound that helps him put to sleep young brides at the altar, inducing in them a death-like state of suspended animation. (The themes of intrusion into and interruption of marriage, one of the 'sacred' events in a patriarchal order, the similar intervention and interruption of life, to produce waking death, all go to the heart of the exile's disruptive effect upon the host nation, or rather the host nation's perception of the exile as a disruptive—and ruptured—body.) He then kidnaps their bodies and extracts bodily fluids from their glands, which he injects into his wife in order to give her the appearance of youth. The seemingly respectable exilic doctor then is a mad scientist who subverts science and uses it to 'sap and impurify all of our precious bodily fluids', in the words of that patriarchal, nationalist archetype of film characters, Colonel Jack D Ripper (Sterling Hayden) in *Dr Strangelove* (Stanley Kubrick, 1963). His mansion operates the same way as Dr Vollin's: it is a site for the performance of respectability that is undermined by secret passages and hidden trapdoors that establish improbable, or even impossible links between the exilic lair below and the space of seeming normality above. Just as Dr Vollin's mansion, Dr Lorenz's home combines the elements of traditional bourgeois interior design with incongruous objects of misplaced worship, spaces of healing with spaces of torture, spaces of scientific enquiry with spaces that work to destabilize

identity. Mr Kessler in *The Invisible Ghost* (Joseph H Lewis, 1942), Dr Brewster in *The Ape Man* (William Beaudine, 1944), and a series of other characters from the film corpus of this thesis could have equally been used to elaborate the arguments above.

## Permanent grafts onto transitory spaces

Of the three exilic bodies in the focus of this thesis, Lorre's is the most difficult to pin down in terms of their relation to space. Not without reason. Where Veidt's characters display a certain unbending refusal to adjust to life in a new land (despite all protestations to the contrary), and where Lugosi's mad scientists do their utmost to remake their own bodies in order to fit in, often sequestered within the protective bubble of their exilic lair, Lorre's characters seem to embrace wholeheartedly their new homelands. In *The Face Behind the Mask*, for instance, we see Johnny Szabó (Lorre) as he first sets foot on American soil, brimming with optimism and excitedly chatting about his plans for the future. While Lorre the actor was perhaps the most skilful of the three exiles, his characters tend to be the most artless. They seldom hide behind masks (I devote some space in Chapter 2 to what happens when they do) and they rarely hide in unassailable fortresses. It is perhaps for this reason that Lorre's body is the most uncontained, the most versatile and therefore the most threatening. Its threat lies not in the physical damage he could do to the host nation, nor to any great subversive power, but in its very ordinariness. Lorre's exiles perhaps threaten most because they come so close to succeeding in their attempted graft onto the body of the host nation. They do not force their way in, but they find temporary footholds in the gaps and fissures of the fabric of society. For this reason, this part of my thesis will be somewhat speculative as I grapple with the diverse and often diffuse spaces in which Lorre's remarkably unremarkable exiles operate. I hope that by optimistically embracing the diversity of his characters and the spaces in which they operate, this part of the present chapter will yield results that are no less interesting and productive for the speculative path that may lead to them.

When it comes to the characters of Peter Lorre, rather than 'occupy a space', a more appropriate phrase would be 'infringe on a space': it suggests both an intrusion into a space dominated by another, and limits that intrusion to the fringes, to the margins. In this section I then analyse the ways in which Lorre's characters infringe on spaces of the host nation, relating these throughout to the spaces occupied by Lugosi and Veidt's perhaps slightly more resilient exilic characters. Again, throughout this analysis I shall rely on Lefebvre and his *The Production of Space* (1991). Baudrillard will prove less helpful, and his analysis of interior design will rarely be applicable to the largely open and/or public spaces in which

Lorre's exilic bodies operate. I will reach back to Foucault, and his ideas on heterotopias (1967), trying to force them into a productive clash with Lefebvre's analysis of the gap between conceived and lived space.

With just a few exceptions (Dr Gogol and Contreras, *Confidential Agent*'s (Herman Shumlin, 1945) exiled Spanish Communist volunteer) Lorre's characters have no fixed home. Mr Moto, the Japanese detective, travels the world, solving mysteries without ever establishing any permanent links. He sleuths in London, on board an ocean liner, in Hong Kong and the jungles of Cambodia.<sup>9</sup> The places he visits, the spaces he negotiates vary with no seeming logic or consistency, not only from film to film, but often from scene to scene. The closest he gets to being the master of any domain, is during the transatlantic voyage in *Think Fast Mr Moto*, when he has his own cabin. In *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942), *Rope of Sand* (William Dieterle, 1949) and *Strange Cargo* (Frank Borzage, 1940) he plays enigmatic strangers who appear periodically in a bar or cantina and disappear just as inexplicably as they appear in the first place. In *The Face Behind the Mask* and *Stranger on the Third Floor* (Boris Ingster, 1940) he plays penniless little men who stay for a while in transient hotels (figs. 3.4 and 3.5). In *The Beast with Five Fingers* (Robert Florey, 1946), *The Chase* (Arthur Ripley, 1946) and *My Favourite Brunette* (Elliot Nugent, 1947) he plays live-in servants in stately homes. Where Veidt's characters always radiate a certain nobility (of descent or spirit), and Lugosi, especially in his later roles, works obsessively to maintain the appearance of petit-bourgeois propriety, Lorre's figures are essentially lower-class. Even Dr Gogol, the brilliant surgeon, worked his way up from a peasant background.<sup>10</sup> His characters are usually shabby, dirty, sly and weak men. Only rarely is there even a hint of a physical threat in his demeanour. When he does threaten violence, it is usually with dainty little pistols which he never fires as in *The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941), or knives as in *My Favourite Brunette*. His exiles then are small, ineffective men who seldom seek to impose on their surroundings their own idealised image of the homeland. Neither do they hope to remake themselves in order to fit in. Rather, Lorre's exiles tend to try to navigate the margins, to survive unnoticed, unchallenged, as if aware that discovery would be followed by expulsion. And indeed, his ultimate aim is often simply to leave for somewhere else, as in *Casablanca*, where he dreams of selling the blank passports to Viktor László (Paul Henreid) 'and then, adio Casablanca!'.

The exilic bodies of Lorre are without the means to carve out, even for a brief period, a space that is theirs. The spaces they infringe are spaces of temporary refuge (and in this temporariness are akin to the seemingly more permanent exilic

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<sup>9</sup>In *Mysterious Mr Moto* (Norman Foster, 1938), *Think Fast, Mr Moto!* (Norman Foster, 1937) and *Mr Moto Takes a Chance* (Norman Foster, 1938) respectively.

<sup>10</sup>'I a mere peasant, who conquered science, why can't I conquer love?' he wails in anguish.



Figure 3.4: The insane exile. Peter Lorre as the serial killer ‘Stranger’ in the deeply offensive *Stranger on the Third Floor* (Boris Ingster, 1940).



Figure 3.5: The threat of the insane exile extinguished in *Stranger on the Third Floor*.

lairs of Lugosi's mad scientists). These include the docks, junkyards, transient hotels, sometimes luxury hotels that are no more permanent for all their opulence (see *Hotel Berlin* (Peter Godfrey, 1945)), gaol cells, bars, speakeasies, diners, boats and even the sewers. These are all more or less public spaces. They are spaces of miscellanies, designed to contain and hide. They are also fixed spaces in the sense that they seal in and contain the bodies within them. In this sense they are best understood in light of Foucault's writings on heterotopias (1967). They are, indeed, other spaces that operate as sites for the individual in crisis. However, they are not spaces that are necessarily part and parcel of the quotidian existence of 'normal' members of society. They are, rather, spaces of disposal, spaces to turn one's back on. And in this sense, and certainly not from the point of view of the exile who seeks more or less permanent refuge in them, they are not similar to cemeteries, one of Foucault's heterotopias (*ibid.*). Cemeteries, first and foremost, serve the living, who go there not only to dispose of the remnants of the dead, but also to process grief. They enter, carrying with them the corpse of a loved one, and once the rituals are completed, they leave the cemetery, dead body and the trauma of loss divested from themselves, and invested in a space designed to contain them. Heterotopias for Foucault, then, are spaces that are the sites for the performance of specific tasks by viable members of the community. The cadaver, to be flippant, does not enter into it. Foucault leaves the way the body in crisis lives this space of crisis out of his analysis. Here Lefebvre can help us plug this gap: the heterotopia is fringe and centre at the same time; it is a conceived space, or representation of space in the sense that it is a space designed to hold bodies in crisis, but it is also a lived space, a representational space that is experienced by the bodies in crisis (1991: 40). Foucault, and the normative order see heterotopias purely as a conceived space. A space that functions, but not as a space that is *lived* (*ibid.*). From the point of view of the exile, however, these heterotopias are lived spaces. They are, in fact, the only spaces within the host nation that are accessible to Lorre's exilic bodies. Again, the conceived does not form a coherent whole with the lived space in a productive conflict that helps us towards a greater understanding of the representation of exilic trauma in Hollywood cinema. However, the concept of heterotopia does serve to illuminate what occurs in spatial terms with the exilic body.

A film that perhaps best exemplifies the exilic subversion of the heterotopias of the host nation is *White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932). I wrote at length on the film in Chapter 2 of this thesis. I revisit it here briefly to show how the exile acts to subvert the heterotopia, and what happens when he succeeds in doing so. In *White Zombie* Béla Lugosi plays Murder Legendre, a sinister man, a foreigner, who wields mysterious powers to reanimate and control the dead. In the opening scene, the film's central couple drive through a funeral that is taking place in the middle of the road. Their coach driver explains that the locals have taken to bury-

ing their dead in the middle of the road, because their corpses could be stolen, were they to be buried in the cemetery. It is, we find out, Legendre who raids the cemeteries to steal the bodies of the recently dead in order to reanimate them and set them to work in his abominable sugar mill. Thinking with Foucault (1967), in *White Zombie*, then, the exile subverts the heterotopia of the host nation, a space reserved for the dead and the compartmentalisation of the indigestible reality of death. When one of the host nation's heterotopias, the cemetery is colonized by the exilic other, the cemetery loses its function—both in terms of absorbing the dead bodies, and in terms of absorbing the grief of the survivors—and the rites performed there are displaced. In other words, the space of displacement (the cemetery), becomes the space of the displaced (the exile), in the process destabilizing other spaces, too. In the instance of *White Zombie*, the funeral rites are displaced to the public highway. The exilic subversion of one space then results in the necessary subversion of another. This domino effect needs to be borne in mind when we consider Lorre's exiles, and their attempt to find a permanent purchase on the heterotopias of the host nation.

The spaces infringed by Lorre's characters are also, despite their fixity, spaces in flux. It is easier to see how the boats, the sewers, the junkyards are temporary and transitory spaces that are nonetheless clearly defined and fixed. They are spaces designed to hold bodies (and objects) until they are picked for re-use or recycling. The scrap iron in the junkyard, the excreta in the sewers, and even the sailor run off to sea on board a ship, are all in limbo, preparing for re-entry into the unceasing cycle of life. What is more difficult, perhaps, to envisage is the way in which the gaols, remote settlements and the (prison or prison-like) colonies operate as spaces in flux. It is not that these spaces are inherently in flux, although it could be argued that the gaol is little different to the junkyard in the respect that the bodies that enter are sorted according to the possibility of reintegration into society at large. As such, they are spaces of limbo, of suspended animation, from which bodies judged against and then found compliant with the socially acceptable norm are eventually released. However, they are also spaces in flux from the point of view of the exile in that Lorre's exilic characters are freely circulating bodies within their rigid hierarchy. In *Nancy Steele is Missing* (George Marshall, 1937), or *Passage to Marseille* (Michael Curtiz, 1944) Lorre plays prisoners who enjoy privileges both within the regulated (official), and the unregulated (inter-inmate) economies of the prison. They are wheelers and dealers, go-getters who, for the right price will deliver messages or smuggle items on behalf of the other prisoners. They are often entrusted by the prison authorities with menial tasks: they sweep the corridors or inform on other prisoners. As in the case of Dracula's ability to negotiate the space of the host nation in the form of a bat, this ability to circulate with relative freedom within the rigid order of the prison (whether that is the hierarchy of the prisoners or the institutional order of the correctional facil-

ity), should not be attributed to any great power or political ability. This relative freedom is afforded to Lorre's exilic bodies precisely because they lack power. The puny little exile poses no threat either to the physically powerful brutes that populate the prison, or to the wardens who wield a more abstract, but far more effective power. Simply put: Lorre's characters could not beat up a fellow prisoner, nor could they break out of prison. Their relative liberty then is a backhanded compliment, an expression of condescension and contempt.

Giving the impression of being able to circulate freely within a largely confined or fixed space is typical of Lorre's exiles. Ugarte in *Casablanca* is a shabby echo of Rick's dashing American hero. He is an insignificant little man, who nevertheless has managed to get his hands on two blank passports. As Naficy points out, the passport is a significant object in films dealing with exile (2001: 32). The passports in Lorre's hands embody this ability to move without apparent restriction. They are passports signed by Marshal Pétain himself and grant the bearer unquestioned leave from any territory under the control of the Vichy Government. And yet Ugarte does not use them himself. He is a man whose only wish is to leave Casablanca, and yet the passports are not his own. They have been promised to Viktor László. Ugarte thus becomes an important man: his ability to grant freedom to Viktor László, a genuinely dangerous exile who has the power to rouse the millions of oppressed minorities throughout Nazi-occupied Europe, bestows upon him, by proxy that same threat to the established order. He then has to be detained, and killed. The threat is not his own, just like the passports are not. Precisely because he is ordinary, and shabby, he poses no threat. That is until he becomes a catalyst for a greater subversion, by virtue of his ability to circulate freely within a space that is hostile to the exile whose aim is to subvert that space. At which point, unlike Rick, he is eliminated.

The spaces in which Lorre's characters circulate are then heterotopias from the point of view of the host nation. They are exactly circumscribed 'elsewheres' that serve the function of providing a stage for the recovery (both metaphorical and literal) of bodies in crisis. What is not heterotopic about them, however, is the ways in which Lorre's exilic bodies operate within these spaces. Rather than going through a process of rehabilitation in spaces designed for that purpose, Lorre's exilic bodies latch onto these other spaces. They subvert these spaces precisely by going against their transitory nature and attempting to establish a more or less permanent existence within them. Lorre's exiles, rather than remaking the host nation, remake the host nation's 'elsewheres', turning them into 'heres', spaces in which he *is* and *is present*, however frequently members of the host nation may seek to bind him as 'absent', 'other' and 'already dead'. These exilic bodies, then, which are constructed by normative discourse as diseased, as bodies in crisis, can indeed infringe with ease on the spaces designated by the host nation for the performance of cleansing rituals, of rites of passage. Where the normative bodies

of the host nation are sent to prison if they stray against the norm, Lorre's exiles find refuge there. Where newlyweds are sent on honeymoon to perform the ritual of the consummation of marriage, Lorre's exiles linger on in luxury hotels and sprawling mansions, with no end in sight of their extended, solitary honeymoon. And where the broken bodies are sent to be healed, there Lorre (as Dr Gogol, for instance) makes his permanent home.

To return to *Casablanca*, we can see how Casablanca the city itself operates as a heterotopia from the point of view of the nation. It is an elsewhere, a space where Rick, a body in crisis can recover his lost American spirit of idealism. By creating a normative space, the Café Américain, within the chaotic space of the colonial centre, Rick rebuilds himself as an active, normative body. It is in response to the threat to the integrity of this normative space (the closure of the café by Captain Renault (Claude Rains) on the orders of Veidt's Major Strasser) that Rick resolves to set things right. He then emerges from the conflict as a body with the power of discursive performativity, of causing things to be by deciding or saying that they should be so. The final act of the film consists of Rick ordering various people to do his bidding (reinforced by the physical threat of the gun he carries), who all comply. He sells his café to Ferrari (Sydney Greenstreet) at the best possible price. He gets Ilsa (Ingrid Bergman) first to play along with the betrayal of her husband, then to acquiesce with Rick's decision that she should go back to and escape with Viktor László. Captain Renault does as he is told: fills out passports and drives the fugitives to the airport. Only Major Strasser refuses to obey the normative voice (i.e., Rick, crucially the only normative voice in the film; all other characters speak with a 'foreign' accent), and is killed for it.

Within this heterotopia designed for the recovery of the normative body, Ugarte is a seemingly privileged body. He has access to the casino, when a powerful official of the Deutsche Bank is refused entry. He has credit at the bar and knows Rick well enough to entrust the stolen passports to him for safekeeping. But his plans of leaving Casablanca as a rich man (from the sale of the passports to Viktor László) come to nought: Lorre's exiles are tolerated within heterotopias as long as they do not seek to emerge from them in the guise of normative bodies. In other words, as long as Ugarte is a shabby minor echo of Rick—a Rick whose crisis is inscribed upon his body—he is safe within the Café Américain. However, as soon as Ugarte threatens to use the heterotopia for its intended purpose (to gain viability within the normative order by claiming for himself an active role, the power to cause things to be through discourse), the forces of normativity clamp down on him with merciless haste. Indeed, when Ugarte turns up at Rick's café to sell the passports to Viktor László, the gendarmes are already there to arrest him. He breaks away from the two officers who first collar him, and, panicked, he runs towards Rick. He screams 'help me Rick, help me!' But Rick '[sticks his] neck

out for nobody'.<sup>11</sup> Especially not for a body that sought to usurp his space, and his role as an active body, a catalyst for action within the oasis of normative space that is the Café Américain in Casablanca. And of course, Rick then goes on to do just what Ugarte had hoped to achieve, but takes longer and goes about it in a far more complicated way. Because he can. Because the exile cannot.

*Casablanca* the film can also be conceived of as a heterotopia in the sense that it is another space, an elsewhere that is used to imagine the inner conflicts of a nation torn between the sense of responsibility to intervene in a European war, and a reluctance to take sides. In this sense, Casablanca the place is no different from the fantastical Arabia in Korda's *The Thief of Bagdad*. The film's setting then becomes a space for the nation in crisis, where the various conflicting tendencies (the isolationist Rick, the blithely pro-German Captain Renault, the committed Nazi Major Strasser, the antifascist Viktor László) are allowed to clash and struggle for supremacy, until the one viable choice, intervention, emerges.

There is a third sense in which *Casablanca* can be thought of as a heterotopia, and it is this third that I pause here to unpick in some detail. In the following paragraphs I will, perhaps, weave a rather speculative argument, but I feel that the film's complexity, and the intriguing results that may emerge, will justify this approach. Further, as Ugarte's theft of the passports sets the narrative in motion (another paradox of the exile in Hollywood: he is denied agency, yet his involvement is often a catalyst for action), I feel that the film has much to offer to our understanding of the exile and the body of the exile in the normative space of the host nation, even if in this particular film Lorre appears for little more than five minutes of total screen time.

In the third sense in which *Casablanca* operates as a heterotopia, it becomes the space in which a deeply distasteful scenario can be safely played out. In this reading Casablanca, the city, becomes a 'mythical kingdom', the term studio executives insisted on as a place name when films threatened to cause offense, and a drop in Box-Office takings, if they were seen to refer directly (and negatively) to a recognizable, real place (Vasey, 1997: 122). It could be thought of as a film in which the terrifying vision of a pro-Nazi America is given free rein.<sup>12</sup> In this reading Vichy France stands for the nation. It is a state that has negotiated a semblance of independence by pledging unquestioning cooperation to the Third Reich. Captain Renault, then, could be thought of as a US president who had gone to bed with the Nazis.<sup>13</sup> Looming behind his shoulder at all times is Major Strasser

<sup>11</sup>As I noted elsewhere, Ugarte's is the only body Rick refuses to stick his neck out for.

<sup>12</sup>By a largely European émigré crew, from director to composer, with a largely European émigré cast, that included Humphrey Bogart as the lone US actor amongst the leading players.

<sup>13</sup>This was not quite as remote a possibility as it might be comforting to imagine. Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* (Houghton Mifflin: 2004) paints just such a nightmare vision of the USA in the 1940s after a presidential election won by the erstwhile aviation pioneer and radical



Figure 3.6: Major Strasser (Conrad Veidt) is frustrated as his attempt to disseminate German culture is thwarted by an outpouring of French nationalism in *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942).

(Conrad Veidt), Nazi envoy to Casablanca. Strasser is the exile who destabilizes the host nation by attempting to remake it in the image of his idealised homeland. And indeed, in *Casablanca*, Major Strasser hopes to impose Teutonic discipline and Nazi mercilessness upon the relatively free territory. He also hopes to homogenise the population of Casablanca, by extirpating difference and dissent by any means necessary. He is the one who demands the arrest and subsequent elimination of Ugarte. He is the one who orders the closure of Rick's Café Américain when his authority is defied. He even tries to sow the seeds of Hitler's grotesque fantasy of German culture: in the café, led by the lugubrious Major, the Wehrmacht and Gestapo officers sing an SS song (fig. 3.6). In spite of the increasingly martial gestures of the conducting Major, their song is soon drowned out by the *Marseillaise* as the French citizens and various refugees join Viktor László in a musical form of Résistance. Again, the exile who seeks to remake the host nation is thwarted.

A counterpoint to Major Strasser's disruptive exile is Viktor László. Where Major Strasser is the exile who seeks to remake the host nation in the image of an idealised homeland, Viktor László is a more acceptable face of otherness. He does not hope to remake the host nation. Rather, his goal is to remake his *home* nation, or even continental Europe as a whole, and there to expunge Nazism.

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pro-German politician Charles Lindbergh.

Major Strasser fantasizes about the Wermacht marching down the streets of New York, but Viktor László dreams of a Europe rid of the terror of Nazism. He is, despite his otherness (incidentally, inscribed upon his body in the form of a faint scar on his face), a safe exilic body. His stated aim is to set up headquarters in the US in order to combat Nazism in Europe, and to return to his homeland, should he be successful. This is a project in which Rick, the normative body within Casablanca, can help, albeit not before some lengthy period of deliberation. That it should take him so long to decide to assist Viktor László shows just how difficult it is for the exilic other to win the trust of the normative order. Viktor László, then, is the exile who hopes to fragment the hegemony, to borrow and re-imagine Hayward's concept (2000: 101), not of the host nation, but of a nightmarish vision of an absolutely homogenous nation-state that attempts to subject one and all to its wholly irrational ideal, or, failing that, to eliminate all that is other. This is why it takes Rick so long to decide to help Viktor László. He understands that he is a subversive exilic body, and is therefore naturally suspicious. Realizing, however, that his intentions are to destabilize the far more threatening 'other' that is the Third Reich, Rick agrees to intervene on his behalf, following the logic of 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'.

I pause here briefly to consider the role of the feminine as a passive body that circulates, a commodity, perhaps, within the economy of Casablanca, the city. I do so because, while my focus in this thesis is the male exilic body, I feel I cannot blithely ignore the troubling lot of the feminine in this most patriarchal narrative. Further, as I shall show, the role of the feminine in the film, in other words, Ilsa's narrative, contributes to our understanding of the role of the exile within the film's discourse, which is intrinsically bound up with issues surrounding the nation. In an analysis indebted to Butler (1993), Rick, the normative body with a newly recovered active role, does not need the feminine, at least not explicitly, to communicate viability and normativity to the outside world. As he tells the tearful Ilsa: 'we'll always have Paris'. This phrase serves to emphasise that he has already conquered the feminine and thereby once and for all expressed his patriarchal power. He has no need to continue asserting that power by parading the conquered feminine for all to see. Viktor László, however, an exilic body with his otherness visibly inscribed on his face in the form of a faint scar, does need the apparent conquest of the feminine in order to communicate, within a patriarchal order, a viability and normativity that would otherwise be inevitably in question. This is why at the end of the film Rick, in a gesture of apparent self-sacrifice (which is nothing of the sort), orders Ilsa to go with László. Rick, within a phallogocentric order (an order that is based on a discursive practice centred around the masculine), is self-constituting, whereas László has no basis to make that claim. Ultimately, the male bodies' relationship to the feminine—as to space—express their position within the normative order.

The third exile that plays an important role—although he himself, as we shall see, is unimportant—in the complex relationship between the normative and the other within Casablanca (the place), is Ugarte. As I suggested earlier, Ugarte is a minor echo of Rick. He wears a white Tuxedo, black bow tie and slicked-down hair in an unconvincing attempt to present himself as a normative body. Ugarte makes two fundamental errors. First, he simply cannot make the costume fit his body, or rather make his body fit his costume. The puny frame under the elegant clothes results in crumples, where there should be smooth, almost reflective surface, and patches of material hanging loose, where there should be signs of a body beneath. By failing to fill out the clothes of the normative body, he inadvertently reveals the very difference he hopes to disguise. Second, he goes about his attempted assertion of viability and corporeality the wrong way: he is hoping to achieve his goal by attempting to bestow upon another exilic body the ability to move with unlimited freedom within the space of the host nation. Clearly, the exile has no right, nor the ability, to endow another (or perhaps an ‘other’) body with the power of agency, and discursive performativity. Just as Jaffar was unable to cause things to be through verbal commands in *The Thief of Bagdad* (see Chapter 2), and just as Dr Gogol was unable to restore bodies in crisis to normative status in *Mad Love* (see Chapter 4), Ugarte cannot grant Viktor László the freedom to move as he pleases. The exile can subvert the heterotopia, in the sense that he can attempt to establish a seemingly permanent existence within the transitory space designed and delineated by the normative order for the recovery of bodies in crisis, but he cannot emerge thence as a recovered body. But Ugarte tries to do just that: by striking it rich, he hopes, he could leave the heterotopia that is Casablanca, and hopes to communicate a wholeness through riches, and well-fitting clothes (that speak of a viable body underneath). And once more, just like Johnny Szabó could not emerge unscarred from the hospital after the hotel fire, and just as Marius (again, Lorre) in *Passage to Marseille* dies on board the ship he had hoped would deliver him from the prison colony to freedom (fig. 3.7), Ugarte cannot ultimately emerge from Casablanca with a viable body.

As we have seen, Casablanca, the space, operates as a heterotopia in a number of ways. First, it is the site where the normative body in crisis, Rick, can recover his lost idealism. Second, it is an other space onto which national anxieties surrounding the rights and wrongs of participation in WWII can be safely projected. And third, it is an other space, a ‘mythical kingdom’ (Vasey, 1997: 122) onto which unconscionable national anxieties surrounding a nation-state hijacked and held to ransom by the immigrants it has admitted, and a nation struggling to impose coherence on a mass of different peoples can be safely projected.

In the third reading of Casablanca as a heterotopia, the North African territory stands for Vichy France, which in turn stands for the nation state, embodied by Captain Renault. But Captain Renault is not his own master. His actions are dic-



Figure 3.7: That rarest of things: a heroic death. Nonetheless, it is another failure of an exilic attempt of integration.

tated by Major Strasser. The nation-state, in this instance, then, is not a construct that can be ‘passed off as natural’ (Hayward, 2000: 89). It is not natural, precisely because the attempt to impose homogeneity, by any means necessary, is a clearly visible one, embodied as it is by the Nazi Major Strasser. The resolution of the film, whereby all exiles are ultimately ejected from Casablanca (Ugarte murdered by Strasser’s thugs, Strasser killed by Rick, and Viktor László and Ilsa put on the plane bound for Lisbon), and the normative body—having recovered his idealism and active role—guides Captain Renault towards ‘beautiful friendship’ where national identity and coherence is forged anew in a relationship that can, indeed, ‘get passed off as natural’ (*ibid.*), shows that the heterotopia has fulfilled its function and allowed the nation state to emerge recovered, and whole.

Ugarte’s role, within all three readings, is to throw a spanner into the works. By settling in the heterotopic space of Casablanca, and then by threatening to use that space in the way in which it was intended, he causes that space to become fragmented. This threat then demands a response from the normative. It cannot tolerate the usurpation of its space of recovery by an ‘other’ body that cannot comply with the norm. Repeatedly we see how Lorre’s exilic characters set similar processes in motion. These narratives can then be understood as reiterations of the resilience of the body of the nation in the face of the contagion of the foreign other. Although spaces for bodies in crisis, the host nation’s heterotopias cannot be subverted by the pathological foreign other.

## Conclusion

Chapter 2 explored the ways in which normative discourse constructs the exilic other as diseased or ‘already dead’. I argued that difference was inscribed on the exilic body, which, following the trauma of displacement, had to try to come to terms with the reversal of the us/them binary, which reconfigured the exile as ‘one of them’. This reversal of the binary resulted in a rupture, which in turn prompted the exilic body to attempt to claim for himself a viable body within the host nation.

I began Chapter 3 with a brief detour to Clive Seale’s *Constructing Death*, and his ideas on the attempts by increasingly frail people in the final year of their lives to communicate a safe identity to the world outside (1998: 149). He argues that old people whose bodies and minds slowly fail as death draws close, in an attempt to assert the existence of the social bond, to communicate a usefulness to society, often barricade themselves in, refusing access to their homes to members of society in general. Others, Seale notes, expend vast amounts of energy on maintaining a home that is pristine, again, in order to convince those around them that they can cope, that they can be trusted to remain independent. Yet others, he goes on, focus their attention exclusively on one all-important project, tackling which becomes symbolic of their ability to get along on their own.

I then turned to Lefebvre’s analysis of the production of space (1991), which I understood as imposing upon the environment a signifying act and therefore an aspect of normative discourse. I brought Lefebvre and Seale together to argue that the exilic body, constructed by the normative discourse of the host nation as diseased, sought to communicate towards the outside a wholeness and safeness that was always in question, through an attempt to impose a signifying act on their environment. Put simply, I suggested that just as people faced with the slow but irreversible failure of their bodies hoped to assert viability through the space they created (or closed off from the outside), exiles sought to convince the world around them of their harmlessness by shaping or attempting to shape the space around them.

First, I explored the exilic spaces of Conrad Veidt’s opposing German twins in *Nazi Agent*. I argued that Otto Becker and Hugo von Detner both hoped to communicate a bond with the host nation. The former appealed to the values of suburban America through an interior design that put the emphasis on a sense of rootedness in a common past; the latter sought to project the image of one who embraces America’s core principle of strength in diversity. However, Otto’s home undermined the values he hoped to communicate by virtue of his insufficient understanding (*connaissance*) of his new home, based on the knowledge (*savoir*) he accumulated elsewhere. His house then spoke of a deep-seated ambivalence about integration into a new society, and a fundamental inability to understand that new society. Similarly, Hugo’s surroundings put the lie to the image he tried

to project. The various decorative reproductions in his home and office pointed to a slippage between who he purported to be, and who he, in fact, was.

Second, I analysed the exilic lairs of Béla Lugosi's characters. Basing my arguments chiefly on Dr Vollin and his labyrinthine mansion in *The Raven* (although most of his film roles would have offered equally suitable examples for my argument), I explored the ways in which the reception areas of Dr Vollin's mansion, the study and living room, operated as sites for the performance of respectability. Here the haughty doctor played the role of genial host, erudite man of letters, amateur of Poe and benefactor of mankind. Behind the secret door in his study, however, lay an underground lair whose grotesque interior served as a space of relief from the demands of normality above. I suggested that Dr Vollin's mansion consisted of an upstairs of normality, complemented by a downstairs of depravity. It was downstairs that the doctor hoped to tear torture from himself by torturing those who refused him entry into the patriarchal order. His exilic lair then operated as a protective bubble, with an additional area that afforded him the opportunity to play the normative body. The imperfect caesura between the upstairs and downstairs, however, resulted in a leakage that pointed to a similar conflict between the expected and actual output of the system of signification that is the production of space, as in the case of *Nazi Agent*'s twins.

Third, I turned to Peter Lorre and his less easily cornered exilic characters. I argued that Lorre's exiles, by refusing to seek refuge from the demands of the normative space of the host nation, exposed their bodies to a hostile atmosphere, which accounted for their shabby appearance. I argued that Lorre's exiles attempted to graft themselves onto the body of the host nation by finding footholds in the heterotopias of the host nation. These heterotopias, spaces for the recovery of bodies in crisis from the point of view of the normative order, were subverted by the exilic bodies of Lorre, and made into more or less permanent spaces of settlement. The exilic bodies that sought to do no more than stay within these spaces that, for the normative body in crisis, are transitory spaces, were tolerated. Those exilic bodies, however, that sought to use these heterotopias for their intended purpose, to emerge from them in the guise of a body that matters (to invoke Butler (1993) once more), were denied the right to participate in society, and ultimately denied their right to life. I then traced this argument in some detail through the remarkably complex text of *Casablanca*, which, I argued, was a filmic exploration of the distasteful vision of a nation held to ransom by the exiles within it.

Ultimately, exilic strategies of attempting a graft onto the body of the host nation were seen to be futile. They cannot work, for the exilic body is constructed by normative discourse as a body in crisis. Further, by virtue of the various markers of difference (accent, scar, clothes, and indeed, surroundings), which immediately identify the exile as other and therefore beyond the loop of the normative, the exile cannot claim to be able to cause things to be through discourse. Denied

participation in discourse, the exile is incapable of a valid signifying act within the host nation. Because the production of space was seen to be part of normative discourse, we can infer that the exile is not capable of producing a space that can communicate the existence of a social bond between exile and host nation. And the reverse is also true: the exiles are denied bodily integrity through their relationship to the normative space, a space that, as a part of normative discourse, contributes to the process whereby the exilic body is constructed as diseased and already dead. As a result, the exilic bodies were seen to attempt to establish a permanent home within the host nation, and to fail as the host nation time and again refused to acknowledge the existence of the social bond.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE MADNESS OF THE EXILE

In Chapter 2 I explored the ways in which identity is destabilized in exile through a reversal of the ‘us/them’ binary (a reversal due to the repositioning of the exile’s identity from one of ‘us’ in the home nation as one of ‘them’ in the host nation), a rupture brought about by displacement. I considered a number of exilic bodies in relation to their inability to participate in society and discourse. I further examined the ramifications of this rupture, tracing the chain-reaction of displacement, rupture and the resultant construction by normative discourse as ‘already dead’. I argued that the destabilization of identity was concomitant with an intellectual rupture: the exile was seen to be unable to apply an analytical, critical type of knowledge (*connaissance*) in the host nation, because the totality of his learning (*savoir*) was the product of ‘elsewhere’ and therefore insufficient for *connaissance* to operate properly within the host nation. This failure of knowledge, I suggested, accounts for the exile’s inability to find purchase on the body of a nation that, through normative discourse, presents itself as homogenous and hegemonic, and therefore impervious to exilic attempts of integration.

In Chapter 3 I explored Hollywood cinema’s representation of space, and the relationship of the exile to the space of the normative, which I argued operated as a *normative space* and therefore part of normative discourse. This, I suggested, was a reflection of the destabilization of identity explored in Chapter 2. Space was then seen to be part of the mechanism of exclusion within the host nation. I considered the ways in which exilic bodies attempt to negotiate, or indeed subvert, the space of the host nation in order to show how resistant the normative discourse of the host nation is to attempted grafts onto its seemingly hegemonic body.

In this chapter I consider the madness of the exile. I argue that the crisis of rationality explored in Chapter 2, and the inability to find a space that tolerates the exilic body, leads that exilic body to seek recourse to a range of strategies of integration, all (or almost all) of which lead to failure and rejection from the host nation, the effect of which, as I explain below, is madness. I contend that the exile hopes to remake himself in an effort to comply with the norm, but, operating with a *savoir* of elsewhere, he is unable to present himself as a member of the community within the host nation. I consider the various manifestations of exilic madness, from Dr Gogol’s (Peter Lorre in *Mad Love*, Karl Freund, 1935) mad love

through Hilary's (Peter Lorre in *The Beast with Five Fingers*, Robert Florey, 1946) and Otto Becker's (Conrad Veidt in *Nazi Agent*, Jules Dassin, 1942) split selves,<sup>1</sup> to the megalomania of Béla Lugosi's mad scientists. I argue that these mad exiles are united by their drive to assimilate through an attempted reconfiguration of the self—whether through science or performance—and their ultimate failure to present their claim to belong as 'natural'. This inability to present themselves as natural members of the host nation will be key to this Chapter of the thesis.

## Madness sets in

A recurring event in the films that this thesis takes as its corpus is when the exile, faced with an insurmountable problem, loses his mind and madness sets in. The madness the host nation imagines the exilic mind to succumb to is crude in some ways, but, in others, remarkably complex. It can be expressed, in its simplest form, as the exile's misconception that he can exercise control, that he can act and/or that he can understand. The three are by no means mutually exclusive, and it is not my intention to engage in a taxonomical exercise. What I aim to do in this chapter is to show the onset of madness in the exile in the face of a hegemonic national body, a body that is only hegemonic in its own imagination (as manifested in popular culture and normative discourse), and then only in the face of the threatening other.

Madness often takes the form of the exile deciding to attempt the impossible. In *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Robert Florey, 1932), Dr Mirakle (Béla Lugosi) announces to a stunned carnival audience that he would 'prove your kinship with the ape'. Even at the film's time of production, when popular opinion underpinned by racist pseudo-scientific discourse and the theory of eugenics continued to assert that non-whites were of the animal kingdom, as opposed to whites who were human and therefore superior,<sup>2</sup> this would have been a project fraught with difficulty. In the era when the film is set—fourteen years before the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859)—this would have been an impossible project, particularly for a man who is himself not of the host nation. For an alien other, who is himself cast as sub-human and ape-like, to attempt to produce proof that his audience would find credible is to doom himself to failure. The inability to anticipate his own failure, or the refusal to abandon a project that he knows to

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<sup>1</sup>I am reluctant to write schizophrenia, as I am not trying to diagnose these bodies (and indeed minds) in a medical sense, but trying to make sense of their representation in mainstream cinema as split. As such, the exact nature of their mental illness is not as interesting, or indeed relevant, as their representation as mad.

<sup>2</sup>See Gilman (1985), for instance, on the exhibition of black Africans in zoos in 19<sup>th</sup> century Vienna and Budapest (110), and his analysis of 19<sup>th</sup> century studies on the anatomy of black women (*ibid.*: 76-108).

be utterly futile, is, in this instance, the marker of madness. Dr Mirakle then operates under the misapprehension that he can understand his environment, that he can use what he believes to be his superior knowledge to explode existing modes of thinking in the host nation and that he can underpin his assertion through the act of proving his thesis. He hopes that by demonstrating his understanding and by taking action to dispel what he sees as a myth that frames him as inferior, he can control both his own destiny within the host nation, and the host nation itself.

Where Mirakle made the mistake of thinking he understood, and then attempted to act on his understanding to control the host nation and himself, *Nazi Agent's* (Jules Dassin, 1941) Otto Becker/Hugo Detner thinks he can control his own body and mind. If we read the conflict of identical twins Otto and Hugo as a struggle between alternative personalities for dominance within one body, then the scene where the twins tussle in Otto's little suburban house, which Hugo hopes to transform into a Fifth Columnist mail distribution centre, becomes a performance of the exile's madness. The self that remains forever faithful to the home nation tries to destroy the self that has embraced wholeheartedly the host nation. In other words, this is the *mise-en-scène* of the exilic madness of split loyalties and split personalities, the ultimate loss of control over one's mind and body.

Halfway between the two is *Mad Love's* (Karl Freund, 1935) Dr Gogol: desperate to win the love of the woman he worships, he attempts a pioneering medical intervention—a hand transplant—in order to save the musical career of her husband. Confronted with the realization that instead of gratitude she feels greater revulsion than ever when he tries to woo her, Dr Gogol goes mad. In a series of scenes that echo *Murders in the Rue Morgue* as much as they foreshadow *Nazi Agent*, Dr Gogol alternately gives vent to his frustrations ('I, a mere peasant who conquered science, why can't I conquer love?' he asks), and talks to his own reflection, an internal Mephistopheles projected onto the mirror, which reflects back to Dr Gogol his nightmare image of society's perception of himself. Dr Gogol then is the victim of his illusion that he can act. He further thinks that he can control not only science, but also the bodies of those around him. The slow realization that his understanding of his own situation is fatally wrong, sends his mind careening into madness.

In what follows I explore this exilic madness through a number of films which I feel best illustrate my point. That is not to say that Hollywood's representation of the exile as mad is limited to these films. As I hope to show over the pages that follow, Hollywood treats all exiles as already mad, in the process of going mad, or as mad until dead. The films I have picked for this chapter are perhaps the ones where this is most clearly seen. I begin with the one that for all the bluntness of its title and the simplicity of its resolution, is perhaps one of the more complex explorations of exilic madness.

## Mad exile, *Mad Love*

Critical writings on *Mad Love*, and there is not a lot written about the film, tend to fall into line with general approaches on Hollywood horror, and focus on anxieties engendered by technology or difference. To give two examples, Youngkin's biography of Lorre (2005), an ambitious volume that seeks to frame Lorre's work within the context of his life, skims over this film, barely pausing to discuss its significance or Lorre's performance. It makes do with a superficial remark about the doctor's competing 'evil' and 'good' personas, while confusing the scene of the preparations for an operation on a paralysed girl with the post-operation consultation of Dr Gogol and Dr Wong by the bedside of an insomniac girl (*ibid.*: 115-9). Benshoff's *Monsters in the Closet* (1997) charts Hollywood representations of queer bodies as monsters as responses to contemporary anxieties surrounding sexual difference. Benshoff mentions Dr Gogol *en passant* as an archetypal representation of the homosexual monster: an organ-playing (read masturbating) man, 'finely acculturated, somewhat dandified, and given to bizarre modes of dress, make-up, and deportment' (*ibid.*: 46). These readings fail to paint a coherent image of the mad doctor. The suggestion that *Mad Love* is the story of a man tormented by his good and bad personas is far too simplistic. Further, while he is inarguably a dandified man who ardently pursues a woman who is simply not interested and in response he displaces his pent-up sexual attentions onto a wax figurine of the longed-for female, sexual difference, or the threat thereof, would not adequately account for Dr Gogol's final descent into utter madness. That is not to say that a queer reading is not applicable. My argument is that Dr Gogol's queerness is not simply sexual, and the sexual aspects of his otherness can be attributed to a different root cause. In other words, he is queer in a far more mundane but perhaps no more acceptable way: he is an exile.

Peter Lorre's Dr Gogol is a brilliant surgeon, desperately in love with the Grand Guignol actress Madame Orlac. He is a regular at the Théâtre des Horreurs, where he sits in the gloom of a private box, getting desperately aroused every night at the sight of Madame Orlac being tortured on stage. This love engendered by the sight of a woman undergoing agonies at the hands of torturers—even if in the 'safe' context of an artistic production—is deeply problematic. It shows a profoundly, fundamentally misogynistic patriarchal system at work: men are aroused at the sight of female suffering, while long-suffering wives are expected to sit through a spectacle that objectifies and ultimately enacts the destruction of women at the hands of men wielding red hot pokers, swords and other phallic implements. Yet, in spite of his compliance with a patriarchal value-system, Dr Gogol's love for Madame Orlac is branded a 'mad love' even in the film's title. This section of the chapter explores the reasons why Dr Gogol's love is mad, when Orlac's love for his wife is sane.



Figure 4.1: The mad doctor (Peter Lorre) and the object of his affections in *Mad Love* (Karl Freund, 1935).

The film opens with Dr Gogol's arrival at the Théâtre des Horreurs for what turns out to be Madame Orlac's final performance. He pauses in the theatre lobby devoutly to stare at a waxworks of the longed-for actress (fig. 4.1). A clearly drunk patron of the theatre walks past and makes a flippant remark about the figurine. Incensed, Dr Gogol jumps to the lady's defence, giving an early indication of his difficulty distinguishing between the object of his affections and the woman he loves. This blurring of the boundaries, this inability to distinguish between the woman and the inanimate likeness of that woman, again shows a strict adherence to a patriarchal discourse that constructs women as objects, a discourse that denies women agency and questions their humanity. And yet, Dr Gogol, a man who not only unquestioningly accepts this patriarchal discourse, but actively contributes to it through his objectification of women and his projection of violent desires on the problematic and incorporeal representation of a woman, is branded insane for the love he professes for Madame Orlac.

Dr Gogol is deeply disturbed by his inability to elicit the 'proper' response from Madame Orlac. However hard he tries to comply with the patriarchal discourse that structures life in the host nation, he cannot be said to belong, he is excluded from a meaningful participation in discourse. While he imitates the patriarchal discourse around him, he cannot be said to participate in normative discourse, which excludes him. At the end of Madame Orlac's farewell performance, Dr Gogol is invited to the backstage party as a 'representative of the public'. This



Figure 4.2: Dr Gogol's dark ecstasy: identification with both torturer and tortured.

qualified invitation indicates Dr Gogol's apartness from the cast and crew. He is allowed to be present, but only as a representative of the performer's other, the audience. The phrase 'representative of the public' suggests further that Dr Gogol is there not in his capacity of Dr Gogol, in other words, not as himself, brilliant surgeon, Grand Guignol fan, brooding man of mystery, but as a member of the public. He is, then, an arbitrarily selected individual charged with standing in for a community or group, and as such his identity is immaterial. This group, however, is in fundamental opposition to the cast and crew of the theatre, indicated by the separation of stage and backstage and audience areas of the theatre. Further, Dr Gogol is not a true representative of the audience: he takes a private box each night. He watches the performance from behind half-drawn curtains, hiding in the shadow of his box (fig. 4.2). He does not mingle with the audience. His dark pleasure in the gloom of the private box is a very different kind of involvement in the spectacle to the one shown by the man who grins with sadistic delight while covering his wife's eyes from the grim proceedings on stage. Dr Gogol, an avid spectator of the executions of prisoners, seems to be less gripped by the sight of the Guillotine slicing the heads off convicts, than he is by the sight of Madame Orlac's performance of a thousand agonies in the Théâtre des Horreurs. We see him observe an execution with a cool detachment, an air of professional interest and perhaps a touch of morbid delight, in sharp contrast with his sweaty, shivering, goggle-eyed adrenaline-rush of imagined participation in the theatre.

Dr Gogol's intense involvement in the performance, apart from indicating an

inability properly to understand the codes of patriarchal discourse—he takes them too literally, perhaps—also suggests that the narratives that unfold on the stage of the Théâtre des Horreurs somehow hold a special significance for him. A billboard outside the theatre shows a list of the plays performed by the company: ‘La mort’ (Death), ‘Trahi’ (Betrayed), ‘Dans l’ombre’ (In shadows) and ‘Torturée’ (Tortured Woman). These terms are all applicable in some ways to Dr Gogol, his obsessions and his desires. He is a man fascinated by death, who watches from the shadows and is tortured by a body that betrays his ‘other’ identity.

As the incident in the theatre lobby already suggested (by showing him blur the boundaries between woman and the representation of woman), Dr Gogol seems to have trouble finding his proper place within the spectator-performer binary. He positions himself as participator and reads the performance as, if not reality, at least an illusion of reality (as opposed to the knowing, deliberate suspension of disbelief shown by the man with the squeamish wife). Where other members of the audience are witnessing a violent spectacle designed to arouse and titillate, Dr Gogol participates: he feels the pleasure of inflicting pain with the searing hot poker. Or perhaps he feels the pain itself, a cathartic experience of his own suffering repackaged and performed as a patriarchal narrative. Like the exile in Hollywood cinema, a dual figure of identification and repudiation, Dr Gogol is both torturer and tortured, man in the shadow (*Dans l’ombre*) and victim (*Torturé*) in the spotlight. His exaggerated identification with the torturer and the excessive projection of his desires upon the tortured figure of the woman mirrors his painful desire to participate. This is a desire as much to participate in the torture (as torturer, or perhaps tortured) as it is a desire to participate in patriarchal normative discourse (which of course inflicts torture on the other, and thereby tortures Dr Gogol himself). This uncertain positioning of the self within the binary oppositions that underpin normative discourse is spelled out by another mad doctor, Dr Vollin in *The Raven* (Lew Landers, 1935): ‘I tear torture from my soul by torturing you!’. Dr Gogol’s inability to position himself within the audience-performer binary, then, is one that is mirrored in his failure to establish a firm and secure position within society as a whole, underlined by his liminal position not only within the audience-performer binary, but also by his contradictory dual identification with victim and torturer. This failure to understand which side of the audience-performer divide he is on, perhaps, also mirrors his failure to realize that his perception of his own position within the ‘us/them’ binary is wrong, too. This is a key point, and one that I come back to regularly in this chapter.

At the end of the final performance, Dr Gogol pays a visit on Madame Orlac to congratulate her on yet another triumphant portrayal of woman destroyed at the hands of man. When he finds out that not only is Madame Orlac retiring from the stage, but she is also married to a ‘brilliant pianist’, Dr Gogol is deeply shaken. ‘I’ve come to depend on seeing you every night. But I must see you

again! I MUST!' he whines. To relive and experience Madame Orlac's sufferings on stage is critical for Dr Gogol's maintenance of a functioning identity. Perhaps it is the constant reaffirmation of man's role in a patriarchal society, coupled with Dr Gogol's—however misapplied—external signs of virility that are necessary to keep a precariously balanced mind on its throne.

Dr Gogol's apartness, his inability firmly to situate himself within the host nation is further indicated by his outward appearance. He is a small man, with a gleaming bald head. He has no facial hair and generally gives the appearance of being quite hairless in general. This hairlessness, a possible indication of containment, an attempted communication of a safe and secure identity impervious to the threat of abjection, is undermined by an oozing, perspiring, pudgy body that speaks of precisely that incompleteness that the baldness perhaps seeks to deny. His eyes protrude from their sockets<sup>3</sup> suggesting a barely contained interior that threatens to spill out at any moment. The divergent pull of this abjection and bodily integrity is reiterated by the overinvestment of a fundamentally effeminate body with signs of excessive masculinity. Dr Gogol's heavy overcoat with fur-lined lapels and stiff-brimmed black hat give the impression of a man seeking to compensate for a body that speaks of a far from secure identity. Just as Ugarte in *Casablanca* failed to fill out the white tuxedo properly, thereby in effect drawing attention to the inadequacy of the body under the costume of the active normative male (Bogart's Rick),<sup>4</sup> so too Dr Gogol seems here dwarfed by his overcoat, his puniness exaggerated by the very coat that is designed to communicate power and masculinity. The final effect of his appearance is one of confusion and uncertainty, mirroring his inability adequately to position himself within the 'us/them' binary. This confusion is exacerbated by the misapplication of excessive signs of masculinity. While the abundantly furry lapel of his coat serves to symbolise virility, by virtue of its position around the throat, its shimmering softness and luxurious abundance, it undermines the very image of virility it seeks to project, instead speaking of a liminality, a troubling blurring of gender-boundaries that effectively queers Dr Gogol's body.

The excessive emphasis on masculinity, which paradoxically denies that very masculinity, indicates a desire to make up for a body that does not and cannot fit. The clothes, designed to cover up this pudgy and effeminate body while communicating a virility that is not there, attest to Dr Gogol's troubling suspicion that the host society excludes him. And yet, it is the strategy itself that marks Dr Gogol as alien and other: he misreads the host nation's normative discourse and his clothes and misapplied props of masculinity become as distinctive and

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<sup>3</sup>This is something that critics at the time of the film's release picked up on and discussed in a tone that staggers the mind today. See Youngkin (2005:118;129).

<sup>4</sup>See the section on Lorre, and particularly *Casablanca* in Chapter 3; pp: 190-205.

distinguishing (from ‘us’) as his puny body. Dr Gogol then attempts to perform normality for the host nation, but his protestation of ‘I am sane’ is heard by the host nation as ‘I am stark raving mad’.

Dr Gogol’s failure to fit in despite a wholehearted espousal of patriarchal values must be considered in light of stereotyping and its role in the acquisition of identity. He is quite clearly a ‘foreigner’: quite apart from the normative discourse of the host nation that locates him beyond the human loop, Dr Gogol is marked as alien quite simply by his name. Gogol, the Russian dramatist, poet and novelist, was every bit the outsider that his fictional namesake is. Gogol was born into a Russian-speaking Ukrainian family (Gogol, 1997: v), a man without an ironclad identity, a man who lived in exile in Paris, hated the French, but loved their theatre and their culinary arts, often eating himself into debilitating fits of indigestion (Troyat, 1974: 170). The significance of this name, when applied to a brilliant surgeon in exile in France with a pudgy frame and an all-consuming but unrequited love for a woman, should not be underestimated. It is a confirmation, or reiteration of the character’s otherness, his inability to fit in, and of a body that rejects the nourishment it desperately longs to ingest in the host nation.

The desire to fit in—in spite of society’s steadfast rejection of these attempts of integration—is reflected in Dr Gogol’s work. Unlike *Murders in the Rue Morgue*’s Dr Mirakle (Béla Lugosi), an unhinged scientist obsessed with the pursuit of arcane knowledge in the hope of remedying his otherness that the host nation will not let him forget, Dr Gogol works towards the benefit of the host nation. His state-of-the-art clinic is dedicated to the treatment of people suffering from mysterious afflictions. As Madame Orlac says: ‘he cures deformed children and mutilated soldiers’. It is quite significant that Dr Gogol’s specialism should be the ‘fixing’ of ‘other’ bodies, bodies deformed through violence and bodies malformed at birth. Curing mutilated soldiers means redressing the damage inflicted in conflict, damage caused by an encounter on the battlefield with the ‘other’. Dr Gogol, then, an ‘other’ body himself, offsets the dangers inherent in the other body by eliminating the signs of abjection afflicting the normative body in crisis as a result of encounters with the other body. But, as the story unfolds, we see that this endeavour is quite futile: he may be able to put people back together, but that does not mean that he can restore the bodily integrity damaged in these encounters. If anything, Dr Gogol’s intervention is a further damaging encounter.

In the first scene that shows Dr Gogol at work in his clinic, we see him standing over the bed of a child. His assistant, Dr Wong, who is of Asian extraction, a mirroring and reiteration of Dr Gogol’s otherness,<sup>5</sup> reports that the child has had

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<sup>5</sup>Benshoff insists (1997:48), albeit in passing, that Dr Wong is Dr Gogol’s queer partner. In this instance, I suspect that an ethnic other ‘sidekick’ might just be that and no more (and of course, that is plenty, mirroring and augmenting as it does Dr Gogol’s status as outsider and other). Their interaction is very limited, indeed, and a queer reading of their relationship would offer little of

the first natural sleep since she has been admitted. Dr Gogol strokes her hand with tender care as he listens to the report and issues quietly-spoken instructions for her continued care. The conference is interrupted by a phone-call from the chief of police, who informs Dr Gogol of the imminent execution by Guillotine of the murderer Rollo. Dr Gogol immediately forgets patient and prognosis. His excitement clear, he practically shouts into the mouthpiece his promise to attend. The child stirs and moans in pain, but Dr Gogol does not even notice. The prospect of an execution has driven all thoughts of medicine from his mind. The scene, apart from being morbidly funny thanks largely to Lorre's impeccable timing, speaks to Dr Gogol's inner divisions: a division between his desire to belong by repairing broken bodies and thereby strengthening threatened identities, and his irresistible attraction to the performance of the splitting of the self through the destruction of the body. Clearly, this is a man deeply concerned with the stability of identity and the vulnerability of the illusion of corporeal integrity that underpins that identity (Gilman, 1985: 15-35).

The case of Stephen Orlac, the pianist, illustrates Gogol's brilliance, but also his inability to resolve threats to the integrity of identity through surgical means, something that bodes ill for his own troubles. Orlac's hands are crushed beyond repair when his train crashes. It is the same train that carries the knife-thrower Rollo, a circus performer and murderer, to Paris and the place of his execution. Orlac and Rollo even have a brief encounter as Orlac enters Rollo's compartment to retrieve his fountain pen, which he had lent to a ghoulish autograph hunter. Confronted with the possibility of the amputation of her husband's hand, in desperation (and on the suggestion of her dresser), Madame Orlac beseeches Dr Gogol to operate on her husband and save his hands, and thereby save his musical career. As we find out, Orlac's identity is fundamentally underpinned by his identity as a musician. Once that is undermined, his complete image of himself is destabilized (as I go on to explain below) to the extent that he believes himself culpable of murder when he knows himself not to be capable of it.

This disintegration of self-image, or the thought of becoming that which we fear we may not be able to help becoming (Gilman, 1985: 20), is one that threatens Dr Gogol, too. It is here that his love becomes insane: while he believes himself to be a rational man, a man of science, the nationalist normative discourse that excludes him and constructs him as 'other' and 'mad' destabilizes his identity by denying his self-asserted rationality. He is then forced, by normative discourse, to perform normality. This performance of normality, however, is perceived by the host nation as madness, because Dr Gogol does not know how to perform rationality. Ultimately, instead of normality, he performs the very madness that he knows

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interest. I suspect this is why this particular relationship is not one that Benshoff chooses to focus on.

he does not suffer from. To put it simply: say ‘you’re hysterical’ often enough to a disgruntled child, and in their increasingly desperate attempt to present themselves as calm, they will inevitably become hysterical. It is then through his performance of the madness attributed to him by the host nation that he becomes truly mad.

The real-life effect of discursive performativity (Butler, 1993: 188) is first played out through the character of Orlac. Convinced that he has somehow ended up with the hands of Rollo (which of course he has), he slowly descends into madness as he questions his control over his own hands. Identity is fragile and needs constant reaffirmation of one’s bodily integrity in order to remain functional (*ibid.*). When doubt over one’s control of one’s own body, or even just a part of it, becomes too strong, identity disintegrates. Indeed, this is what happens to Orlac, thanks largely to Dr Gogol. It is Dr Gogol who grafts Rollo’s hands onto Orlac’s body (much like he seeks to graft himself onto the body of the nation, ignorant of the powerful protective mechanism of the national body, normative discourse, that works to reject the invading other). It is also Dr Gogol who, masquerading as a resurrected, machinic Rollo, complete with metal pins, head reattached to his torso, hands to his wrists with a terrifying assortment of metal devices, tells Orlac that his hands were, indeed, once those of the knife-throwing murderer. This revelation pushes Orlac into madness.

The same process can be seen in Dr Gogol’s character played out through the entire film. From the very earliest moments, filmic discourse and dialogue repeatedly describe Dr Gogol as ‘nasty’, ‘queer’ and ‘foreign’. These constant reiterations of difference, statements that deny him a firm and stable identity by questioning his legitimacy as a resident and even his sanity, eventually push Dr Gogol to perform the very madness and nastiness he stands accused of. At the end of the wrap party, Dr Gogol sees removal men prepare to take the waxworks of Madame Orlac to be melted. He buys the statue, offering some weak explanation about Galatea, Pygmalion and the myth of the statue that came to life in response to the fervour of its creator’s love. The removal man turns to his driver and begs him to start the engine, grunting: ‘there’s some awful queer people about at night in Montmartre’. The request itself is not that ‘queer’: first, it is the waxworks of a woman and the purchaser is a man; second, it is not that odd that an aficionado of the theatre should be interested in buying a wax figurine of a star of the stage. What makes the exchange queer is that it should be Dr Gogol who wishes to buy a likeness of a woman who ‘belongs’. The threat here lies in the aspiration implied by the purchase: the ‘nasty foreign gentleman’ (in the words of Madame Orlac’s dresser) hopes to establish—by proxy—a relationship with a daughter of the nation. The fantasies of rape that are inherently bound up with nationalist discourses surrounding occupation by enemies (Hayward, 2000: 89) here find fertile ground in the imagination of the locals.

Dr Gogol is not content with possessing Madame Orlac’s likeness, of course.

Just as the host nation is terrified by his attempts at integration, which they interpret as ‘queer’, ‘nasty’ and ‘foreign’ aspirations to cause miscegenation in the host nation through the rape of its women, so Dr Gogol obsessively pursues the gaps and fissures on the illusory hegemonic body of the nation-state (*ibid.*: 94-5) in order to graft himself into it. Ultimately he arrives at what he hopes will be a solution: drive his rival in love mad by suggesting that his bodily integrity is irretrievably undermined by the transplantation of the murderer Rollo’s hands onto his wrists and, the competition eliminated, he should be able to fill the space vacated by the husband. The trouble is that Stephen Orlac, an Englishman, is not an exilic other. The filmic discourse (dialogue and representation) positions Orlac within the human loop. He may be, puzzlingly, an artist (unlike his stepfather, the antiques dealer, who by virtue of his work buying, valuing and selling antiques, in other words putting a price on objects associated with memories and history, is tapped into the history of the nation and therefore participates fully and completely), but he is never othered by discourse. His is not the uncontained genius of the unhinged mind, but a genius that finds its expression in music and is therefore firmly located in culture and the cultural practices that contribute to the production of a hegemonic national space, to mix and match Lefebvre and Hayward. Orlac is a man very much within the human loop. This is the stumbling block that brings Dr Gogol’s fragile identity in exile crashing down. The man whose elimination he hoped would open up a gap into which he could insert himself (this somehow sounds a little dirty, but I suppose it *is* dirty), is firmly rooted in the culture of the host nation, and therefore resilient to the destabilizing effect of the exile. After all, his wife, Yvonne, does not fall under the spell of the exile, unlike Madeline did in *White Zombie*, where the exile’s control of the feminine worked to instigate madness in the normative male. Orlac’s removal by Gogol is impossible. He thinks he has managed to drive Orlac completely insane by posing as a resurrected posthuman Rollo, but Orlac’s identity, it turns out, is much less fragile than his own. In a moment of beautiful irony, in the end it is the hand that he grafted onto Orlac’s wrist that stabs Gogol in the back: he is betrayed by his very effort to restore a stable and firm identity to a man who belongs more than he himself does.

Gogol’s insanity is then rooted in his growing realization that he does not belong. His inability to position himself within the binary system of normative discourse, as us versus them, as natural versus alien, as sane versus insane—reflected in his failure to situate himself within the spectator-performer binary, his inability to distinguish between the woman he loves and the object of his desires, his failure to understand that Orlac’s identity is made of sterner stuff than his own—finally sends his mind tottering off its throne. Just as his love is mad for daring to hope to conquer the feminine within the host nation, he himself is mad, too, for believing that he could graft himself onto the body of the host nation by positioning himself as a rational man and a viable body in opposition to what he

assumes is the irrational mind and non-viable body of Orlac. Very briefly, then: Gogol's madness is the failure of understanding, of control and the inability to act.

Gogol is by no means alone. In what follows I consider a number of other exiles gone mad, always striving to relate their individual experiences of exclusion and insanity to Dr Gogol and each other in an effort to show the consistency with which Hollywood uses the figure of the mad other to warn against attempts of integration by bodies it judges to be non-viable in the host nation.

## The *Invisible Ghost*

A film that, perhaps surprisingly, echoes many of the issues explored by *Mad Love* is the 1941 Poverty Row quickie *Invisible Ghost* (Joseph H Lewis). That it should echo aspects of *Mad Love* is surprising because of the gaps between the two films: *Mad Love* was an MGM production aimed at cashing in on the popularity of horror films at the period, on the box office appeal of a newly arrived European star, Peter Lorre, and the talent of one of the most important artists of German Expressionism, the cinematographer (and now director) Karl Freund, whose *The Mummy* (1932) was one of Universal's three enduring horror films of the early 1930s. It was then a fairly big-budget project, with major stars, made at the height of the popularity of horror films, in the middle of the 1930s, at a time when the US was emerging from the Great Depression and a European—let alone global—conflict still seemed avoidable. By contrast, *Invisible Ghost* was a Poverty Row quickie, directed by the little-known director Joseph H Lewis (now enjoying cult status), starring Lugosi, whose career was faltering as horror films steadily lost their appeal in the late 1930s. It was made in 1941, at a time when the big question was no longer whether the US would enter a second global conflict in two decades, but when it would do so. That *Invisible Ghost* should show a striking kinship with *Mad Love*, in terms of its representation of the exilic body and its torments, points out the consistency of Hollywood's imagining of the threats against the body of the nation, even at a time of great political, social and economic upheaval. This consistency then suggests, as I already proposed in the introduction to this thesis, that rather than the context dictating the representation, it is the representation that can tell us about the nation and its timeless fears and insecurities.

*Invisible Ghost* is the puzzling story of a serial killer on the loose in a small community. It takes place exclusively in the home of the wealthy Dr Kessler (Lugosi). This being a Katzman-produced Poverty Row quickie, Dr Kessler's wealth is hinted at (by the presence of a housekeeper, a butler and a chauffeur in the house) rather than represented in material terms for the likely reason that, due to the shoestring budget, little money was spent on décor or props. It is never explained what sort of doctor Kessler may have been in his working life, although



Figure 4.3: Dr Kessler (Béla Lugosi) in *Invisible Ghost* (Joseph H Lewis, 1941) cannot hide the torment of the disintegration of his American Dream as he sets eyes on the woman who left him.

at one point we seem him dress a superficial wound suffered by his butler, which would suggest that he may be a retired medical doctor. All the murders—some of them take place during the narrative, others are mentioned as having occurred in the past—have been committed in or around Dr Kessler’s house, yet the police are stumped. The killer is, in fact, Dr Kessler, who, as we see in one of the early scenes of the film, goes into a murderous trance every time his runaway wife (played by the former silent screen star Betty Compson) appears in the garden and looks through the window at her husband (figs. 4.3 and 4.4). In yet another bizarre plot development that is sketched out in a conversation between characters whose purpose seems to be little more than to relay this piece of information, Mrs Kessler’s attempt at running away had gone disastrously wrong. Unbeknownst to Dr Kessler, she is now insane, sheltered by his chauffeur in the gatehouse.

When the most recent victim, Dr Kessler’s housemaid, is identified as the former sweetheart of Miss Kessler’s (Polly Ann Young) fiancé, the fiancé is immediately arrested, charged with all murders and in spite of Dr Kessler’s intervention at the state governor’s office, he is put to death. In perhaps the film’s most absurd twist, the hitherto unseen and unmentioned twin brother of the dead fiancé (played by the same actor, John McGuire) appears without notice on the night of the execution. Aided by the surprisingly unmoved Miss Kessler (I suspect we should ascribe her lack of emotion to a shortcoming in acting ability rather than unfeel-



Figure 4.4: Dr Kessler in a murderous trance.

ing or cruelty of character) he begins investigating the crimes in order to clear his wrongly executed brother's name. When a scrap of Dr Kessler's dressing gown is found lodged in a tear in a portrait of Mrs Kessler, the fiancé's twin brother remarks: 'without doubt the murderer is insane; the picture can tell us that.' In line with racist thought, which fixes the ethnic other as already insane or prone to insanity (Gilman, 1985: 132), but for no other identifiable reason, the black butler (Clarence Muse)<sup>6</sup> comes under suspicion. During the ensuing psychiatric evaluation of the butler, it is Dr Kessler who, unaware of his own murderous trances, enters one such trance when his wife wanders into his mansion, and unknowingly reveals himself to be the killer. His wife drops dead and Dr Kessler emerges from his trance, only to be told that he has committed the murders. In perhaps one of the most powerful—but still faintly ludicrous—moments of Lugosi's acting career, Dr Kessler silently mouths the word 'me' and hangs his head. He accepts the charge without protest and is led away by the police.

It may be one of the most shoddily written films in Hollywood's long history, and certainly few valid conclusions could be drawn from an analysis that takes as its starting point any suspicion of intentionality, but it is precisely because of its haphazard writing, its reliance on shorthand and convention (in short: stereotype) and a faint hope that the audience will not care too much whether it makes sense,

<sup>6</sup>Muse had played the superstitious coach driver in *White Zombie*, another black character represented as inherently prone to insanity.

that this film is eminently suitable for an analysis of the way Hollywood cinema and its cheap underbelly, Poverty Row, conceives of the exile. What this film can help us identify are the knee jerk reactions, first-sight prejudices and immediate opinions both engendered and exploited by films whose primary objective is to make money by more or less carefully gauging the tastes and expectations of its audience.

Albeit *Mad Love* and *Invisible Ghost* seem at first glance to be miles apart, there is a fundamental similarity in the way the exile's isolation from society at large is represented. This similarity can be apprehended in the figure of the feminine. As we have seen in the first section of this Chapter, Dr Gogol uses the waxworks of Madame Orlac as a substitute for Madame Orlac herself. I argued that unable to get the actual woman, Dr Gogol hopes to achieve the illusion of possessing her by acquiring her likeness. Dr Gogol's growing inability to distinguish between the woman and the object was the main sign of his madness. His investment in the figurine of all his hopes of belonging, of achieving integration into the nation through the conquest of the feminine pointed to his faltering sanity. Eventually, this same inability to distinguish between the object and woman, his assumption that the real Madame Orlac was the waxworks figurine come to life, was the final confirmation for society at large that he had gone beyond not only the acceptable, but also the tolerable, and had to be put to death. As I now go on to explain, there is a very similar relationship between Dr Kessler, Mrs Kessler and the normative (the latter embodied by the triumvirate of the eligible bachelor, the policeman and the psychiatrist).

Unlike Dr Gogol, who was never able to conquer love, Dr Kessler has loved and lost (which is, it is said, better than never having loved at all, an empty platitude this film may serve to dispel). Mrs Kessler has left her husband for another man. Still, each year, when their wedding anniversary comes around Dr Kessler has a special dinner, where he pretends that his wife is present and all is well. He knows that she has left him, but chooses to act, for that one night of the year, as if she were there. In this masquerade of normality he is assisted by his daughter, who ensures his (or rather 'their') privacy, and the butler, who serves dinner. Dr Kessler is unaware that his wife did not get far. Periodically, Mrs Kessler leaves her hiding place in the basement of the gatehouse (where she is secretly fed and cared for by the driver and his wife) and wanders the grounds of the Kessler house. When Dr Kessler catches sight of her through a window, he enters a trance. In this trance he sets off in search of a victim. If he finds a potential victim, he throttles them using his dressing gown.

The implications reach far: in his own conception of self, Dr Kessler remains perfectly normal, a fully-functioning, respected member of the community, as long as he can pretend on his wedding anniversary that nothing had happened to subvert his position in society. During the anniversary dinner he maintains polite

chit-chat, empty small talk with thin air. The film starts with Dr Kessler entering the dining room, bowing at an empty chair and saying: ‘Good evening dear, you are more beautiful than ever.’ This shows how Dr Kessler hopes to communicate a safe and secure identity through ritual. He observes the ritual of the marking of the wedding anniversary, and he observes the ritual of peaceful co-habitation even in the absence of the partner whose mere presence, within the conventions of a patriarchal system, would render the ritual meaningful. Further, Dr Kessler’s behaviour emulates the discourse of national unity based in a patriarchal normativity: by creating—and coming to believe—the illusion of a coherent and hegemonic family unit based on marriage between a man and a woman, and by underpinning that illusion through a strict adherence to the conventions of discourse appropriate to that domestic setting, Dr Kessler hopes to continue to assert a viability that is always in question in his own mind, and comes to be questioned by those around him as the narrative unfolds.

The solitary tête-à-tête shows that Dr Kessler understands what is required of him in order to be seen to be normal. He understands that he needs to operate within a functioning family unit, where the patriarchal order is upheld through his performance of the role of the *pater familias*. The problem is that he performs that which he is not: a happily married man. His insistence on performing the role of the happily married father when he is no such thing puts to the lie the viability he seeks to assert through that very performance. In other words, just as Dr Gogol, attempting to assert a masculinity that is always in question, performs the madness he is accused of—until he becomes mad—so too Dr Kessler attempts to perform compliance with patriarchal normative discourse with the same negative outcome. The pretence of family unity is seen for just that by those around him: pretence; and a fairly disturbing one, too. Miss Kessler’s fiancé catches sight of Dr Kessler conversing with thin air. Miss Kessler admits ‘it must seem weird if you haven’t seen it before.’ The fiancé’s hushed, understanding tones show that he has appraised the situation fully: her father is stark raving mad. ‘He always seemed perfectly rational to me,’ he whispers. Even the new housemaid remarks, ‘I think this is a crazy house!’ Dr Kessler, however, remains oblivious to just how mad he appears during the anniversary dinner. His belief that his imaginary anniversary dinner is normal, or at most no worse than a mild eccentricity shows the extent to which he has misunderstood normative discourse and its requirements.

A reading that suggests itself following my analysis of *Mad Love* is that for Dr Kessler the invisible Mrs Kessler at the anniversary dinner is a safe and contained incorporeal femininity that he can control. The imagined Mrs Kessler is fully in his power, precisely because he has imagined her. Just as Galatea—the waxworks figurine of Madame Orlac—is a substitute for the real feminine that Dr Gogol cannot control or possess, so too the imaginary Mrs Kessler is a substitute for the wife that had run away from Dr Kessler. This imaginary substitute is

one that helps prop up Dr Kessler's sanity, although while doing so, it confirms to the outside the very insanity that Dr Kessler strives to deny through the performance of the presence of an illusory Mrs Kessler. The real Mrs Kessler, however, wild and uncontrolled, roaming the grounds at night, is a perpetual reminder of his failure to comply with the patriarchal norm: to control the feminine, thereby asserting his viable, powerful masculinity. It is for this reason—his inability to exert the control that all viable men within a patriarchal system have over the feminine—that when he catches sight of the runaway Mrs Kessler, his mind shuts down and he enters his murderous trance. The reminder of his failure triggers in him an unthinking reflex, which reveals him as he truly is: unable to fit into a patriarchal order; unsuitable for integration; a genuine and immediate threat to that order.

What gives this film a more tragic edge than, say, *Mad Love*, is that Dr Kessler is a genuinely lovely man. He shows deep concern for those around him. He strains every sinew to get his daughter's fiancé pardoned. When the new cook is about to run away because she fears her cooking is not up to scratch, the compliments Dr Kessler pays her are truly affectionate and heart-warming.<sup>7</sup> When he is finally identified as the killer, his shock and sorrow are plain for all to see; so much so that even the policeman, who had chased the murderer for so long to no avail, seems to find no pleasure in arresting him. Yet Dr Kessler is a raving madman, a serial murderer who cannot be allowed to remain at large in society. *Invisible Ghost* then shows that the exile need not be evil or monstrous, for even when he is the nicest possible person, the frustrations and pent-up aggressions born of an incomplete integration into the host nation will find a murderous outlet that renders him unsafe to remain at large.

## Medical experiments in the Rue Morgue

Existing critical works on *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Robert Florey, 1932) focus on violence (Prince, 2003: 181), the film's roots in the European modernist tradition (Sultanik, 1986: 223), distrust of the scientific establishment in the 1930s (Matthews, 2009: 141) and Dr Mirakle's Darwinist project (Creed, 2009: 140-151). What I hope to achieve in this section of the present chapter is a synthesis of these four approaches by linking the use of violence and torture to the mad scientist's attempt to prove that 'we are the product of evolution' (in Pierre's flat-mate's words), a project that has its roots, I argue, in Dr Mirakle's displacement and con-

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<sup>7</sup>When the cook tells Dr Kessler that she would cook apple pie the next day, he tells her apple pie is his favourite. This can be understood as an attempt to assert his integration into the host nation by professing love for a dish that is synonymous with the American way of life itself: 'as American as apple pie.'

sequent perception by the host nation as ‘funny’ and ‘almost a [fairground] show in himself’.

In *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, Dr Mirakle’s goal is not merely to prove evolution, but also to explode the binary opposition that frames him as other and therefore animal and as a result intolerable within the normative order. He works to establish mankind’s kinship with the ape. This, he hopes, will unite all mankind in a shared origin within the animal kingdom, which, in turn, will make it impossible for some to claim superiority over others. This work, however, requires subjects for experimentation. Dr Mirakle trawls the streets of Paris at night in search of suitable brides for Erik, a gorilla who is the star of Dr Mirakle’s fairground show. If he could show that Erik and a female human can mate, he hopes, it could be established beyond doubt that man descends from the ape. This would put an end to that element of racist pseudo-scientific discourse that locates the other’s body in the animal kingdom. Simply put: if we are all descended from the ape, one cannot call another a beast, because to do so would be to call oneself a beast too. Dr Mirakle’s mistake—and the marker of his madness—lies in his choice of subjects for experimentation.

I have already discussed this film at some length in relation to the concept of the exilic space in Chapter 3, and will not go into great detail on that topic here. Instead here I analyse Dr Mirakle’s performance of rationality, before focusing on his medical experiments and its inappropriate subjects in a reading informed by Sander Gilman’s *The Jew’s Body* (1991). In so doing I will also make references to other Lugosi characters, which equally show a shockingly pragmatic attitude to the female body as functional object.

The film opens with a carnival scene. A throng of merry Parisians are milling around a gaudy carnival that boasts extraordinary exhibits, which are in fact foreign bodies: an Arabian belly dancer (Lady Fatima) and an Apache chief and one of his warriors. We follow a couple of young couples as they move from tent to tent. They arrive before a tent advertising Erik the Gorilla, ‘the beast with a human brain’, as the poster proudly announces. Inside they try to sit unobtrusively in the back row, but they are told to move to the front by a blatantly foreign man: his curly hair, joined eyebrows, wide-brimmed hat and walking stick conform to 19<sup>th</sup> century stereotypical representations of the Jewish male (e.g., Gilman, 1991: 65). The film’s putative hero, Pierre Dupin (Leon Waycoff) and his girlfriend Camille (Sidney Fox) move to the front, discussing their immediate impressions of Dr Mirakle. ‘What a funny man, he’s a show in himself,’ says Camille. ‘Did you notice his accent? I wonder where he comes from...’ Pierre muses in reply. As in the case of so many other exilic bodies in Hollywood cinema, the host nation has formed an immediate and unchangeable impression of Dr Mirakle: he is weird and foreign. From here, there is little doubt as to the eventual outcome of Dr Mirakle’s attempts at exploding the binary that frames him as other.

It is worth pausing here to consider Dr Mirakle's opening remarks at the sideshow. No other exile is quite so explicit in setting out their agenda, or quite so ambitious in their plans. That he should be more explicit and more ambitious than other exilic bodies does not make him an exception. On the contrary, he is, alongside Dracula who embodies the threat of invasion, an archetype of the exilic other in Hollywood cinema. Dr Mirakle sets the agenda for the exiles who are already within the host nation: to disrupt normative discourse in order to find a purchase on the hegemonic body of the host nation. In order to illustrate my point fully, I here include Dr Mirakle's speech in its entirety,<sup>8</sup> with interjections and heckles by his audience.

DR MIRAKLE: 'Silence! I'm Dr Mirakle Messieurs et Mesdames. I'm not a sideshow charlatan, so if you expect to see the usual carnival hocus-pocus, just go to the box office and get your money back! I'm not exhibiting a freak, a monstrosity of nature, but a milestone in the development of life. The shadow of Erik the ape hangs over us all. The darkness before the dawn of man.'

'Listen to him, brothers and sisters. He's speaking to you. Can you understand what he says, or have you forgotten? I have re-learned his language. [...]

'Here is the story of man. In the silence of chaos there was the seed that rose and grew into the tree of life. Life was motion. Fins changed into wings, wings into ears, crawling reptiles grew legs. Aeons of ages passed. There came a time when a four-legged thing walked upright. Behold, the first man!'

OLD GENTLEMAN: 'Heresy!'

DR M: 'Heresy? Heresy? Do they still burn men for heresy? Then burn me, monsieur, light the fire! Do you think your little candle will outshine the flame of truth? Do you think these boards and curtains are my whole life? They are merely a trap to catch the pennies of fools.'

'My life is consecrated to a great experiment. I tell you, I will prove your kinship with the ape! Erik's blood shall be mixed with the blood of man!'

CAMILLE: 'What does he mean?'

PIERRE: 'I wish I knew.'

Dr Mirakle begins by trying to establish for himself an illustrious pedigree. He seeks to distance himself from his fellow sideshow exhibitors, implicitly claiming

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<sup>8</sup>Well, not entirely. I have cut out Dr Mirakle's 'conversation' with Erik, in which he translates Erik's account of his childhood in Africa.

for himself membership in the scientific community. But he *is* a sideshow exhibitor, and he cannot escape the moniker of ‘charlatan’ throughout the film. It is only in death that he is described—even if mockingly—by the title he so craved: the gendarme that escorts his corpse to the morgue tells the morgue attendant, ‘they say he was a scientist.’ This is in no way a recognition of his work, however. Dr Mirakle simply becomes, like the women whose corpses he had jettisoned into the Seine, an unclaimed dead body who cannot speak for himself, waiting for autopsy and unceremonious disposal, the fate of the destitute, the prostitute and the criminal in death.<sup>9</sup>

Having introduced himself, Dr Mirakle goes on to give evidence of his vast learning (*savoir*). He talks to Erik in the language of the apes, which he claims to have ‘re-learned’. He then ‘translates’ for the benefit of the audience. He continues this display of *savoir* by giving a lecture—albeit a fairly sketchy and highly fantastical one: ‘wings into ears’ indeed!—on the theory of evolution. He then takes the theory to its next logical step: if all life descended from ‘the seed that rose and grew into the tree of life’, it stands to reason that Erik, the ape, is ‘the first man’. This is the moment where Dr Mirakle’s project falters and dies in its birth. This is the first instance in the film when he attempts to apply his *savoir* in a critical manner. However, as I argued in Chapter 2 and again in the introduction of this Chapter, the exile operates with a *savoir of elsewhere*, and therefore his *connaissance* or analytical understanding of the world around him cannot be reliable. In other words, no matter how vast his learning, he will be unable to make valid conclusions after displacement because his knowledge is not compatible with the *savoir* of the host nation. And indeed, a gentleman in the audience gives voice to the general outrage Dr Mirakle’s thesis has provoked: ‘Heresy!’ he shouts. Dr Mirakle’s response further confirms his inability to understand his environment, which is alien to him and he to it. He sneers: ‘do they still burn men for heresy? Then burn me, monsieur!’. What Dr Mirakle does not understand is that for his heckler heresy does not mean a truth that is not yet accepted as such. Dr Mirakle’s definition is one that relies on the certain belief of the eventual acceptance of the heretical thesis. From the point of view of those who cry ‘heresy’, a heretical statement is a blatant untruth when iterated within normative discourse: an assertion that is nonsense within the system in which it was formulated. To make this clear: Dr Mirakle’s concept of heresy is that of Giordano Bruno, who went to the stake rather than recant his scientific findings in the face of the opprobrium of the Catholic Church. The heckler’s concept of heresy is that of Torquemada: a thought that irrespective of its merits, by simple virtue of its existence within the system, threatens the stability of that system. Dr Mirakle’s mistake then is his failure to understand that his project is more subversive than

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<sup>9</sup>I return to this issue later in this section.

he may have thought. Incontrovertible scientific proof of man's descent from the ape would allow Dr Mirakle to claim, in turn, kinship with the normative, but this claim of kinship in itself would destroy a system whose basic principle is that it is whole and homogenous because it excludes the likes of Dr Mirakle.

This lecture, quite literally an attempted performance of rationality, takes place against a painted backdrop showing various milestones of evolution. It resembles the Bayeux Tapestry more than a scientific chart or illustration. The sequence of organisms of increasing levels of complexity depicted on the backdrop is echoed on stage. Erik the gorilla stands half erect in his cage. He is the first link in the sequence, a savage beast that needs to be kept behind bars for the safety of those around him. Next to him stands, hunch-backed, Janos the Black, Dr Mirakle's assistant. His face is covered in thick hair, his gait is shambling, he seems hardly human. Dr Mirakle keeps him in check with a bullwhip. Janos does not need to be kept under lock and key, he is not immediately dangerous to those around him, but he is barely civilized. Finally, there is Dr Mirakle himself: his gait painfully erect, as if he had straightened his spine forcefully and has now lost all flexibility in his upper body. He is closer to Janos in appearance than to the fine gentlemen who visit his exhibit, and whose dress sense and manner he fails to emulate. This proximity to Janos (the cane that alludes to bodily trauma and therefore to mental pathology—*mens non sana in corpore insano*, as Gilman put it (1995: 74)—the animal excess of hair), indicates that Dr Mirakle needs keeping an eye on, for he may be dangerous. The task of keeping a watchful eye on the ambitious foreigner is taken on by the film's hero, Pierre Dupin. The mirroring of the backdrop behind Dr Mirakle, then, drowns out the import of his speech. Far from performing sanity of mind and membership of the community of man, he locates himself in the animal kingdom. By taking a position on stage he becomes part of a collective embodiment of the evolution of the species without being able to extend the line of evolution beyond himself to the members of the audience. Just as Dr Gogol as a solitary member of the audience had failed to cross the boundary between audience and performer, so too Dr Mirakle fails to make the connection between himself, on stage, and the audience that sit opposite (and opposed to) him. Being part of the spectacle of difference on stage, he is firmly planted on the wrong side of the binary: one of 'them', certainly not one of 'us'.

This binary opposition is then confirmed by the way this scene is followed by Pierre's outpouring of love for Camille. In what could be considered a template for all scenes of courtship in the patriarchal system, Pierre leans over the reclining Camille. With his dark clothes against her white dress, he gives the impression of crushing her. In a sing-song tone that serves to disguise the ideologically terrifying (oppressive) meaning of the words, Pierre compares her to the stars and coos 'you're like the song on May Day; you're like the wine in Burgundy on May Day.' Following so soon after Dr Mirakle's lecture on the origins of all life in the

primordial mud—an unpalatable confrontation of his audience with the vulnerability of their bodily integrity and their potential for abjection (Kristeva, 1982: 3-4)—Pierre’s profession of love seems a list of ‘dos’ (as opposed to Dr Mirakle’s ‘don’ts’): the feminine is here constructed in patriarchal discourse as incorporeal, spectral, an immaterial surface whose purpose is to receive the male signifying act (Butler, 1993: 39). This juxtaposition of the subversive and the normative forms of discourse, and Camille’s immediate rejection of the former and submission to the latter further indicates the inevitable failure of Dr Mirakle’s project.

But Dr Mirakle’s lecture is not quite over: after miscalculating the effect of his performance so badly, Dr Mirakle makes matters even worse. He has insisted on his scholarly pedigree, only to confirm in the minds of his audience that he is a charlatan. He claimed to have re-learned the language of the apes in an effort to give evidence of his vast intellect; instead he comes across as mad. He explained the theory of evolution and concluded man’s descent from the ape, only to brand himself an animal without convincing his listeners that they too shared his ancestry. He then goes on to announce that ‘Erik’s blood shall be mixed with the blood of man!’. He spells out unequivocally his intention to corrupt the pure blood of the nation by mingling it with the blood of a different species, or, in short, to cause miscegenation. This has to be the most spectacular failure of *connaissance* in a corpus of films that is certainly not short on dramatic failures of knowledge.

I now move on to consider Dr Mirakle’s ‘great experiment’. Soon after his scandalous announcement of his exact plans, Dr Mirakle comes across a pair of low-lives engaged in a deadly knife duel on a bridge across the Seine. The chaotic duel is watched by a woman, screaming in terror, clutching a lamp post. When the duellists die of their knife wounds, Dr Mirakle approaches the hysterical woman. ‘A lady in distress?’ he asks in a chilling tone of sadistic mockery. He grabs hold of the woman’s arm and forces her into his carriage. As Janos drives off, we hear her insane laughter from the darkened coach. The next scene begins with a shadow-play of Dr Mirakle (he is, revealingly, clearly recognizable by the curl of his hair and his prominent nose) approaching a female figure, who struggles against the ropes that tie her to a rack shaped like an X. Soon the audience is denied the protective distancing of the shadow-play and is confronted with the full horror of Dr Mirakle’s ‘great experiment’. The shadow-play is replaced by a direct shot of the rack, the terrified woman tied to it, and the obsessed scientist busy experimenting on her. He tells her that her suffering would be soon over as she struggles against his attempts to draw blood from a vein in her arm. Showing an absolute absence of empathy—another quality that points to his position beyond the ‘normal’—he then chides her as she fails to stop her screams of terror. The scene, one of the most disturbing in the canon for its sheer inhuman brutality, illustrates succinctly the fears of a nation confronted by the vulnerability of its illusory hegemony. In order to unpick this idea more fully, I now turn to Sander

Gilman (1991) and his analysis of the figure of the prostitute in life, and death.

Writing about the consequences of succumbing to seduction, Gilman writes: ‘The seducer is the parallel image of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). For in the act of seduction he transforms the innocence of the female into a copy of himself, just as Dracula’s victims become vampires’ (1991: 107). Gilman then turns his attention to the relationship between the pathologist and the dead prostitute as object of study.

The touching of the dead body is not merely a piteous gesture toward the “fallen,” it is a permitted touching of the female, a not contagious, not infecting touching, a control over the dead woman’s body. [...] Once dead by her own hand it was the physician who could touch the body. His role was to examine and dissect the body condemned to death by its fall from grace. And that body becomes the object of study, the corpse to be opened by the physician. For one of the favorite images of late nineteenth-century medical art is the unequal couple transmogrified into the image of the aged pathologist contemplating the exquisite body of the dead prostitute before he opens it. (ibid.: 108)

Gilman’s analysis of the cultural representation of the power-relations between seducer and seduced is quite fitting here. It is fitting for its proximity of spirit to my reading of *Dracula* as the nation’s imagination of the embodiment of the threat of invasion. It is further apt because of the presence of Béla Lugosi in both films, in the perhaps surprisingly similar roles of invader/seducer in *Dracula*, and scientist/seducer in *Murders in the Rue Morgue*. It is further apt simply because *Murders in the Rue Morgue* offers us this image of the mad scientist contemplating the exquisite body of the (not yet) dead prostitute.

In Gilman’s reasoning, the seducer infects the seduced. The seduced, ‘fallen’ woman, in turn passes on this infection to the men who are taken in by her false charms. It is in death, usually by her own hands, that the fallen woman is cleansed of her sin of succumbing to the seducer. Dr Mirakle then compounds his crimes (against the normative) by picking as a subject for his experiments a living body. Not only is it a living body, it is the body of a prostitute, the still infectious pathological body that is the product of seduction by the pathologically libidinous (and therefore syphilitic) body of the other (ibid.). Apart from showing his lack of empathy, which in itself puts him beyond the norm, the choice of a living body for his experiment to mix Erik’s blood with the blood of man shows his unsuitability for acceptance into the normative. No matter how great his *savoir*, or how rigorous he is in his application of logic (*connaissance*), he will never succeed in presenting himself as a rational and acceptable normative body for he has no compunction

in making contact with the unsafe, infectious, pathological body of the still-living prostitute.<sup>10</sup>

When Dr Mirakle completes his experiment, it is a failure. The woman's blood is 'rotten', 'black'. Her 'beauty was a lie'. In other words, the exquisite body of the prostitute held the infected (syphilitic) blood of the pathological other. This indicates just how powerful the protective mechanism of normative discourse is: the other is both root cause of the infection of the seduced woman, and is in turn defeated by the very infection he had passed on, locking the other into a vicious circle from which there is no escape. As he roars in incensed rage at the limp body of the woman tied to the cross, her body shakes with a sudden and final spasm and she dies. Dr Mirakle sinks to his knees as if her death had been entirely unforeseen. He then rises and orders Janos to 'get rid of it'. Janos cuts through the ropes that hold the now dead woman and Dr Mirakle steps on a pedal built into the platform on which the cross stands. A trapdoor opens and the corpse is quite literally flushed into the Seine in perhaps the most sickening moment of the corpus of films in this thesis. If his sins were not yet black enough, this final affront to the now cleansed dead body of the prostitute, and the suggestion of the regular nature of these disposals by the very existence of such an efficient method of getting rid of dead subjects, fully and finally establish Dr Mirakle as irredeemably pathologically different and therefore intolerable within the space of the normative.

But the catalogue of his sins is still not complete! Realizing that he needs a woman of pure blood for his experiment in miscegenation to work, he kidnaps Pierre's fiancée, Camille. At this, nature itself rebels against the unnatural foreign madman: Erik turns on his master and kills him. In the film's final scene Dr Mirakle ends up in the morgue where so many of his 'subjects' had been laid out, once recovered from the river. Having made contact with the living, thus infecting body of the prostitute, Dr Mirakle himself is destined for the fate that is the correct manner of processing the pathological body: cleansed from contagion, Dr Mirakle becomes the object of study (autopsy) for the education and improvement of the normative order.

## The revenge of the mad exile

Béla Lugosi began to build an impressive résumé of mad scientist roles soon after achieving stardom in the brief period of 1931-1932, with *Dracula*, *White Zombie* and *Murders in the Rue Morgue*. The mad scientists he played seemed to carry within them the bitter taste of failure that Count Dracula, Murder Legendre and

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<sup>10</sup>Even Dr Frankenstein (Colin Clive in the first two films in the series) had the decency to experiment only on the deceased, and never on the living.

Dr Mirakle had suffered. As if informed by these earlier roles, Lugosi's mad exiles seem hell-bent on visiting terrible vengeance upon a society that refused to admit their antecedents. Dr Vollin in *The Raven* (Lew Landers, 1935), Dr Carruthers in *The Devil Bat* (Jean Yarbrough, 1940) and Dr Vornoff in *Bride of the Monster* (Ed Wood, 1955) are three such mad scientists. Lugosi's star status or the prestige of the production seemed to have little bearing on this typecasting: *The Raven* was made by Universal at the peak of Lugosi's stardom, on the back of a string of earlier successes; *The Devil Bat* was a typical Poverty Row film made by the Producers Releasing Corporation (PRC); *Bride of the Monster* was an Ed Wood film, made on a shoestring budget that would have seemed paltry even on Poverty Row. Over the next few paragraphs I consider the madness of these exilic scientists consumed by a thirst for vengeance. I trace their motivations and explore their methods—and the madness in them.

In Chapter 3, I already discussed Dr Vollin in relation to the space that he constructs for himself. I argued that his mansion, with its moving rooms, secret torture dungeons and high-tech operating theatre, offered him a space in which he could escape the demands of 'normality' that burdened him in the space of the host nation. I do not revisit that aspect of his madness here, but explore his motivations for vengeance, and his own explanation of the roots of his madness.

In an interesting parallel with Peter Lorre's Dr Gogol (in *Mad Love*, made in the same year), *The Raven*'s Dr Vollin is a gifted surgeon convinced to attempt the impossible by a desperate relative of a seriously injured character. Dr Vollin is begged by Judge Thatcher to save the life of his daughter, Jean, who suffered serious brain damage in a car accident. Dr Vollin refuses at first, cruelly dismissing Thatcher's entreaties, explaining that death does not hold the same significance for him as for other people. When Thatcher tells him that the surgeons who first operated on his daughter admitted that only Vollin might be able to save her, he triumphantly exclaims 'so they do say I am the only one,' and gleefully agrees to perform the life-saving operation. After Jean's successful recovery from the operation Dr Vollin tries to court her. She admits that she is drawn to him, but rebuffs his advances, telling him that she is in love with Jerry, her fiancé. Vollin, ominously, tells her: 'the restraint that we impose upon ourselves can drive us mad!' When Jean admits to her father that she is (in the words of her father) 'in danger of becoming infatuated' with Vollin, Judge Thatcher meets Vollin to ask him to discourage her. Rather than showing understanding, and agreeing to Thatcher's request, Dr Vollin is elated. Realizing that his daughter's feelings are reciprocated by Vollin, Thatcher tells him: 'there's no point in saving Jean's life only to sacrifice her happiness!'

Dr Vollin's madness is then rooted in his attempt to impose restraint upon himself. His sanity hinges on Jean's acceptance of his courtship. If he were to be rejected, he warns her, he would become mad. If we read Dr Vollin's desperate

pursuit of Jean as an attempt to find acceptance into the host nation through the conquest of the feminine, we can see how his madness is the result of his failure to find that acceptance. In fact, he is rejected, quite brutally indeed, by Judge Thatcher, whose verdict, by virtue of his position, carries the implicit approval of the system he works to maintain and protect. Thatcher's assertion that he would rather see his daughter dead than unhappily married to Dr Vollin is a comprehensive condemnation. Thatcher's statement carries two implicit judgements. One is that his daughter would certainly be unhappy with Dr Vollin, even though she is in love with him. But this love, in Thatcher's view, cannot be called anything other than a dangerous infatuation with an unsuitable suitor. The second implicit judgement is that Jean's death would be preferable, from the point of view of the host nation whose laws Thatcher works to maintain, to her conquest by Vollin. Little wonder, then, that the exile goes mad. Framed by normative discourse as already dead, a judgement he adopts as his own when he declares that 'death is my talisman,' he is quite explicitly rejected, refused integration into the community of the host nation when his advances towards a daughter of the nation are mercilessly crushed. He is refused the right to participate in the (pro)creation of the nation.

Dr Carruthers in *The Devil Bat* is another exile who goes mad when the opportunity to find a place for himself in the host nation as a productive and respected member of the community is denied him. We join Dr Carruthers's story when he has already spent some time fermenting his mad plan for vengeance. He is a developer of fine fragrances, and his many concoctions have generated vast profits for the company that employs him. His resentment stems from his feeling that he is not sufficiently appreciated for his contributions to the company's successes. The film begins with Dr Carruthers being presented with a \$5,000 cheque as a token of the owners' appreciation for his work. Dr Carruthers is incensed that he should be offered so little and embarks on a campaign of terror against his employers and their families. He has devised a process whereby he can electronically enlarge vampire bats. These bats, he has discovered, have a violent dislike of a particular fragrance, which he has synthesized. He murders his victims by getting them to try on an aftershave that he has developed, which includes the fragrance that enrages the bats. He then releases the magnified bats from their cave, and the bats hunt down and kill those who carry the obnoxious fragrance.

Carruthers's motives for his campaign of terror may seem less justified than Dr Vollin's. Even so, Carruthers is firmly convinced that he has been wronged against, and excluded from a style and mode of living that he aspires to. His resentment may seem illogical, but it needs to be borne in mind that it is the host nation speaking through the admittedly low-prestige medium of the Poverty Row quickie. Accordingly, in the imagination of the host nation, the exile is more sinning than wronged against. The film suggests that he had been given the opportunity to prosper financially from his own work, but he had failed to

take advantage of that opportunity. Where Dr Vollin in *The Raven* is a rejected suitor, deemed unacceptable as a father in/of the nation, Dr Carruthers is a failed capitalist, and in the land of opportunity that equals failing to be of use to, and integrated into society. That he has been reduced to mixing potions in a dank and dark underground laboratory is no-one's fault, but his. That the resentment he has developed about his own failure fermented into a mad thirst for revenge is not the host nation's fault, but the result of his own inherent tendency towards insanity, the narrative seems to conclude.

As I suggested earlier in my analysis of *Invisible Ghost*, films made on Poverty Row are revealing about the society in which they were made, precisely because they are often shoddily written, shot as quickly and as cheaply as possible, relying more on convention and shorthand, or stereotype, than on detailed characterization or psychological realism. What makes the above analysis applicable, then, is the star body of Lugosi, and the meanings invested in it. Each subsequent film in which he starred inscribed into the star body of Lugosi another layer of meanings associated with difference, pathology and failure at, or unsuitability for, the pursuit of the 'American Dream'. By the time *The Devil Bat* was filmed, he had come to embody all the qualities that I argue constitute the exilic. So much so that by the time Lugosi began his association with Ed Wood, his mere presence in a film was enough to invoke a complex discourse surrounding exile, otherness, already-deadness, attempts at integration and exclusion. In Ed Wood's largely autobiographical cross-dressing drama *Glen or Glenda* (1953), Lugosi appears as Scientist, a narrator, or rather a bizarre one-man Greek Chorus who introduces major plot elements and comments on the action. Lugosi, just by making an appearance, invokes the trauma of difference, which is the theme of *Glen or Glenda*, chronicling the troubles of a man who prefers to wear women's clothes.

In the final completed film Lugosi made with Ed Wood, *The Bride of the Monster* (1956),<sup>11</sup> he plays Dr Vornoff, a mad scientist who hopes to build an army of atomic supermen. In a key scene of the film,<sup>12</sup> Dr Vornoff explains his plans to a rival scientist. I here reproduce his speech in full, which requires very little comment.

DR VORNOFF: 'Home...? ...I have no home. Hunted, despised, living like an animal, the jungle is my home. And I will show the world that I can be its master! I will perfect my own race of people, a race of atomic supermen, which will conquer the world!'

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<sup>11</sup>I discount *Plan 9 from Outer Space* (1959), which features just a couple of shots of stock footage of Lugosi who died early on during filming.

<sup>12</sup>This scene has become a bit of a cult phenomenon on YouTube in the form of a competition to recreate it as faithfully or entertainingly as possible. See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkqqIZiXHvs>

This speech, delivered in Lugosi's last film in which he has a speaking role, is an apt summary of the meanings invested in Lugosi's star body. Homelessness, persecution, exclusion, being an animal and living beyond society are invoked in a speech that culminates in a threat of terrible vengeance by the means of creating an army that will help him remake, by this stage not only the host nation, but the entire world as one that finally he can master.

## Splitting selves

The bulk of this Chapter dealt with one major film example in each section, with only the occasional reference to other films. Perhaps fittingly, I break with that pattern here and investigate a multiplicity of bodies that house a multiplicity of selves (or in one case, a multiplicity of bodies that house but a single self). In Chapter 2, I introduced the concept of the post-human in relation to the process of the destabilization and subsequent rupturing of the exile's identity that follow displacement. Here I return to this concept in order to unpick the significance of the split self in relation to exilic madness. These split selves are Otto Becker/Hugo von Detner (Conrad Veidt) in *Nazi Agent*, Hilary (Peter Lorre) and his murderous hand in *The Beast with Five Fingers*, Ygor (Béla Lugosi) and the Monster (Lon Chaney, Jr) in *Ghost of Frankenstein* (Erle C Kenton, 1942), with references to a few more bodies (and many more selves) along the way.

So far I focused on perhaps more Romantic notions of madness. The 'mad doctor' who comes unhinged in his quest for knowledge is a constant figure in Romantic literature, from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) to Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), as is the figure of the man pushed into madness by unrequited love. That these films should share a Romantic conception of insanity can be attributed to Hollywood's enthusiastic plundering of the often public domain works of 19<sup>th</sup> century literature. I have further shown that these instances of insanity, from Dr Gogol's *Mad Love* through Dr Kessler's murderous trances to Dr Mirakle's pursuit of Camille for the purposes of his 'great experiment' are inextricably bound up with issues of exile and the rejection of attempts of integration into the host nation. In this final section of the last Chapter, I turn my attention to a concept of madness that has come to prominence in cultural representations in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with growing public awareness of Freud's writings on psychoanalysis. For all the modernity of Freudian psychoanalysis, the conditions it describes, or their causes, were not new or specifically the products of the period (Gilman, 1985; 1991; 1995). What was new was the vocabulary to describe mental disorders that were no more known or understood by the public at large than before. The condition that is used (or perhaps exploited is a better word) by Hollywood, to describe the rupture that

takes place in the exile after displacement, is that of the split or multiple personality. I hasten to repeat here that I do not intend to diagnose in clinical psychology terms the condition that afflicts the exilic characters this thesis investigates. It is even further from my intentions to theorize around the complex relationship between condition and its representation. That task has already been undertaken by others with expertise in the field of mental illness.<sup>13</sup> What I aim to achieve in this section is to show how Hollywood conceives of the exile as suffering from a mental disorder brought on by displacement.

*The Beast with Five Fingers* (Robert Florey, 1946) is the story of an inheritance dispute after the death of the famous piano virtuoso Francis Ingram (played by the Belgian émigré Victor Francen). Ingram's hangers-on, his nurse and distant relatives squabble over his money and valuable possessions. Ingram's widowed brother-in-law, Mr Arlington (Charles Dingle) and his son Donald (John Alvin) stand to inherit the entire estate if they can successfully contest the maestro's unusual will, in which he has left everything to his nurse, Julie (Andrea King). Ingram's friend and musical collaborator Bruce Conrad (Robert Alda) is more interested in carrying out his late friend's wishes than profiting from his death, but then again, if he is successful in his courtship of Julie, he does stand to benefit if the will is upheld. The scholar Hilary Cummins (Peter Lorre), whose world is turned upside down by the death of his employer and benefactor, is fighting to assert his claim on Ingram's library. While the avaricious Arlingtons, the composed and determined Julie and the raffish but shrewd Conrad all have the means and ability to argue their cases, the put-upon Hilary fails to make his voice heard. He bases his claim on the library on a verbal promise by Ingram, which no-one is willing to come forward to back. To make matters worse, the night before Ingram's death, Julie is present as Ingram tells Hilary to leave and never come back. He does so because Hilary had alleged that Julie and Conrad were conspiring to elope together, leaving Ingram without his nurse and friend, whose tender ministrations he had come to rely on. It is the suggestion of a threat to his domestic security—and Ingram is also an exile—that prompts him to react harshly and kick Hilary where it hurts most. Having been frightened by the prospect of losing his support, he inflicts that very thing on Hilary. Little wonder then that Hilary's mind totters. After Ingram's death he is clinging on to an uncertain refuge, barely tolerated in an alien space, while his claim of legitimacy is disputed by all around him. His attempt at establishing a lineage, citing Ingram's iterative confirmation of his membership in the community (in this instance the community includes those with a legitimate claim on the estate), is rebuffed by the community, which results in a splitting of Hilary's self and the onset of madness, as I now go on to

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<sup>13</sup> *Disease and representation* (Gilman, 1988), *Health and Illness*, *Images of Difference* (Gilman, 1995), etc.



Figure 4.5: Hilary (Peter Lorre) has trouble distinguishing between his own murderous hand and the severed hand of his late benefactor in *The Beast with Five Fingers* (Robert Florey, 1946).

explain.

As if mirroring Hilary's madness, the film's plot becomes fairly confusing at this point. After he is laid to rest in the crypt of his villa's chapel, Ingram's hand mysteriously disappears. It then goes on a murderous rampage, although it fails actually to kill anyone. The young Mr Arlington, and Hilary himself are attacked, but both survive. Arlington barely, but Hilary fights back against the hand. He nails it to a plank of wood and locks it in a safe (fig. 4.5). When the hand magically gets out of the safe and attacks him again, he overpowers it and throws it on the fire. But even this fails to put an end to the hand's campaign of terror. The explanation is simple, if outlandish. It is not the severed hand of Ingram that is responsible for the attacks, but Hilary's own hand. Ingram's hand was severed by Hilary. It is he who tries to strangle those who stand between him and his claim on the library. But he is not a rational murderer. He is insane for he does not realize that it is he who controls the title's 'beast with five fingers'.

His is then a split personality. On the one hand—if you will forgive the expression—he is Hilary, secretary to Francis Ingram, scholar of arcane texts, guardian of a vast and valuable library. As a bibliophile, his passion is knowledge and contribution to the sum total of human learning. As Ingram's secretary, his job is organisation, administration, correspondence, in short, to render ordered and manageable a life that by virtue of the demands on the good and the great

would otherwise be disordered and unmanageable. On the other hand—again, I apologise—he is the ‘beast with five fingers’, a murderer motivated by his selfish desire to keep for himself the knowledge housed in the library. He is further motivated by his desperate need for a safe haven, a place to stay. He is possessive of the books which he thinks of as his own, and which endow him with the knowledge necessary for survival in a space that is alien to him, and he is devious in his planning of the attacks, if unlucky in their execution. Hilary then is another exilic Nosferatu. His identity ruptures under the threat to his space of refuge and he becomes insane, a paradoxical being who is both one thing and its exact opposite at the same time: present and absent; normal and insane; human and beast.

The third Frankenstein film in Universal’s original series, *Son of Frankenstein* (Rowland V Lee, 1939) introduced an entirely new character, Ygor (Béla Lugosi), the twisted hunchback. He is the original Dr Frankenstein’s former assistant, who remains the Monster’s only friend and companion. But in the first film of the series, Dr Frankenstein’s grotesque assistant was Fritz (Dwight Frye), who certainly was not a friend of the Monster. Frye played Karl in the second film, a variation on his earlier character. It is interesting in itself that at a time when the global Capitalist system was in the grips of the greatest crisis of its history and Soviet Russia loomed large as the major threat to the American way of life, the hunchback should have had a German name (in fact a name that is a derogatory term for ‘German’); it is equally interesting that by the end of the decade, at a time of a global conflict precipitated by Nazi ambitions for world domination, that role should transform into a twisted Russian, Ygor. What is even more interesting is how an established character played by Dwight Frye is replaced, supplanted even, by an exilic body which then masquerades as one that is deeply rooted in the mythology of the series, so much so that Ygor is now sometimes thought to have been an original character in Mary Shelley’s novel. This is then a casting strategy and scriptwriting solution that mirrors the exilic project of grafting oneself onto the body of the host nation. In order fully to unpick the significance of Ygor in relation to exilic madness, I now turn to the fourth film in the series, *Ghost of Frankenstein* (Erle C Kenton, 1942), the first without Karloff, and the first wartime feature in the series, in which the relationship between Ygor and Monster (Lon Chaney, Jr) is fascinating, complex and, I argue, offers us an intriguing reading of the Monster as the embodiment of the nation, under threat of subversion by the exile.

*Ghost of Frankenstein* picks up where *Son of Frankenstein* left off. The villagers have decided to extirpate all memory of Frankenstein and his Monster. They destroy the old Frankenstein castle, and Ygor and the Monster, thus rendered homeless, set off to find the second baron’s brother (Cedric Hardwicke), an established and respectable neurosurgeon in a distant town. Ygor is hoping that the new baron Frankenstein will restore the Monster to his former strength. Upon

their arrival, the Monster befriends a small child. They play peacefully together—the film here refers back to the shocking moment in the original *Frankenstein* (James Whale, 1931) when the Monster, delighted by the way the flowers that he and a small child throw into a lake float, throws the child after them. In *Ghost of Frankenstein*, however, the child comes to no harm. This is not the lumbering brute Monster of the original who is not aware of its own monstrous strength. This is a peaceful, harmless, childlike Monster who is only dangerous when roused to anger or provoked into violence. Ygor's hope that the Monster may be restored to his former power is dashed by the baron: the Monster's brain is damaged beyond repair, and his only hope is a brain transplant. Complementing the Monster's struggle for an identity where a mighty body is undermined by a feeble brain, Ygor is hoping to find a solution to his own problem: an attempted execution by hanging has left him with a broken neck and a feeble body, which cannot carry out the commands of his ambitious brain. Ygor then conceives of the idea of having his own brain transplanted into the Monster, thereby rendering both incomplete bodies whole again (figs. 4.6 and 4.7). Clearly, Ygor is operating with a fractured concept of self. That he should be able to entertain the notion of having his brain transplanted into a different body points to the fragmentation of his personality: he can conceive of his own body—which should be inseparable from his identity—as the obstacle in the way of his ambitions. As Gilman argues, ‘you hate what society hates’ (1995: 74), and society hates Ygor. He then comes to hate Ygor, or rather the body of Ygor. His desire to transpose his identity into a new body mirrors his dislocation from his original environment and points to his failure to recognize a boundary that ought not to be crossed.

If, in light of Hayward's reading of the national body (2000: 88-101), we conceive of the Monster's body as an assemblage of disparate fragments which masquerades as a coherent whole that denies its plurality, we can see how the *Frankenstein* films can be read as perhaps more sophisticated reflections on national identity than hitherto thought. The Monster is an artificially constructed entity—just like the nation—called into being through discourse: its coming to life is *always* accompanied by the creator's shouts of ‘it's alive!’. Bearing in mind the context of the first *Frankenstein* film's production, and the fact that it was made at Universal, the studio that attracted the most European émigré talent<sup>14</sup> and was run by the German Carl Laemmle and his son, the first Monster then could be read as a critical representation of the crisis-torn German nation, itself a relatively recent geopolitical formation and a result of the assemblage of disparate smaller states and principalities. *Frankenstein* (1931) then becomes a warning note of the dangers inherent in the German nation-building project, a project on the brink of derailment by the monster of Nazism.

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<sup>14</sup>On the ‘Germanness’ of Universal see Horak, 2005: 254.



Figure 4.6: Ygor (Béla Lugosi) explains his plan to have his brain transplanted into the cranium of the Monster (Lon Chaney, Jr) in *Ghost of Frankenstein* (Erle C Kenton, 1942).



Figure 4.7: The Monster-Ygor (Lon Chaney, Jr, speaking in the voice of Béla Lugosi) grins in malevolent triumph as he awakes after the brain transplant.

In the mid-war *Ghost of Frankenstein*, however, when the external threats to the American nation are explicit and seen in the form of the German naval campaign against commercial US shipping in the Atlantic, and the Japanese aerial attack on Pearl Harbor, the focus shifts to the figure of the other, hoping to subvert the no longer threatening patchwork body of a Monster who may be more productively understood as the American national body. Indeed, America's concept of its own nationhood, based in the myth of the melting pot that forges a coherent and homogenous community out of a disparate mass of immigrants, echoes this Monster's *individual* identity that denies the visible plurality of the body that houses it. This distinction, rather than a simple change of director and writer, may account for the quite drastic shift in tone and aesthetics midway through the series. Ygor's plan of substituting his own cunning brain for the innocent brain of the childlike Monster becomes the nightmare vision of Fifth Columnist activity within the United States and the evil machinations of the other amongst us who hopes to transform the peaceful collective body into a vicious Monster that is true to its name. And indeed, where the first two films of the series, and to an extent the third instalment made use of exterior shots of wild and untamed nature to illustrate the dangers of Baron Frankenstein's project, in *Ghost of Frankenstein* the exterior shots are of a small, idyllic town disturbed by a nameless (and foreign) threat to a peaceful way of life.

At the beginning of the first chapter I used *Nazi Agent* (Jules Dassin, 1942) to open up this inquiry into Hollywood representations of exilic bodies. It seems quite fitting to me to return to that film here as I approach the Conclusion. I began then with the film's final moments, and it is hard to resist the attractive symmetry (and inevitable binary) of now looking at the film's beginning.

*Nazi Agent* opens with a montage sequence of images of saboteur activity in the US. The threatening images of explosions and other examples of sabotage, against a faint backdrop of a genuinely chilling spider's web, are accompanied by a warning against the unseen enemy within. The action then begins with a press conference held by the German High Consul, Hugo von Detner (Conrad Veidt). We only ever see him from the back. His harsh voice, clipped diction and unmistakable German accent immediately mark him as the threatening other present within the space of the host nation. After the members of the press file out of his office, he has a brief conversation with his secretary. The two discuss the importance of Otto Becker (also Conrad Veidt) to their plans. The scene then shifts to the small suburban rare books and stamps dealership of Otto Becker. In a matter of just a few minutes the film has established its basic concern: the enemy is amongst us, and we cannot tell who he might be. As an audience, we are no less suspicious of Becker, at this point, than we are of Detner. And we have no idea—although perhaps we do have an inkling—that the two are twin brothers, played by the same actor.

I have described the film's plot in some detail in Chapter 2, and will not repeat it needlessly here. Instead, I focus on the two brothers. As in the previous cases discussed in this section, the personalities of the twins are complementary and mutually exclusive. Otto wears a comfortable, heavy wool suit. His hair seems to defy the comb, and he has a beard, in conjunction with his other traits, a strong visual indication of privileging intellectual endeavour over action. He exudes a warmth and kindness that seems to infect those around him. His pet canary trills ceaselessly when he is near. By contrast, Hugo is imposing and forbearing. Dressed in sharp evening clothes at all times, his hair slicked against his scalp, clean shaven, with a monocle planted firmly in his right eye, Hugo is in every way the exact opposite of his brother. He radiates a cruel and calculating coldness that silences Otto's canary. Otto's ambition is to live a quiet life, consumed by his passion: collecting rare books and stamps. Hugo's ambition is to disrupt the American war effort and thereby contribute to Nazi Germany's campaign for world domination. Otto is very private, but also fair-minded, thoughtful and considerate, a good friend to those around him. Hugo is intensely political, but he is selfish, too, his personal ambition clearly comes before anything and anyone. He exploits not only his subordinates and those who could be his friends, but even his family. He had betrayed his father to the Nazis, and would not hesitate to kill his own brother to further his cause. The two are then perhaps best understood as two sides of the same coin: neither is the coin itself, they are but two superficial imaginings of a complex and conflicted personality. They are two incompatible modes of being in exile. In Gilman's words, one is 'that which we fear we may not be able to become,' Otto, the good stereotype, the other is that which we fear we may not be able to help becoming, Hugo, the bad stereotype (1985: 20). This analysis then helps us conceive of the two brothers as two distinct personalities struggling for control of the same body.

When Otto rebels against Hugo's usurpation of his peaceful domestic space (which Hugo turned into a mail distribution centre for the German sabotage ring), Hugo goes to the shop to kill his brother, and thereby eliminate a source of annoyance. In the tussle that follows, however, it is Otto who overcomes his brother. With Hugo's henchmen outside his door, Otto has to think quickly. Speaking in his brother's manner, he tells them to wait. He then quickly puts on his brother's clothes, shaves off his beard and slicks down his hair. He assumes his brother's role, but his goal is not to further Nazi Germany's aims, but to subvert and ultimately dismantle the sabotage ring. From this point on, he always appears in the guise of Hugo. But this is a Hugo tormented by his dual personality, a man torn between his duty to his home nation, and his allegiance to his adoptive nation. Finally, he succeeds in winding up the spy ring. His mission accomplished, he returns to Nazi Germany to face punishment for his betrayal. This film then is an exploration of exilic modes of being in the host nation, where the conflict of two

diverging loyalties is represented as the conflict of two personalities in the same body. It is then best understood as a film about the madness of the exile, brought on by a rupturing of identity due to displacement. This split identity in exile can be apprehended in practically all exilic bodies in the corpus. Dr Kessler is loving father *and* homicidal maniac; Dr Vollin is a doctor *and* torturer; Dr Gogol an altruistic orthopaedic surgeon *and* sadistic ghoul; Captain Hardt (Conrad Veidt in the 1939 Michael Powell film *The Spy in Black*) is a loyal, heroic naval officer *and* a spy and a traitor (depending on whether we look at him from the home nation or the host nation); Dr Mirakle is a sideshow charlatan *and* an intellectual revolutionary; Raskolnikov (Lorre in Josef von Sternberg's 1935 *Crime and Punishment*) is criminologist *and* criminal; and Becker/Detner is 'good German' *and* Nazi rolled into one.

We can, however, add another layer to this already complex narrative. A fairly commonplace observation in critical works on exile and Hollywood is that émigré actors in Hollywood were often forced into the tragically ironic position of having to portray those who had forced them to flee their native countries.<sup>15</sup> Thinking about *Nazi Agent* in relation to its star, Conrad Veidt, helps us refine this rather overstated irony. The truth is that, although there were, indeed, a number of Jewish actors who ended up playing Nazis during the war years, these were very rarely major parts that would have required a great deal of identification with the role. Further, as Garncarz has shown (2006: 110-111), the Jewish actors who played Nazis did not resent playing Nazis, as long as the part was a 'good' or challenging and prominent one. In *Nazi Agent*, however, Conrad Veidt, a German émigré, plays a German émigré who is forced, by the home nation, into a position of having to assume the identity of one who had made life unliveable for him in the home nation. The emphasis here is not on the simple binary of good German playing bad German. Rather, the focus here is on the pain of having to perform the *exilic rupture* that is the result of displacement. The tragedy lies not in what is happening in the home nation (which, I hasten to add, I am not suggesting was not tragic), in other words the tragic irony is not that the exilic actor is forced to act that which he is not, but in what is going on *in (the) exile*. It is the compulsion to perform the conflict between that which I fear I may not be able to become and which I fear I may not be able to help becoming (Gilman, 1985: 20) that is tragic (and probably not ironic at all). To put it very simply: the tragedy lies in the exile's having to perform that which he is forced to become in exile, and not in performing what he fled. This distinction then helps us consider *all* exilic bodies in Hollywood in this light, and not only those who are refugees from very concrete and mortal threat. It further helps us move beyond the unhelpful and not at all

<sup>15</sup>For an account of the tragic irony of (German) Jews playing Nazis, see Garncarz in *Journeys of Desire* (Philips and Vincendeau, 2006: 103-114).

typical binary of Jew playing Nazi. We can then move towards a framework for theorizing around exile that helps us conceive of the exilic pain of the performance of displacement and rupture, from Lugosi's Dracula through Lorre's Johnny Szabó to Veidt's Becker/Detner and all other bodies that this thesis takes as its focus, and more.

## CONCLUSION

This investigation of representations of exile, the exilic experience and exilic bodies in Hollywood cinema was originally born out of a dissatisfaction with Hamid Naficy's *An Accented Cinema* (2001). I had a suspicion that Naficy might not be quite right in dismissing representations of exile prior to the late 1950s (2001: 10). It seemed somewhat cavalier to ignore exilic filmmakers who were displaced prior to the 1950s and to claim that 'the *first* group was displaced or lured to the West from the late 1950s to the mid-1970s by Third World decolonization, wars of national liberation, the Soviet Union's invasions of Poland and Czechoslovakia' (my emphasis; *ibid.*). I also felt that it could be shown that Hollywood cinema, too, would prove to be a productive area of study for representations of exile. I felt his dismissal of exilic artists in the Hollywood system, because they had come to be regarded as 'exemplars of the American cinema' (*ibid.*: 19), was both superficial and constituted a missed opportunity. I set out to show that Hollywood films, for all their qualities that result from their provenance from a rigidly structured centre for cultural production, do engage with issues of exile and the trauma and rupture of displacement. I quickly found that although exiles were rarely represented with much empathy for the traumas that afflict them, and exilic directors' work did not always or automatically reflect on their experiences as exiles, displacement and its ramifications were recurring themes in many Hollywood films, regardless of the origins of their directors. I also found that there were many films in the pre-1950 period that sought to weave narratives that centred on or touched upon stories of displacement and exile.

In Chapter 1 I set out the contexts of this investigation. I explained I would focus on Hollywood in the period of 1930-1956, arguing that although a period of great upheavals in terms of politics, society and technology, this quarter-century also corresponded to what is considered the Golden Age of Hollywood, running from the introduction of optical sound to the end of the unrivalled dominance of the major studios, which came to an end with the emergence of the 'package-unit system' (Bordwell et al, 1985: 331-332).

Having set out the temporal and geographic scope of this thesis, I went on to situate the three stars I chose to focus on in relation to the major social, political and technological changes that were taking place at the time of their emigration from Europe. I then went on to explain how my research is positioned compared to existing theoretical works on exile. I argued that by taking the focus on the

actor, through a close reading of their films, roles and performances, this thesis would help delve deeper into a system of representation that makes use of the exilic body in Hollywood cinema. I contended that this approach would afford us greater insights into the ways in which Hollywood conceives of and perceives the exile, than do works that focus on the history of exile, or that of the Hollywood system in relation to its exilic directors, actors and other artists and technicians. In the final section of Chapter 1 I began setting out my methodology, and explained the significance of the concept of the nation, and issues of identity in relation to my understanding of the exilic trauma of displacement, and its representation. I argued that the binary of the exilic them versus the local us, constructed through normative discourse, was an imaginary one, for it was based in the abstract conflict of the imagined community of the nation with the imagined other, the exile.

In Chapter 2 I continued to establish my methodology, while beginning to discuss the corpus of films that this thesis took as its focus. I used *Nazi Agent* to explore the duality of the exile, and the ramifications of the rupture of displacement. I argued that displacement caused a reversal of the us/them binary, which destabilized the exile's concept of the self. I suggested that the identity that had emerged in the exile's pre-displacement environment as one of us (in the home nation), became the non-viable identity of one of them in the host nation. I argued that two conflicting strategies of being in the host nation (remaking oneself to fit in; and remaking the host nation to fit the exile) could be apprehended in the split or dual personalities of exiles in Hollywood cinema. I went on to show how the normative discourse of the host nation gives evidence of the exile's exclusion from the realm that constitutes the us, and the exile's position beyond what I called, after Halberstam and Livingstone, the 'human loop' (1995: 15). I then explored how normative discourse puts the exiles on display in a 'zoo of posthumanities' (1995: 3).

In the second half of the chapter I discussed, one after the other, two key films, *The Thief of Bagdad* and *White Zombie*, which offered intriguing readings on the inability of the exile to participate in normative discourse. We saw two exilic bodies, from two distinct periods and strikingly different production contexts, fail to make their voices heard and their commands obeyed. I suggested that this failure should be, in part, attributed to the exilic failure of knowledge. Displacement, which had destabilized the 'us/them' binary, was also seen to disrupt the exile's knowledge. I introduced the distinction between *savoir*, or the totality of one's knowledge, and *connaissance*, or the critical and self-reflexive application of that knowledge in specific situations, in order to show how the exile operated with a *savoir* of elsewhere, which resulted in a failure of *connaissance*. It was this inability to draw viable conclusions in the post-displacement environment, that was seen to work to limit the exile's potential for integration into the host nation.

Chapter 3 was used to show how space itself formed part of normative dis-

course to bind and fix the exile as beyond the human loop. I argued, using Lefebvre (1991), that the spaces Hollywood imagines the exile as inhabiting offered an intriguing field of analysis for the way in which the normative conceives of the exile. I used *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931) to show how the spaces that Dracula was seen to occupy, or (and this was equally important) be absent from, contributed to the discourse that framed the exilic other as already dead. I went on to explore Hollywood representations of exilic spaces created by the exiles themselves. First, using Baudrillard (2005), I considered the exilic interior design of the respective living spaces of *Nazi Agent*'s identical twins and ideological opponents Hugo von Detner and Otto Becker (both Conrad Veidt). I argued that operating with a *savoir* of their homeland, they fail to create spaces that can seem to be 'natural' (Hayward, 2000: 89) in the host nation. Detner was seen to come closer to succeeding in producing a space that was convincingly of the host nation, but the various decorative elements of the interior design of both his home and his workspace pointed to the essential falseness of the image he sought to project. Becker, on the other hand, was seen to construct a space that aimed to deny his Germanness, but in doing so recreated an interior that was as (or perhaps more) compliant with the German ideal of the *Heimat*, as with small-town American values.

I went on to consider the interior arrangement of the exilic lairs of Béla Lugosi's mad scientists. I used *The Raven* (Lew Landers, 1935) to show how the exile relied on a complementary exilic space, which offered the exile relief from the demands of normality when attempting to operate within the space of the normative. I argued that the spaces of Dr Vollin's (Lugosi) mansion, where he received guests, functioned as a sort of stage for the exile's performance of respectability, and that the underground spaces of his torture dungeon and secret operating theatre offered him a profane sanctuary.

The final section of Chapter 3 dealt with the heterotopias of the host nation and the ways in which exiles (predominantly Lorre's puny and weak exiles) sought to establish permanent grafts onto these transitory spaces and spaces of transit. I argued that by virtue of the heterotopia's function as a space for the recovery of (normative) bodies in crisis, heterotopic spaces were vulnerable to infringement by homeless exilic bodies. I used *Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942) to explore the various ways in which Casablanca, the city, and to an extent *Casablanca* the film itself, could be understood as a heterotopia for the recovery of bodies in crisis, whether that is the body of the normative in crisis (Rick), or the hegemonic body of the nation in crisis. Lorre's Ugarte was seen to attempt to use this heterotopia to emerge from it in the guise of a normative body. Because Ugarte's body is not the normative body in crisis, but the non-viable body of the exilic other, perceived and conceived by normative discourse as a ruptured body whose bodily trauma is visibly inscribed, he could not use the heterotopia for its intended purpose.

In Chapter 4 I brought together the various threads of this thesis, from the rupture of identity, through the failure of knowledge to the re-iteration of non-viability through the production of space, to explore the madness attributed to the exile by Hollywood cinema. I argued that the combination of the reversal of the ‘us/them’ binary coupled with a normative discourse that in all its forms worked to exclude the exile, the exile was seen to be going mad, or to be already mad. In a close reading of *Mad Love*, I explored Dr Gogol’s (Peter Lorre) inability to perceive and understand his environment appropriately, and argued that failing to interpret correctly how to comply with the norm, he misapplied conventional signs of belonging in such a way that marked him as mad and beyond the human loop. I went on to trace similar failures of reason in the films of the three stars that this thesis has focused on. I argued that Béla Lugosi’s mad scientists could be understood as inheritors of the sense of injustice prompted by the rejection of his early characters’ (*Dracula*, *Dr Mirakle*, *Murder Legendre*) attempts at integration into the host nation. I suggested that with each subsequent role he played, Lugosi’s star body became more irrevocably equated with a complex discourse surrounding displacement, relocation, attempt at integration and exclusion, to the extent that by the end of his career no motive needed to be established for his grand designs to take revenge on the host nation.

In the final section of Chapter 4 I explored the filmic representation of the exilic split, or the rupture of displacement. I suggested that all exilic bodies at the centre of this thesis’s focus, to an extent, displayed a duality of self that could be attributed to conflicts arising within the exile between homeland and host nation, loyalty to the old and embracement of the new, eradication and irradiation. I used *The Beast with Five Fingers* (Robert Florey, 1946) to explore, through Lorre’s character, Hilary, the madness of the exile whose perception of his own self has destabilized to the extent that he cannot distinguish between his own (murderous) hand and the severed (and quite inanimate) hand of a dead man. I went on to suggest that Béla Lugosi’s Ygor, in the third and fourth instalments of the *Frankenstein* series, similarly suffered from a split identity, which took the form of his ability to entertain the notion of continuing his life with his brain transplanted into the cranium of the Monster (Lon Chaney, Jr). That he should be able even to conceive of such a plan, showed, I argued, that he was not able to understand his own self as being inseparable from his own body, having taken to heart society’s hatred of his own body, and making that hatred his own (Gilman, 1995: 74). By regarding his own body with the same eyes that perceive him as hateful, distorted and ‘one of them’, he internalized a form of perception that rendered him insane. Finally, I returned to *Nazi Agent*’s rival twins and argued that the film was best understood as a representation of two competing strategies for survival in a post-displacement moment, where exaggerated loyalty to the homeland comes to clash with a naïve ambition to achieve full and complete integration into the host nation.

I concluded by arguing that if we moved beyond the observation that it is ironic that exilic stars were often asked to portray those who had pushed them into exile (e.g., officials of Nazi Germany), we could see how Hollywood used exilic stars to perform, time after time, the rupture and trauma of displacement and exile.

## Tarzan and all-too perfect integration

In this Conclusion I would like to return, briefly, to a star, Johnny Weissmuller, who I had hoped to include in this investigation. I had to drop Weissmuller because, having migrated to the US with his family as a child, not having been trained as an actor, and achieving sports-star status as an American athlete, he could not be easily discussed alongside the three stars I selected. What I would like to show here is how the framework set down in this thesis could be used to shed new light on the ideological implications of the *Tarzan* films.

The figure of Tarzan, played by Johnny Weissmuller in twelve films made between 1932 and 1948, shows interesting parallels with Rudyard Kipling's Mowgli from *The Jungle Book* (1894) and its film versions (Zoltán Korda, 1942; Wolfgang Reitherman, 1967; etc.). Both Tarzan and Mowgli are raised in the jungle with animals acting as a surrogate family. Both are threatened by the incursions of 'civilized' humans into their adopted homes, and both use their superior knowledge of the jungle to thwart the trespassing outsiders. The crucial difference between the two is that Kipling's character is an Indian boy, an ethnic other, whose integration into the hierarchy of the jungle, although a fraught one, can be attributed to his proximity to the animal kingdom as an ethnic other—within the paradigm of the racist colonialist discourse that informs Kipling's work, and by extension, its adaptations. Tarzan, however, is a normative white body, albeit one that carries a corporeal inscription of difference: an overdeveloped, hyper-masculine musculature. Further, Mowgli is a child, his youth, vulnerability and lack of strength are emphasised through reiterations of his inferiority by the animals who have raised him. By contrast, Tarzan is a grown man (albeit one who is childlike in his virginal innocence), and far from being inferior to the animals, he is the master of the jungle, a better swimmer than a crocodile, stronger than an ape, louder than an elephant, and faster than a lion.

So how does the framework elaborated in this thesis help us make sense of the figure of Tarzan the Ape Man? Perhaps more pertinently, does it help us move beyond a reading of the *Tarzan* films as colonialist texts akin to *The Jungle Book* and its film versions?

If we read the jungle as a mythical kingdom<sup>16</sup> that stands for the host nation,

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<sup>16</sup>I am referring back to Ruth Vasey's account of Hollywood strategies of displacing sensitive issues from recognizable settings to exotic or fantastical ones in order to achieve a calming distance

Tarzan becomes a—quite literally—naturalized citizen of his adopted nation, the jungle. Just as the exiles discussed in this thesis, he uses subversive modes of negotiating the space of this host nation (not only does he swing from lianas, he also walks upright, unlike any other inhabitant of the jungle), a space that is fundamentally hostile to him. His life is a constant struggle for survival, with dangers lurking at every corner: venomous snakes, voracious crocodiles, predatory big cats threaten his existence at every turn. Yet by turning into a virtue his ability to subvert the space of his host, and by wielding a knife—a weapon that symbolises his *savoir* of elsewhere,<sup>17</sup> a type of knowledge that is not of the host nation—he carries on surviving.

The white explorers, in this reading, could be understood as constituting a second wave of immigrants come to the host nation. When they meet Tarzan and describe him as an Ape Man, they are giving voice to a nagging doubt. In their eyes Tarzan is a man, a member of the human race, but he is also an ape, a member of the animal kingdom. The Ape Man, then, perhaps bizarrely, comes to signify much the same as Nosferatu: an impossible presence, a body who looks like one of us, but is perceived as one of them. Tarzan is the exile who has achieved an all-too perfect integration into the host nation. To the eyes of those who emigrated later in life, he seems to belong naturally: he is an Ape. But enough of his pre-displacement identity remains inscribed in his body (lack of body-hair, human gait, the loin cloth that gives evidence of a distinctly human sense of modesty) for the new immigrants to recognize vestiges of their shared identity: he is a Man. In this reading, then, rather than a purely racist, colonialist text—which, of course, it is—*Tarzan, the Ape Man* (WS Van Dyke, 1932) is also a text that makes use of the ideology of nativism, as well as a racist, colonialist discourse to speak, not (only) about the colonial other, but (also) about the immigrant other amongst us. For all its celebration of the corporeal magnificence, the might and majesty of Tarzan, the film also frames him as other: unable to speak in his native tongue, he imitates the sounds of the locals (the call of the elephant for his famous jungle cry); he may be powerful, agile and fast, but not a natural citizen of the jungle.

Finally, although the jungle, as I suggested above, stands for the host nation, this does not mean that the film attributes the qualities of the jungle to the host nation. Just as the mythical kingdom of Bagdad in *The Thief of Bagdad* was not a negative reflection on the nation that it stood for, so too the jungle is not a critical imagining of the host nation. This is a ‘have the cake and eat it, too’ quality of normative discourse: as I argued in my account of Hayward’s analysis of the nation, the nation stresses the differences that serve to construct it, and elides those

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from immediate or perhaps contentious problems (1997: 122).

<sup>17</sup>Once more, side-stepping psychoanalysis allows a more productive reading of what otherwise we might be too tempted to read as a phallic symbol.

differences that would work to undermine its illusory homogeneity (2000: 94). In this instance, the jungle endows the nation with the positive qualities that serve its purpose, naturalness, fertility, health and majesty, but not the negative ones that would undermine it. The reverse is also true: the immigrant body of Johnny Weissmuller is a double loser. It is both primitive and uncivilized, therefore other; and mighty, majestic and apelike, therefore, again, other.

## Reflections on approach and method

I would like to finish this thesis by reflecting briefly on the approaches and methodology adopted. This gives me an opportunity to revisit my arguments for preferring textual analysis against the backdrop of the films' historical, social and economic context(s), over an approach focusing on archival research, star studies, performance analysis or Hollywood studio history. The brief recap that follows, then, serves to justify the approaches and methodology adopted and to explain the benefits of rejecting, or more precisely, limiting the extent of my engagement with others.

As I set out in Chapter 1, this thesis has sought to explore *representations* of exile and the exilic body in a period that precedes the date identified by Naficy as the beginning of 'an accented cinema' (2001). Naficy's assertion that films reflecting on exile and the rupture and trauma of displacement first emerged in the 1950s (*ibid.*: 10), and that European émigré directors working in Hollywood had somehow come to be 'exemplars of the American cinema' (*ibid.*: 19), dictated my focus on Hollywood, and on the period 1930-1956. The period, and the geographical context, combined with the central concern of this thesis with representations of exile and the exilic body, dictated the decision to follow a methodology based primarily in textual analysis. The textual analysis is throughout in dialogue with the context: films are introduced in relation to the history of their creation, and the political, economic and production context in which they were made. However, rather than read the films in light of their specific context, the analysis of the key texts selected is conducted in order to offer an insight into the society, and the normative discourse, within which they were created.

Another factor that prompted me to privilege textual analysis over other approaches was the prevalence of critical works on exile focused on production history and the history of Hollywood. As I argued in Chapter 1, Elsaesser's works on European émigré filmmakers in Hollywood (2000; 2005), Phillips and Vincendeau's *Journeys of Desire* (2006) and Ruth Vasey's invaluable *The World According to Hollywood* (1997), as well as a host of other works, have already done much to uncover the stories and histories of émigré artists in Hollywood. Elsaesser has explored in great detail the economic realities and the political conflicts of the

working lives of émigré directors in Hollywood (e.g., 2000: 361-382). *Journeys of Desire* is a hugely significant contribution to the history of exile with its focus on the private, public and professional lives of émigré actors working in Hollywood. Vasey's work on the commercial interests that dictated executive decisions on which films would get made, who would make them and how they were to be made broke new ground and shed light on an until then little-known aspect of Hollywood history. My decision to focus on textual analysis was then also due to a commitment to making a real contribution to research on exile and Hollywood, and to address what I perceived to be a gap in criticism. Everything, it seemed, has been analyzed, from motivations for migration, the wealth of extra-textual material generated around Hollywood star bodies, through business strategy dictating which stereotypes were safe to depict on screen, to the ways in which exilic filmmakers, artists and technicians negotiated the structures and hierarchies of the Hollywood film industry, with the exception of films where the exilic body was put on display for all to see. My focus was dictated by a commitment to shift attention from the extra-textual to the text itself, and from the ways in which exiles circulated within Hollywood, to the ways in which the exilic body circulates within the Hollywood film.

It was this decision to privilege the textual, or as I put it in my introduction, to put the horse before the cart, that has allowed me to draw attention to the constancy of Hollywood's use of the exilic body, and the truly remarkable similarities between such seemingly different films as *Thief of Bagdad* (Ludwig Berger, Michael Powell, 1940) and *White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932), *Mad Love* (Karl Freund, 1935) and *Invisible Ghost* (Joseph H Lewis, 1941), *Nazi Agent* (Jules Dassin, 1942) and *Ghost of Frankenstein* (Erle C Kenton, 1942). I feel that the findings of this thesis, on the representations of the exilic body as the repudiated other in an imagined binary opposition between the 'us' of the host nation and the 'them' of the exile, have justified the decision to limit my engagement with certain approaches, and to adopt the approaches and methodology used in the thesis.

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*Double Confession* (Ken Annakin, 1950): Paynter72

*Quicksand* (Irving Pichel, 1950): Nick Dramoshag

*Rope of Sand* (William Dieterle, 1949): Toady

*Casbah* (John Berry, 1948): Slimane

*My Favorite Brunette* (Elliott Nugent, 1947): Kismet

*The Beast with Five Fingers* (Robert Florey, 1946): Hilary Cummins

*The Verdict* (Don Siegel, 1946): Victor Emmric

*The Chase* (Arthur Ripley, 1946): Gino

*Black Angel* (Roy William Neill, 1946): Marko

*Three Strangers* (Jean Negulesco, 1946): Johnny West

*Confidential Agent* (Herman Shumlin, 1945): Contreras

*Hotel Berlin* (Peter Godfrey, 1945): Johannes Koenig

*The Conspirators* (Jean Negulesco, 1944): Jan Bernazsky

*Arsenic and Old Lace* (Frank Capra, 1944): Dr. Herman Einstein

*The Mask of Dimitrios* (Jean Negulesco, 1944): Cornelius Leyden

*Passage to Marseille* (Michael Curtiz, 1944): Marius

*The Cross of Lorraine* (Tay Garnett, 1943): Sergeant Berger

*Background to Danger* (Raoul Walsh, 1943): Nikolai Zaleshoff

*The Constant Nymph* (Edmund Goulding, 1943): Fritz Bercovi

*Casablanca* (Michael Curtiz, 1942): Ugarte

*The Boogie Man Will Get You* (Lew Landers, 1942): Dr Lorentz

*Invisible Agent* (Edwin L Marin, 1942): Baron Ikito

*All Through the Night* (Vincent Sherman, 1941): Pepi, the piano player

*The Maltese Falcon* (John Huston, 1941): Joel Cairo

*They Met in Bombay* (Clarence Brown, 1941): Capt. Chang

*Mr. District Attorney* (William Morgan, 1941): Mr. Hyde

*The Face Behind the Mask* (Robert Florey, 1941): Janos 'Johnny' Szabo

*You'll Find Out* (David Butler, 1940): Professor Karl Fenninger

*Stranger on the Third Floor* (Boris Ingster, 1940): The Stranger

*Island of Doomed Men* (Charles Barton, 1940): Stephen Danel

*I Was an Adventuress* (Gregory Ratoff, 1940): Polo

*Strange Cargo* (Frank Borzage, 1940): M'sieu 'Pig' Cochon

*Mr. Moto Takes a Vacation* (Norman Foster, 1939): Mr Moto

*Mr. Moto in Danger Island* (Herbert I Leeds, 1939): Kentaro Moto

*Mr. Moto's Last Warning* (Norman Foster, 1939): Mr Kentaro Moto

*Mysterious Mr. Moto* (Norman Foster, 1938): Mr Moto

*I'll Give a Million* (Walter Lang, 1938): Louie

*Mr. Moto Takes a Chance* (Norman Foster, 1938): Mr Moto

*Mr. Moto's Gamble* (James Tinling, 1938): Kentaro Moto

*Thank You, Mr. Moto* (Norman Foster, 1937): Mr Kentaro Moto

*Lancer Spy* (Gregory Ratoff, 1937): Major Sigfried Gruning  
*Think Fast, Mr Moto* (Norman Foster, 1937): Kentaro Moto  
*Nancy Steele Is Missing!* (George Marshall, 1937): Professor Sturm  
*Crack-Up* (Malcolm St Clair, 1936): Colonel Gimpy  
*Secret Agent* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1936): The General  
*Crime and Punishment* (Josef von Sternberg, 1935): Roderick Raskolnikov  
*Mad Love (The Hands of Orlac)*, Karl Freund, 1935): Doctor Gogol

## Béla Lugosi, Hollywood films from Dracula, 1931-1956

*The Black Sleep* (Reginald Le Borg, 1956): Casimir

*Bride of the Monster* (Ed Wood, Jr, 1955): Dr. Eric Vornoff

*Glen or Glenda* (Ed Wood, Jr, 1953): Scientist

*Bela Lugosi Meets a Brooklyn Gorilla* (William Beaudine, 1952): Dr. Zabor

*Mother Riley Meets the Vampire* (John Gilling, 1952): Von Housen

*Bud Abbott Lou Costello Meet Frankenstein* (Charles Barton, 1948):  
Count Dracula

*Scared to Death* (Christy Cabanne, 1947): Prof. Leonide

*Genius at Work* (Leslie Goodwins, 1946): Stone

*The Body Snatcher* (Robert Wise, 1945): Joseph

*Zombies on Broadway* (Gordon Douglas, 1945): Prof. Paul Renault

*One Body Too Many* (Frank McDonald, 1944): Merkil

*Return of the Ape Man* (Phil Rosen, 1944): Prof. Dexter

*Voodoo Man* (William Beaudine, 1944): Dr Richard Marlowe

*The Return of the Vampire* (Lew Landers, 1944):  
Armand Tesla/Dr. Hugo Bruckner

*Ghosts on the Loose* (William Beaudine, 1943): Emil

*The Ape Man* (William Beaudine, 1943): Dr James Brewster

*Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* (Roy William Neill, 1943): Monster

*Bowery at Midnight* (Wallace Fox, 1942):  
Prof. Frederick Brenner, alias Karl Wagner

*Night Monster* (Ford Beebe, 1942): Rolf

*The Corpse Vanishes* (Wallace Fox, 1942): Dr. Lorenz

*The Ghost of Frankenstein* (Erle C Kenton, 1942): Ygor

*Black Dragons* (William Nigh, 1942): Dr. Melcher/Monsieur Colomb

*The Wolf Man* (George Waggner, 1941): Bela

*Spooks Run Wild* (Phil Rosen, 1941): Nardo

*The Black Cat* (Albert S Rogell, 1941): Eduardo

*Invisible Ghost* (Joseph H Lewis, 1941): Charles Kessler

*You'll Find Out* (David Butler, 1940): Prince Saliano

*The Devil Bat* (Jean Yarbrough, 1940): Dr. Paul Carruthers

*Black Friday* (Arthur Lubin, 1940): Eric Marnay

*The Saint's Double Trouble* (Jack Hively, 1940): The Partner

*The Dark Eyes of London* (Walter Summers, 1940):  
Dr. Feodor Orloff/Prof. John Dearborn

*Ninotchka* (Ernst Lubitsch, 1939): Kommissar Razin

*The Gorilla* (Allan Dwan, 1939): Peters - the Butler

*Son of Frankenstein* (Rowland V Lee, 1939): Ygor

*The Phantom Creeps* (Ford Beebe, Saul A Goodkind, 1939): Dr. Alex Zorka

*S.O.S. Coast Guard* (Allan James, William Witney, 1937):  
Boroff / M A Anderson

*Shadow of Chinatown* (Robert F Hill, 1936): Victor Poten

*Postal Inspector* (Otto Brower, 1936): Gregory Benet

*The Invisible Ray* (Lambert Hillyer, 1936): Dr. Felix Benet

*Murder by Television* (Clifford Sanforth, 1935):  
Dr. Arthur Perry / Edwin Perry

*The Raven* (Lew Landers, 1935): Dr. Richard Vollin

*The Mystery of the Marie Celeste* (Denison Clift, 1935):  
Anton Lorenzen / A Gottlieb

*Mark of the Vampire* (Tod Browning, 1935): Count Mora

*The Best Man Wins* (Erle C Kenton, 1935): Doc Boehm

*The Mysterious Mr. Wong* (William Nigh, 1934):  
Mr. Fu Wong, aka Li See

*The Return of Chandu* (Ray Taylor, 1934):  
Frank Chandler, aka Chandu the Magician

*The Black Cat* (Edgar G Ulmer, 1934): Dr. Vitus Werdegast

*The Devil's in Love* (William Dieterle, 1933):  
Military Prosecutor (uncredited)

*International House* (A Edward Sutherland, 1933): Gen. Nicholas Petronovich

*Night of Terror* (Benjamin Stoloff, 1933): Degar

*The Whispering Shadow* (Colbert Clark, Albert Herman, 1933):  
Prof. Anton Strang

*Island of Lost Souls* (Erle C Kenton, 1932): Sayer of the Law

*The Death Kiss* (Edwin L Marin, 1932): Joseph Steiner

*Chandu the Magician* (William Cameron Menzies, Marcel Varnel, 1932):  
Roxor

*White Zombie* (Victor Halperin, 1932): 'Murder' Legandre

*Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Robert Florey, 1932): Dr. Mirakle

*Broadminded* (Mervyn LeRoy, 1931): Pancho

*The Black Camel* (Hamilton MacFadden, 1931): Tarneverro/Arthur Mayo

*Women of All Nations* (Raoul Walsh, 1931): Prince Hassan

*50 Million Frenchmen* (Lloyd Bacon, 1931): Orizon - Magician (uncredited)

*Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931): Count Dracula

## Conrad Veidt, English-language films 1932-1943

*Nazi Agent* (Jules Dassin, 1942): Otto Becker, Baron Hugo von Dettner

*Above Suspicion* (Richard Thorpe, 1943): Hassert Seidel

*All Through the Night* (Vincent Sherman, 1941) Franz Ebbing

*The Men in Her Life* (Gregory Ratoff, 1941): Stanislas Rosing

*Whistling in the Dark* (S Slyvan Simon, 1941): Joseph Jones

*A Woman's Face* (George Cukor, 1941): Torsten Barring

*The Thief of Bagdad* (Ludwig Berger, Michael Powell, 1940): Jaffar

*Escape* (Mervyn LeRoy, 1940): General Kurt von Kolb

*Contraband* (Michael Powell, 1940): Captain Andersen

*The Spy in Black* (Michael Powell, 1939): Captain Hardt

*Under the Red Robe* (Victor Sjöström, 1937): Gil de Berault

*Dark Journey* (Victor Saville, 1937): Baron Karl Von Marwitz

*King of the Damned* (Walter Forde, 1935): Convict 83

*The Passing of the Third Floor Back* (Berthold Viertel, 1935): The Stranger

*Jew Süss* (Lothar Mendes, 1934): Josef 'Jew Süss' Oppenheimer

*Bella Donna* (Robert Milton, 1934): Mahmoud Baroudi

*I Was a Spy* (Victor Saville, 1933): Commandant Oberaertz

*F.P.1* (Karl Hartl, 1933): Maj. Ellissen

*The Wandering Jew* (Maurice Elvey, 1933): Matathias

*Rome Express* (Walter Forde, 1932): Zurta

*The Congress Dances* (Erik Charell, 1932): Prince Metternich