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"A dangerous mix of recklessness and sophistication": Themes of identity and nostalgic ideas of Europe in the travel writings of Patrick Leigh Fermor

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Abstract:

This thesis provides an academic study of Patrick Leigh Fermor's travel accounts of his journey across Europe in the 1930s. Through a close analysis of these texts, it will attempt to see what these travel accounts can contribute towards ongoing debates about diversity and identity in Europe. It allows for both literary and historical approaches of study, and will refer to several travel writing theories and historiographical debates about the idea of Europe. Despite Patrick Leigh Fermor being a popular British post-war author, his works have received little scholarly attention; this thesis seeks to alert scholars to the rich potential for research that these texts provide. It will argue that both the author's techniques of self-presentation and his conception of the history of Europe create nostalgic images of a 'lost Europe'. While his conception of Europe doesn't necessarily 'Orientalise' eastern Europe, his images of a lost Europe are heightened there.

Words: 22,987

Preface

I would like to thank my parents for supporting my decision to do this Master degree. Without their backing and support it would not have been possible. Thanks also to Alex Drace-Francis for being so helpful in supervising this thesis, and to Grzegorz Moroz for sharing his research with me. I would like to acknowledge the Universiteit van Amsterdam and its beautiful surroundings in the city of Amsterdam for providing a wonderful setting for my last year in academia. The friends I have made along the way, both within the university and outside it, have made it a year to remember. My plans to study this Master degree abroad and within the discipline of European Studies were put into motion by the looming departure of Britain from the EU. This experience has only served to make me feel more European than ever.

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0.1 Introduction

Spurning a traditional education and seeking adventure, Patrick Leigh Fermor set out at the young age of 18 to walk across Europe from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople (now Istanbul) in December 1933. His journey took him from Holland into Germany, across Austria and Slovakia, looping through Hungary and Romania, traversing across Bulgaria, before he finally arrived at his goal just over a year later. With a second hand greatcoat and little money, he set out to walk this 1400 mile journey armed only with 'an outgoing nature, a sense of adventure, an affinity for languages and a broad network of friends'.[1] While he sought to travel 'like a tramp', his journey across the width of the continent proved to be a diverse experience. He spent some lowly nights in cow sheds in Bavaria or wrapped in his greatcoat under the stars on the Hungarian plain, but equally spent months frequenting the estates of Romanian Counts and sleeping in the mansions of Europe's fading elite classes.

A Time of Gifts and *Between the Woods and the Water* provide an account of this journey, and both texts prove fascinating in a variety of ways.[2] The setting of his journey is a continent on the eve of its most turbulent period in its history. The spirit of youth and adventure courses through Leigh-Fermor's narrative, resulting in a compelling account of his adventure that has proved unboundedly popular with his readers. However the texts also prove to be more widely autobiographical about his life; while the journey was undertaken in the 1930's, they were only written up and published in the 1970s and 1980s. Between that time Leigh Fermor lived a prominent literary life and became a famous British war hero for his daring abduction of a German general in Nazi occupied Crete during the Second World War. The texts simultaneously manage to capture Leigh Fermor both in his youth and the wisdom of his later years. The texts also capture Europe's complex political, ideological and cultural history, and present a fusion of both contemporary Europe at the time of the journey and the Europe that was to come. As neatly summarized by fellow travel writer Jan Morris, the texts 'reflect both the maturing of a mind and the condition of a continent'.[3]

The texts prove to be paradigmatic and multi-faceted. Whilst primarily a travel account of his journey, the texts frequently meander and become essayistic in parts, capturing debates regarding history, politics, cultural diversity, and national and European identities from a particularly transnational and comparative perspective. Leigh Fermor's literary genre remains difficult to define. While he is 'generally classified as a travel writer', Morris also describes him as 'a memorist, a historian, a connoisseur of art and architecture, a poet, a humorist, a story-teller, a social chronicler, a mystic and one of God's own country'.[4] With their combination of culturalised travel writing, autobiography and interpretations of European history and culture, both *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water* convey a vision of Europe like no other.

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[1] Gross, M. (2010). *A Walk From Vienna to Budapest*. [online] Nytimes.com. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/23/travel/23frugalwalk.html [Accessed 27 Jun. 2018].

[2] Fermor, P. (1977). *A Time of Gifts*. London: John Murray; Fermor, P. (1986). *Between the Woods and the Water*. London: John Murray.

[3] Morris, J. (2005). 'Introduction to the text' In P. L. Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*. London: John Murray. p.IX.

[4] *Ibid*., p.VII.

As will be demonstrated by this thesis, the resulting richness of Leigh Fermor's travel accounts has made him not only an immensely popular author but also one that is simultaneously worthy of scholarly attention. There is freedom for scholars to analyse them as life writing, travel writing and as historiography. There is also scope to use the texts for scholarly research into debates relating to European identity and culture. Ongoing debates persist within European Studies as to whether a European identity exists, and if so, what exactly it constitutes. One approach towards this debate is through analysis of how individuals such as Leigh Fermor have subjectively interpreted Europe. Autobiographical and travel writings can offer insights into subjective experiences of Europe, and into the way Europeans remember and interpret their lives. The European nature of his route, and the transnational elements of autobiography and historiography that Leigh Fermor explores through the base of the resulting travel texts, allow for a great deal of analysis into Leigh Fermor's own identity and his interpretation of Europe.

This is not to say that Leigh Fermor wrote his travel accounts with any explicit ideas of European identity in mind. Through a close reading of the texts, this thesis will instead treat his travel accounts as a fertile testing ground for ideas of Europe and European identity. This thesis will hypothesise that perhaps the biggest draw of the texts is Leigh Fermor's success in vividly capturing a vision of 'lost Europe'. The Europe of the 1930s that he travels through and describes was on the cusp of modernity, and Leigh Fermor nostalgically recounts the places and ways of life that were to be either permanently altered or completely destroyed during the Second World War. The Europe that he describes was 'a remembering time, but also a waiting time', for 'still alive in the public consciousness was the old Europe of princes and the peasants', but 'also apprehension of what was to come'.[5]

For Pim Den Boer there is 'no stable core, no fixed identity and no final answer' to the question of European identity.[6] This thesis shall propose that Patrick Leigh Fermor's nostalgic interpretation of Europe's history and of a transnational European culture remains attractive to some Europeans as a way of understanding European identity. An interpretation of Leigh Fermor's travel accounts provides just one answer to this debate.

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[5] Morris, 'Introduction' in *A Time of Gifts*, p.VIII

[6] Dussen, J., Boer, P., Bugge, P., Woever, O. and Wilson, K. (2005). *The History of the Idea of Europe*. Milton Keynes: Open University, p.11.

0.2 Context and Literature review:

This section will explore how Leigh Fermor was an extremely popular figure both during his life and after his death, but also a figure who has been the subject of very little academic attention. It will also outline which of his writings will be studied in this thesis, and why certain texts will not be examined. A case for the academic value of studying travel writing will also be made.

Many have been drawn towards Leigh Fermor, a polyglot and autodidact once described as 'a cross between Indiana Jones, James Bond and Graham Greene'.[7] Throughout his life he was a prominent author, writing eight acclaimed travel books alongside countless essays, translations, book reviews and introductions. A part of the Leigh Fermor legend stems from his action during the Second World War when he abducted a Nazi general in a daring operation while serving in Crete. Greece remained a prominent part of Leigh Fermor's life following the war. As well as becoming a local celebrity for his wartime exploits, he moved to the country in 1950 and built a house at Kardamyli, a seaside village in the southern Peloponnese, where he lived for the rest of his life. The house was to become 'a haven for writers and artists drawn to its owner's extraordinary charisma, and the wild, arid beauty of the surrounding landscape'.[8] While he was a legendary figure for his daring wartime exploits, this reputation was cemented by the publication of the accounts of his adventurous pre-war walk across Europe. *A Time of Gifts* was published in 1977, and *Between the Woods and the Water* followed in 1986. The two books proved to be his most famous work and made him one of Britain's most famous travel writers. He also wrote an estimated 12,000 letters to an extremely wide network of contacts across Europe throughout his lifetime.[9]

Alongside his writing Leigh Fermor was immensely popular and a natural socialite, whose open and fascinating personality attracted followers to him like moths to a lightbulb. I would go as far to suggest that something resembling a cult has developed around Patrick Leigh Fermor; with his charm, intelligence, and natural networking ability, there has been no shortage of friends eager to define their relationship to him. This can be seen in the abundance of literature published describing connections to him. Kathryn Starbuck writes of visiting Kardamyli and singing folk songs to Patrick Leigh Fermor [10], David Mason writes of having been 'lucky enough' to have visited in him in Greece and 'got to know the man'[11], while Dolores Payás has written the memoir *Drinks Time!*, simply describing some of her personal conversations with Leigh Fermor during some of his infamous drinking sessions.[12] Despite having never met him, Nick Hunt felt obliged to try and trace Leigh Fermor's footsteps in his

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[7] Doward, J. (2018). *How an idyllic Greek hideaway inspired a British war hero and travel writer*. [online] the Guardian. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2017/dec/24/leigh-fermor-greece-british-musuem-art [Accessed 27 Jun. 2018].

[8] *Ibid*.

[9] Fermor, P. and Sisman, A. (ed.) (2016). *Dashing for the Post: The Letters of Patrick Leigh Fermor*. London: John Murray. *Dashing For the Post* collects just some of the letters Leigh Fermor sent to friends and connections throughout his lifetime, and will be referenced at points in this thesis.

[10] Starbuck, K. (2014). Singing for Patrick Leigh Fermor. *Sewanee Review, 122*(4), 664-669.

[11] Mason, D. (2007). 'Getting to know Michaeli'. *The Sewanee Review, 115* (3), pp. 403-423.

[12] Payás, D. (2015). *Drink Time! In the Company of Patrick Leigh Fermor*. Chicago: Bene Factum Publishing

eulogy *Walking the Woods and the Water*[13], while the website patrickleighfermor.org is an ongoing project that only serves to fuel Leigh Fermor's legend. Here fans from all over the world trade their connections with Leigh Fermor, attempt to recreate parts of his journey, post lesser known biographical information about Leigh Fermor's life or places from his journey, as well as share details of the network of events relating to Leigh Fermor taking place around the world. The website enthusiastically described to its eager audience how a recent symposium dedicated to him in Copenhagen was even attended by the Danish Queen, 'who has avidly read all of his books'.[14]

With his appeal and influence still clearly alive and strong, Leigh Fermor is a prime target for scholarly investigation. It is surprising then that very little academic literature exists relating to him. Artemis Cooper has written a biography on him titled *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*. While this proves to be an useful source of information about Leigh Fermor's life, as Cooper makes clear in her introduction to the book she was a close friend of Leigh Fermor (to the level that she refers to him as 'Paddy'), so the book can hardly be treated as academically impartial.[15] While also not strictly academic for the same reasons, Jan Morris' introductions to the most recent editions of both *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water* will also be used to during the analysis. The only scholarly analysis of Leigh Fermor's writing is by Grzegorz Moroz, who has written a study into 'parallaxes' as means of organizing memory in Leigh Fermor's travel accounts. This has proven to be a valuable piece of secondary literature, and will be referred to in the section on memory in the first chapter of this thesis.[16] Moroz has also written a study into the nostalgic quality of the paratexts in Leigh Fermor's writing, which will also be referred to.[17]

While Leigh Fermor may not be the subject of much direct academic research, his significance has not escaped the attention of scholars of travel writing. Wendy Bracewell refers to Leigh Fermor's reputation as a 'heroic adventurer and gentleman scholar of the British imperial past' as an influence upon the textual tradition and expectations of subsequent male British travellers to the Balkans.[18] In *Tourists with Typewriters*, Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan reference Leigh Fermor as influential in regard to the 'genteel clubbability of the same myths and stereotypes' that persist among British post-war travel writers.[19] The pair emphasise the role of post-war travel writing as a form of entertainment, but also an under-analysed source of imperial nostalgia. Despite not going into detail these authors touch upon the reputation and

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[13] Hunt, N. (2014). *Walking the Woods and the Water: In Patrick Leigh Fermor's footsteps from the Hook of Holland to the Golden Horn*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

[14] Sawford, T. (2018). *Sisters Queen Margrethe and Queen Anne-Marie make rare joint appearance at "To Greece with Love" symposium*. [online] Available at: https://patrickleighfermor.org/2018/01/28/sisters-queen-margrethe-and-queen-anne-marie-make-rare-joint-appearance-at-to-greece-with-love-symposium/ [Accessed 28 Jun. 2018].

[15] Cooper, A. (2013). *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*. London: John Murray.

[16] Moroz, G. (2016). 'Parallaxes as Means of Organizing Memory in Travel Narratives of Patrick Leigh Fermor and Ryszard Kapuściński'. *Crossroads: A Journal of English Studies*, 13 (2), pp.41-53.

[17] Moroz, G. (2016). 'Travel Books, Nostalgia and Paratexts: The Case of Patrick Leigh Fermor's *A Time of Gifts*', in Drąg, W. and Kębłowska-Ławniczak, E. (ed). *Spectrum of Emotions: From Love to Grief*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

[18] Bracewell, W. (2005). 'New Men, Old Europe: Being a Man in Balkan Travel Writing'. *Journeys*, 6. pp. 88-115.

[19] Holland, P. and Huggan, G. (2010). *Tourists with typewriters: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Travel Writing*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

legacy of Leigh Fermor amongst other British travel writers, who frequently refer to the sentiment of nostalgia that Leigh Fermor's books generate as a benchmark in their own travel texts. This will be explored in greater detail in the sections on the ideas of 'lost Europe' in later chapters of this thesis.

This thesis seeks to help in filling the large gap that exists in regards to scholarly research into Leigh Fermor's texts. It will argue that the texts are an ideal testing site for several theories found within the umbrella-like discipline of European studies, due to Leigh Fermor's European framing of his lived experience, his engagement with European history and the nature of his travels across the width of the continent. As there is a lack of dedicated scholarship on Leigh Fermor, this thesis will comment on whether these theories fit with Leigh Fermor's texts or whether they need to be adapted. The method for this analysis will be outlined in the following section of this introduction.

The analysis will be based upon a close reading of Leigh Fermor's texts *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*, both of which were published towards the end of his lifetime and at the peak of his fame. This author underwent much deliberation whether to include *The Broken Road: from the Iron Gates to Mount Athos*, covering the third and final leg of the journey.[20] As a source, the text is problematic; a notoriously slow writer, Leigh Fermor failed to finish the book before he died. As a result the book was compiled and completed by Colin Thubron and his friend and biographer Artemis Cooper. The resulting book is a blend of Leigh Fermor's incomplete manuscript and sections written in the style of Leigh Fermor by the books executors, using his entries from his diary for material. Despite the authors best attempts however, it is difficult to consider the book's Leigh Fermor's own. As a source this third book warrants separate analysis of its own, and analysis into the rich contents of the first two books provides ample material for this thesis. This third book will be referred to sparingly and only when appropriate to the analysis drawn from the first two books. In the interests of feasibility this thesis will also not study the rest of Leigh Fermor's portfolio of other travel texts he produced over his lifetime. While including these books would no doubt add further options for analysis, they would make the scope of investigation too wide and detract from the distinct focus on Europe within this thesis.

One may question the scholarly value of studying travel texts such as Leigh Fermor's when they can seem fairly low-brow literature written to entertain. I would argue that this is where travel writing draws its discursive power, and a growing school of scholars are realising the importance of studying travel writing. Travel writing has played a key role throughout history in acquiring and structuring knowledge about foreign lands. Alex Drace-Francis describes travel writing as a form of 'culturized movement', and a key site of othering and representing cultural differences.[21] Expanding upon this Holland and Huggan propose that travel writing belongs to a wider structure of representation, 'within which cultural affiliations and links, and culture itself, can be analysed, questioned and reassessed'.

Scholars of travel writing have also recognised the freedom of travel writers to use the licenses and devices of fiction. For Paul Fussell 'travel writing is at best a mediation between fact and

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[20] Fermor, P. (2013). *The Broken Road*. London: John Murray.
[21] Bracewell, W. & Drace-Francis, A. (2008). *Under Eastern eyes: A comparative introduction to East European travel writing on Europe*. Budapest: Central European University Press. p.4

fiction'. Travel writers have the ability to exaggerate or invent elements of their narrative, and also the ability to suppress or ignore. Despite this copious subjectivity, the genre draws discursive power for it still retains a measure of objectivity. As recognised by Fussell, 'travel books are a subspecies of memoir in which autobiographical narrative arises from the speaker's encounter with distant or unfamiliar data', but one 'in which the narrative claims literal validity by constant reference to actuality'.[22] Further theories of travel writing and life writing will provide tools for analysis and will be referenced throughout this thesis.

Holland and Huggan recognise the discursive power of travel writing as a discipline that straddles categories and genres. Travel narratives 'can run from a picturesque adventure to philosophical treatise, political commentary, ecological parable, and spiritual quest' while also 'borrowing freely from history, geography, anthropology, and social science'. However whilst writers of travel texts often demonstrate great erudition, they often fail to respect the rules that govern conventional scholarship.[23] This thesis will argue that because travel texts such as Leigh Fermor's prove to be highly readable and popular, their resulting influence makes them useful tools in cultural analysis of European identity and into broader studies of identity.

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[22] Fussell, P. (1982). *Abroad: British Literary Travel Writing Between the Wars*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.10.
[23] Holland & Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters*, p.8.

0.3 Method

The nature of the texts has influenced my methods of research. The texts will be studied with the analytical tools of a historian as well as the tools used by scholars of travel writing and life writing. This thesis will undertake three interlinking and corresponding lines of investigation which are loosely divided into three chapters.

The first chapter will look at how Leigh Fermor constructs his own self-identity within the texts, and how this shapes his interpretation of Europe throughout the texts. It will firstly examine his self-presentation as a wandering scholar who is fluent in history, literature and cultural differences. This persona is a defining trait of Leigh Fermor's narrative style and forms a distinct part of his own identity, alongside acting as a lens through which he interprets the different cultures he encounters along his journey. The second section of this first chapter will look at the role of Britishness and class in Leigh Fermor's self-image. It will look at how Leigh Fermor's romanticised self-image as a bohemian scholar travelling like a tramp is a cover for rhetorical devices of eccentricity and gentlemanliness. It will argue that this self-image serves to strengthen his narrative by lending it authenticity. The third part of this chapter will look into the role of memory within the travel texts. In writing his travel account from memory, certain details and events are forgotten and excluded from the narrative, while other elements are brought to the fore. Referring to Moroz's study into the 'parallax' structure of Leigh Fermor's texts, it will be argued that the texts effortlessly switch between Leigh Fermor's younger and older selves. This rhetorical device lends Leigh Fermor's narrative authenticity and facilitates the nostalgic memories of 'lost Europe' that pervade the narrative.

These ideas of self-identity examined in the first chapter influence Leigh Fermor's interpretations of Europe that will be analysed in chapter two. The first part of this chapter will look at how Leigh Fermor walked through Europe during a significant historical period. The Europe he travels through in some cases has pre-modern elements that were to be largely swept away in the period following the Second World War. The privileged ways of life of the elite classes that he encounters on his journey were also waning. Germany in particular is described as being on the cusp of modernity, an effect that is heightened by the contrasting presence of Nazis in his memories of the country. The parallax structure is used here to heighten a sense of foreboding in regards to the horrors that the Nazis were to unleash in future years. The second part of this second chapter develops this theme, and seeks to assess the importance of the nostalgic images and interpretation of history that Leigh Fermor constructs throughout the texts. It will theorise that such an approach forms an under recognised European narrative; the narrative of a 'lost Europe', of vanishing pre-modern traditions and of a fading elite. It will question whether such a narrative is comparable to other nostalgic European writers such as Stefan Zweig, and theorise that this narrative of Europe has remained alluring and popular to Europeans even into the 21st century, particularly as Europe undergoes a crisis of identity. Literature on the relationship between historiography and myth will be used to ascertain the power of this narrative. The last part of this chapter will analyse Leigh Fermor's distinctly transnational approach towards European history. The transnational history he presents repeatedly strengthens the notion of a Europe bound by common historical roots. Europe's elite classes are central to this interpretation of history, and are presented sympathetically throughout the texts. It will attempt to place his transnational interpretation of history within the wider historiographical debate assessing the importance of the history to the idea of Europe.

The third and final chapter will look at Leigh Fermor's vision of Europe in relation to the textual tradition of dividing Europe into East and West. The first part of this chapter will examine traditions of distinguishing between East and West Europe in travel writing in. It will propose that Leigh Fermor's travel accounts in some ways conform to an orientalised view of Eastern Europe as a mysterious space, and also one that has heightened attributes of backwardness and barbarity. The second part of this chapter will look at how elements of Leigh Fermor's texts counter this oriental narrative. While the peasants that he describes in Eastern Europe are portrayed as particularly backward, the elite classes he encounters are strongly connected to the rest of the rest of Europe culturally. Leigh Fermor is ambiguous about exactly where Eastern Europe begins and who the Eastern Europeans are. He also others the whole of Europe as exotic and unfamiliar rather than just Eastern Europe. The third part of this chapter will look at Leigh Fermor's presentation of an Eastern Europe lost to communism. In doing so it will draw upon previous analysis of the role of memory and of the narrative of a 'lost Europe' proposed earlier in the thesis. It will be argued that the nostalgic images of lost Europe are much stronger in Eastern Europe for the elite classes he encountered were to be dramatically effected by communism as well as the Second World War. Leigh Fermor also revisited Hungary and Romania while writing the second text and was horrified by the changes he saw.

This thesis will conclude by summarising its findings and assessing their significance. Furthermore it will assess the pitfalls of this thesis; mainly that it is built on a deep reading of Leigh Fermor's texts that only represent part of his writing, and is a reading that in itself is subjective. It will also point towards scope for future research that could be undertaken on these travel texts and into Leigh Fermor's life.

Chapter 1:

1.1 A 'wandering scholar' fluent in history, art, literature and languages
1.2 The repeated fiction of the 'bohemian tramp' and the persona of 'eccentric gentlemanliness'
1.3 Lost memories and the 'parallax' structure

An analysis of Leigh Fermor's self-presentation is a useful starting point in a textual analysis of his travel accounts. Such an examination of his identity construction is a useful base through which to explore the wider narratives of history and themes of identity established throughout the texts and which will discussed in chapters two and three.

Scholars of travel writing have identified the importance of auto images in travel writing. Alex Drace Francis recognises that autobiographical travel texts serve as useful sites for constructing identities. This occurs on an individual and collective level in that 'the traveller's identity is conveyed through his or her literary 'persona', which thereby also becomes a site for the performance of group identities'.[24] Scholars such as Schick and Guerrina are in agreement that identity is 'constructed through a mass of social interactions and acts of representation'.[25] Identity is neither monolithic nor static, for identity formation is a continuous process and the importance of one identity will change with time and place.[26] These theories of identity are useful when analysing Leigh Fermor's shifting self-presentation throughout the travel texts.

Leigh Fermor's construction of his self-image throughout the book is important for several reasons; the persona he constructs within the text both affects how he interprets Europe and its peoples along his travels, but also shapes how readers interpret the images and ideas that he produces within the texts. It is a necessary first step to examine Leigh Fermor's self-identity in order to support the analysis of the wider themes of history and identity that will make up the second and third chapters of this thesis.

This chapter will begin with an examination of how Leigh Fermor constructs the identity of a 'wandering scholar'. This image is created by Leigh Fermor's frequent demonstrations of knowledge of European histories, literatures and languages that is imprinted in his surroundings. This knowledge represents an understanding of cultural differences and lends authority to Leigh Fermor's narrative voice that influences the images of Europe examined in other chapters. It will move on to look at Leigh Fermor's repeated self-image of a 'bohemian tramp' who sees Europe from all levels of society. This image is a partly fictional persona that tries to generate authenticity within the texts. While he may use this image, a more accurate description would be that of 'eccentric gentlemanliness'. The eccentric aspect of this persona is used to generate nostalgia, and the gentlemanliness reflects notions of amateur scholarship. The last part of this chapter will look how memory is used as a narrative device and how Leigh Fermor constructs and interprets his memories. It will look at the use of the 'parallax' structure of narration throughout the texts again lends the texts authenticity. Two Leigh Fermor's narrate

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[24] Drace-Francis, A. *'Identity'*, in forthcoming in vol. *Keywords: Concepts in Travel Writing Studies*, ed. C. Forsdick, Z. Kinsley & K. Walchester. London: Anthem Press.

[25] Schick, I. 1999. *The Erotic Margin. Spatiality and Sexuality in Alteritist Discourse*. London: Verso.

[26] Guerrina, R. (2010). *Europe: History, Ideas, Ideologies*. London: Arnold. p.139.

the text: the senior Leigh Fermor, writing with a lifetime of knowledge and experiences, narrates the account of the youthful and impressionable boy who made the journey.

Attempting an analysis of Leigh Fermor's self-presentation across the entirety of the texts is not an easy task however. That the texts are so layered in their style and content provides scope for so much analysis to be done. As a result examples will be chosen selectively in order to best support the arguments being presented. Given the scale of the journey and the travel texts as a source there is also the temptation to present the analysis of these texts in chronological order. Such an approach would limit the analysis so instead as much contextual information will accompany each example as possible.

1.1 A 'wandering scholar' fluent in history, art, literature and languages

While primarily an account of his journey across Europe, the texts cannot simply be considered as travel texts. Leigh Fermor frequently meanders into rich historical and literary discussion about his subjects. For example Leigh Fermor may one moment be describing the physical surroundings of his journey from Ulm in Germany, before snapping into a description of the architectural qualities of pre-baroque German towns, then weaving into a lively interpretation of the history of the Landsknechts and how their imagery continues to influence both German art and the country that he sees around him.[27] This movement between subjects is woven into the narrative so that it doesn't even break flow, and examples of this are too countless to mention over the duration of the two texts.

I propose therefore that one of the primary self-images Leigh Fermor constructs and repeatedly strengthens throughout his travel texts is that of a 'wandering scholar'. The 'scholar' part of this identity is demonstrated through his knowledge of history, literature and languages, while the 'wandering' aspect stems from the application of this knowledge as he travels from place to place throughout his journey.

For Lorenza Mondada travellers undertaking the Grand Tour went to Italy for it 'was imprinted with multiple forms of knowledge'.[28] For Leigh Fermor, Europe is imprinted with such knowledge and it acted as his Grand Tour. He heavily interprets the physical space around him through his knowledge of history. Surveying the landscape from a vantage point of a church tower in Ulm, history leaps out and is brought to life for Leigh Fermor:

> It was an amazing vision. Few stretches of Central Europe have been the theatre for so much history. Beyond which watershed lay the pass where Hannibal's elephants had slithered downhill? Only a few miles away the frontier of the Roman empire had begun... The same valley, functioning in reverse, funnelled half the barbarians of Asia into Central Europe and just below my eyrie, heading upstream, the Huns had entered and left again before

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[27] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, pp.107-109.

[28] Mondada, L. (2005). 'Seeing as a Condition of Saying. On the Discursive Construction of Knowledge in Travel Accounts', in Schulz-Forberg, H. (ed.). *Unravelling European Civilisation: European Travel and Travel-Writing*. Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang. p.68.

swimming their ponies across the Rhine until, foiled by a miracle, they drew rein a little short of Paris.[29]

Looking at the wooded slopes of a valley in Romania he is again overwhelmed by his historical imagination, this time on the subject of the Mongols:

> I could imagine Batu [heir of Ghengis Kahn] and his companions with their flat bow-cases and quivers and habergeons and targets and plumes, turning in their saddles and looking at each other nonplussed under their epicanthic eyelids... all halted in dismay on the verge of a thicket stretching a hundred leagues.[30]

As Leigh Fermor describes in a conversation with one of his hosts in Hungary, 'history seemed to drop from the air and spring out of the ground' for him.[31] Small details as well as landscapes inspire such historical imagination from Leigh Fermor. Noticing the ceremonial swords still carried by nobles in Hungary, he advances that 'surely they were heirlooms from the Turkish wars', that 'blades like these sent the Turks' heads spinning at full gallop'.[32] Aside from this fairly gruesome example, simply staying in a house full of historical paintings and statues 'gave sudden reality to whole fragments of European history of a century earlier or more'.[33] It seems clear that Leigh Fermor actively sought to bring history to life through his travel accounts and the evocative language he uses makes it a central tenet of the texts.

This active seeking of history is even more clear is his proposition of a 'historical jaunt' to his hosts that he stays with east of Budapest. The resulting trip sees them travelling between historical sites in Transylvania with frequent historical interpretation and contextualising along the way.[34] This idea of the 'historical jaunt' is an apt metaphor for the knowledge of European history that he brings to life throughout the texts. History clearly shapes how he interprets his surroundings of Europe, and is perhaps the most conspicuous feature of his identity as a wandering scholar. The frequent transnational focus of the European history he describes, and how this constitutes an idea of Europe, will be discussed in greater depth in chapter two.

Knowledge of art history also plays a large role in his interpretation of his surroundings. Art becomes a recurrent theme from the start of his journey in Holland. It is 'no wonder [Holland] took shape in painting terms', for 'the nature of the landscape itself, the colour, the light, the sky, the openness, the expanse and the details of the towns and the villages' are familiar sights from the 'hundreds of mornings and afternoon in museums and picture galleries and country houses'.[35] In Germany, the view of swans diving through holes in frozen Rhine at Dusseldorf is contrasted to the paintings of Thomas Mann.[36] The inhabitants of the great Hungarian plain are described as 'Goyaesque' for the 'outsize quality about them; something

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[29] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.102.

[30] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.205.

[31] *Ibid*., p.135.

[32] *Ibid*., p.7.

[33] *Ibid*., p.72.

[34] *Ibid*., p.127.

[35] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, pp.35-36.

[36] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.49.

of giants and something of ogres'.[37] While a demonstration of his knowledge about art, these aesthetic comparisons are also revealing about how his knowledge of art history has also shaped his 'horizon of expectations' about Europe. Edward Said goes some way in explaining the role of this horizon of expectations in his description of 'textual attitude'. The textual attitude is the literary allusion that may occur when the author is confronted by something unfamiliar, and is a method by which authors create a frame of reference (not only for their own understanding but also for their readership), for they feel that the thing that they are referencing has more authority than actuality.[38]

Comparison of his surroundings to art further generates nostalgia by altering Leigh Fermor's conceptions of time. Halfway into *A Time of Gifts* he describes how the peasant scenes of Pieter Bruegel 'had presided at every stage of this *winterreise*', but also that 'when no buildings were in sight, I was back in the Dark Ages'.[39] In a peasant home in Germany, he speculates as to the artist that could have painted the scene in front of him: a 'small crone in a pleated coif sat at the end of the table, her eyes bright and timid in their hollows and all these puzzled features were flung into relief by a single wick from below'.[40] Such a vivid and aesthetic description of this instantly conjures thoughts of Golden Age paintings by artists as Rembrandt in the reader's mind and generates a sense of historicity. These expectations also affects his interpretation of physical space. Leigh Fermor ties the aesthetics of classical European art to his own journey. As he walked along the Danube he senses that "I was traversing, without knowing it, an important minor subdivision of art history', and proposes that 'the links between journeys and painting, especially this sort of journey, is very close'.[41]

Leigh Fermor's interpretation of the world through art fits with Manfred Beller's argument that there is no such thing as a pristine encounter since preconceived images can dominate what we observe. For Beller, encounters with other cultures, languages and customs such as Leigh Fermor's are often governed by selective perception which evokes curiosity and the generation of images in people's minds. Historians and social psychologists have come to the conclusion that we transform our perceptions into images.[42] These references to art help the reader to create images and visually imagine his journey.

Literature determines how Leigh Fermor interprets the world around him but also how he connects with people along his journey. In trying to gain an understanding of Czechoslovakia, he uses an English translation of Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk* given to him by his host. Švejk proves to be a 'fictitious figure who has succeeded in representing… a whole nation'.[43] A love of literature is used as a basis for connection wherever he goes, ranging from fellow wanderers such as Konrad from the Frisian Islands, with whom he spent 'evenings reading aloud from Shakespeare'[44], to his elite hosts in Romania who shared his love of 'Wells,

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[37] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.50.
[38] Said, E. (2003). *Orientalism*. London: Penguin. While the conception of textual attitude is rooted within the study of colonialism, it is still a useful concept here.
[39] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.176.
[40] *Ibid*., p.81.
[41] *Ibid*., p.175.
[42] Beller, M. and Leerssen, J (ed.). (2008). *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, p.5.
[43] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.282 & p.301.
[44] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.240.

Galsworthy, Morgan, Warwick Deeping, Dickens and Byron'.[45] Questions about the exact location of the old kingdom of Bohemia, and why it features so prominently in Shakespeare's work, are the sort of questions that trouble him upon his journey. The extensive literary monologues that they spur often span pages and create the image of a learned and cultured individual.[46] In a deeper analysis of these paratexts Grzegorz Moroz proposes that they are selected to invoke feelings of nostalgia, right down to the title of *A Time of Gifts* from Shakespeare's *The Twelfth Night*.[47]

A knowledge of European languages forms the mainstay of Leigh Fermor's knowledge of cultural difference. While he may be far from fluency, Leigh Fermor repeatedly demonstrates either his proficiency or understanding of how the language works. Travel writing often reveals more about the traveller than the depicted subject, thus conveying both hetero and auto images[48]. For Leigh Fermor this is the image of a polyglot. His proficiency in German serves him well for much of his journey, but he picks up smatterings of Hungarian and Romanian. In Hungary he speaks to a friar in Latin for it was their only common tongue. For Leigh Fermor this provides 'an exhilarating illusion of slipping back to the time when Latin was the common tongue of literate Europe', and is a demonstration of scholarliness while also being nostalgic.[49]

What does this image of a wandering scholar reveal about Leigh Fermor? Arguably these demonstrations of knowledge give his narrative authority. To Rob Nixon travel writing 'enjoys an intermediary status between subjective inquiry and objective documentation' and the way it 'negotiates the slippage between these two modes in order to maximise the writer's discursive authority' is important.[50] To readers, Leigh Fermor fully understands and can relate to the continent he is travelling through in a way that is impossible to most travellers. He is also creating the persona of someone who can learn through the knowledge imprinted in his surroundings. Leigh Fermor requires no formal education. As he outlines in his introductory letter to his friend Xan Fielding, Leigh Fermor left upon his journey almost as if to escape his past; he was kicked out of a series of public schools, felt he was a disappointment to his parents and was living a bohemian lifestyle.[51] Playing on this bohemianism, the walk was to serve as his education.

Leigh Fermor certainly didn't want to cultivate a purely scholarly self-image however. This can be seen by whom Leigh Fermor most relates to throughout his travels. While he idolises another wandering bohemian scholar in Austria for decoding the history of his surroundings and recounting the stories behind the Danubian castles[52], he equally idolises the cosmopolitan Baron Pips Schey in Hungary and the boisterous and gallivanting István in Romania. The traits of these connections were both aspects of his identity that he did not want to be overlooked. As is the title of this thesis, Leigh Fermor reminds us that his teachers at school thought that

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[45] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.247.

[46] *Ibid*., p.192 & pp.90-96.

[47] Moroz (2016), 'Travel Books, Nostalgia and Paratexts: The Case of Patrick Leigh Fermor's *A Time of Gifts*', p.163.

[48] Beller & Leerssen (ed.). *Imagology*, p.447.

[49] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.116.

[50] Nixon, R. (1992) *London Calling: V. S Naipaul, Postcolonial Mandarin*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.13.

[51] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.34.

[52] *Ibid*., p.185.

he was 'a dangerous mixture of sophistication and recklessness', a daring war hero as well as a wandering scholar.[53] This mix is acknowledged by Wendy Bracewell who describes Leigh Fermor's legacy as a 'heroic adventurer and gentleman scholar of the British imperial past'.[54]

In studying this image of the wandering scholar it is of greater interest to examine how Leigh Fermor situates himself within a textual tradition of other traveller writers. As highlighted by Holland and Huggan, travel writers place themselves within a tradition, one that is as much literary as it is historically based.[55] Leigh Fermor compares himself to the hero in *The Cloister and the Hearth*. This book is a 19th century story by Charles Reade about an 'errant scholar' who travels from Holland to Rome, studying the countries of Europe as he goes.[56] When describing the purpose of his journey Leigh Fermor situates himself within the 'European tradition of youthful, needy, and earnest figure, spurred along the highways of the west by a thirst for learning'.[57] The mornings he frequently spent in his host's libraries 'pouring over central European history' further develops this scholarly image.[58] With these examples Leigh Fermor tries to construct the image of himself as a wandering scholar and certainly one that is nostalgic for the past. Leigh Fermor directly mentions (and disparages) the image of the wandering scholar later in his journey. Speaking Latin to a monk in an abbey, he notes that while exciting 'it conjured up the world of the wandering scholars whom I had presumptuously thought of as models before setting out, and lately rather drifted away from'.[59]

In support of this, his biographer Artemis Cooper describes how Leigh Fermor 'had an image of himself as "innocent, enthusiastic and bookish image of his young self'.[60] While Leigh Fermor may have tried to avoid it out of fear of being labelled pretentious, a more apt comparison might have been to Erasmus of Rotterdam, a Dutch humanist and scholar who travelled all over Europe in the 16th century. It seems no accident that he enters Europe 'through a secret door' of Rotterdam, where the first thing he notices is 'a statue of Erasmus under snow'.[61] For Luiza Mondada how travellers organise 'the discursive traces of their journey and the techniques of vision this entails should be understood as discursive processes, allowing the production of a descriptive text endowed with legitimacy'.[62] The legitimacy of the image of the 'wandering scholar' is one such discursive process.

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[53] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.137.
[54] Bracewell (2005), 'New Men, Old Europe', p.93.
[55] Holland & Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters*, p.7.
[56] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.17.
[57] *Ibid*., p.32.
[58] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.106.
[59] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.117.
[60] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.34.
[61] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.27.
[62] Mondada, 'Seeing as a Condition of Saying', in Schulz-Forberg (ed.), *Unravelling European Civilisation*, p.66.

1.2 The repeated fiction of the 'bohemian tramp' and the persona of 'eccentric gentlemanliness'

The persona of the wandering scholar creates an image of Europeanness: Leigh Fermor reads many languages, has historical and literary knowledge of the continent as well as a personal network of connections all over Europe. However notions of class and of British identity are downplayed in Leigh Fermor's auto-image construction. Combined with the image of the 'wandering scholar' explored in the last section, Leigh Fermor attempts to create the self-image of the 'bohemian tramp'. It shall be argued that this image is a repeated and structured fiction. A more accurate image would be that of 'eccentric gentlemanliness'. While Leigh Fermor used the label 'wandering scholar himself', eccentric gentlemanliness is my own description. The eccentric aspect of this persona and its imagined obsolescence serves as a cover for his nostalgic interpretations of Europe present throughout the texts while the 'gentlemanliness' reflects notions of amateur scholarship and the British class structure.

At the beginning of his travel account Leigh Fermor states his goal to 'set out across Europe like a tramp'.[63] It is a self-description that he repeatedly turns to. Even as far into his journey as Hungary he references the 'whole roast chicken, bread and bacon' that he eats on the as 'a tramps dream', as if trying to distance himself from the lavishness of his feast.[64] Despite being quite different from the 'moving swarms of tramps' at a workhouse in Austria, whose 'overcoats flapped like those of scarecrows and their rags and sometimes their footgear was held together by rusty safety pins and string', Leigh Fermor retains this label. He makes little reference to his financial background, and in doing so he appears as a self-made man whose agency is emphasised. Holland and Huggan propose that travel writing often disguises as much as it reveals, with factual disclosures acting as screens for cannily structured fictions.[65] This constructed self-image of a tramp serves to hide Leigh Fermor's real identity, for in reality he is more privileged and upper class than he is prepared to let on.

Certain details along this trip reveal more about the true colours of his social class. In Vienna, Leigh Fermor meets an anglophile baron who reminisces 'about London and parties and the Chelsea Arts Ball', whose 'familiar atmosphere' makes Leigh Fermor 'feel homesick'.[66] At another point in Vienna, Leigh Fermor alludes to this fictional image of self-inflicted poverty:

> I hadn't arrived in Vienna totally unprepared. There were a few inhabitants on whom I could stake a shadowy claim. But, for the sake of morale and prompted by a sort of vagrant's amour-propre, I hadn't wanted to launch myself on them when I was absolutely broke.[67]

In fact much of his later journey becomes defined by its lavishness. Having stayed one night with tramps in Vienna, he then spent time with 'a half-native and half-expatriate Bohemian set which seemed perfect from the first moment I became involved in it', with whom 'the last days… were given over to music and dancing and dressing up'.[68] Staying with Count Józsi in

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[63] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.17.
[64] *Ibid*., p.333.
[65] Holland & Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters*, p.200.
[66] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.236.
[67] *Ibid*., p.245.
[68] *Ibid*., p.246.

Hungary he spent a night in the company of Archduke Joseph (one of the last of the Habsburgs) 'dressed in an Elizabethan or Edwardian cut'.[69] Reflecting upon the evening Leigh Fermor writes how he had meant 'to live like a tramp or a pilgrim or a wandering scholar', but 'has recently been strolling from castle to castle' 'sipping out of crystal cut glasses and talking to Archdukes'.[70]

The disguise of a tramp is one that he can use readily and temporarily, and lends his narrative authority for he sees Europe at all levels of class. He does discuss class at some points. In the town of Bruchsal he compares the burgomaster to his equivalent class in England, 'In England, the burgomaster... with his erect bearing and grey tweeds, might have been colonel of a good line regiment'. This example of the burgomaster is used to offer a critique on the British upper class in that it was 'so different was it from an evening spent with his putative English equivalent'.[71] Recent literature by Mary Louise Pratt highlights the patriarchal and imperialist undertones of much travel writing, and suggests that the uncritical view of travel writing as a celebration of human freedom needs to be adjusted to the modern realities of race, class and gender privileges.[72] While Leigh Fermor is hardly imperial in his outlook, class does play a role in his journey and should not be ignored. A similar journey undertaken by someone without the benefit of his class and gender would no doubt be very different.

Alongside class Leigh Fermor's British nationality plays a role in his self-representation. In a minor way it serves to open some doors for him along his journey. In Germany being English 'seemed to help: for one was a rare bird and object of curiosity'.[73] Getting caught up in trouble with frontier guards in Hungary 'when it emerged that I was English, it seemed to make a great difference'.[74] Later on in Hungary 'the accident of nationality' seemed to help him stay with elites, for 'I think Hungarians had a definite soft spot for England'.[75] His nationality also plays a role in forming his expectations about Europe. Taking refuge from the snow in a Heidelberg inn his host puts him up through the New Year period which prompts Leigh Fermor to ask whether the same would have happened in England and '[Wonder] how a German would get on in Oxford if he turned up at the Mitre on a snowy December night'.[76]

Rarely does his nationality hinder him. Only in Nazi Germany does it draw him into a confrontation in a bar with an angry German who is dismayed Britain has crippled Germany:

> Then his face changed to a mask of hate. Why had we stolen Germany's colonies? Why shouldn't Germany have a fleet and a proper army? Did I think Germany was going to take orders from a country that was run by Jews. A catalogue of accusations followed, not very loud, but clearly and intensely articulated.[77]

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[69] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.85.

[70] *Ibid*., p.87.

[71] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.79.

[72] Louise Pratt, M. (1992). *Imperial eyes: Travel writing and Transculturation.* London: Routledge, p.3+12.

[73] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.49,

[74] *Ibid*., p.345.

[75] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.26.

[76] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.73.

[77] *Ibid*., p.77.

Both his class and nationality combine to form a persona of 'eccentric gentlemanliness'. The idea of 'gentlemanliness' is an undercurrent in the British class system, and refers to a respectable code of conduct and notions of intelligence. It is tied to codes of 'Englishman's honour'. Leigh Fermor stays with two girls in Stuttgart, and Artemis Cooper speculates that he may have invented the second girl to protect her honour.[78] Gentlemanliness is also related to his knowledge and scholarship. The figure of a gentleman scholar implies a man with sufficient wealth and free time to pursue his own academic interests at an amateur level without depending on it for his livelihood. Moroz identifies Leigh Fermor as a gentleman scholar more typical of the 19th century, where the narrative persona is foregrounded as an amateur scholar, expert in the areas of knowledge of his own choice'.[79] This amateur scholarship underpins the image of the wandering scholar.

Combined with these notions of gentlemanliness is an inherent eccentricity which appeared to be part of his personality. His goal of walking to Istanbul was no doubt eccentric. Despite walking in the depths of winter, he 'despised lifts', and 'had a clear policy: to avoid them rigorously, until walking became impossible'.[80] In a depreciating tone Leigh Fermor downplays his ambitions to walk to Istanbul as a mere 'change of scenery'.[81] He uses out of date maps that were published in the turn of the century[82], and separates himself from other travellers in taking routes that no normal traveller would have taken. While Leigh Fermor adventures to the island of Ada Kale in the Danube, a historic outpost of the Ottoman empire that has survived in Romania, he delineates that 'a traveller sticking to the usual route would have followed the Danube south, clean across Hungary into Yugoslavia..'.[83] He explains his eccentricity to his rather unusual upbringing away from his family and later at boarding schools, which he attributes as influencing his later character.[84] Leigh Fermor emphasises this eccentricity as a way of separating himself from other travellers. He acknowledges that travelling in such a way across Europe 'was a rarity', and that 'nobody else was travelling like this in those days'.[85] This eccentricity and separation hints at notions of heroism, which his older self was acknowledged for.

Finally the persona of eccentric gentlemanliness affects readers' reception of the travel texts. To Holland and Huggan the alibi of the 'gentlemanly traveller' entails principles of self-depreciation and is an ironic recognition of a bygone imperial era. Many travel writers see themselves as anachronistic and take rhetorical advantage of their own imagined obsolescence to generate feelings of nostalgia for past times.[86] An element of this identification to a bygone era is that Leigh Fermor is authentically travelling in age before tourism. Rarely does he need to make this clear; in Heidelberg he distinguishes between a real accumulation of objects in German pubs, rather than the tourism influenced 'staged props

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[78] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.46.

[79] Moroz, 'Parallaxes as Means of Organizing Memory in Travel Narratives, p. 43.

[80] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.98.

[81] *Ibid*., p.17.

[82] *Ibid*., p.341.

[83] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.256.

[84] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, pp.3-7.

[85] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.27.

[86] Holland & Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters*, p.6.

of forced conviviality'[87] that might be seen today, and in Transylvania he separates himself from the 'charabanc-load of tourists' coming to see Dracula's castle.[88]

That he is travelling before the ages of mass tourism strengthens the image of 'lost Europe' for Leigh Fermor has authentically experienced this bygone time. Travel writers like Leigh Fermor benefit from 'a twofold asymmetrical communicative situation', the writer has experienced both the reality of modernity and of the era of the journey. He 'claims a superior epistemic position to the static worlds of the reader and the visited outside'.[89] For Holland and Huggan modern travel writers are quick to cash in on readers growing fears of homogenization, promoting their products as thrilling alternatives to the sanitized spectacles of mass tourism. Although Leigh Fermor completed his walk in the 1930s, his texts were published in the 70s and 80s and were probably influenced by the changes in the nature of mass tourism in the intervening period. Accounts such as Leigh Fermor's provide evidence that the 'world is still heterogeneous, unfathomable, bewildering, and as proof the spirit of adventure can still be had'.[90]

1.3 Lost memories and the 'Parallax' structure

Memory plays a crucial role in the travel texts, both in terms of how it shapes the narrative and how the texts are constructed. Two facets of memory in the texts will be discussed; the lack of original diaries and source material used by Leigh Fermor in writing the texts gives his narrative free reign, while the parallax structure allows two Leigh Fermor's to narrate the journey.

While Leigh Fermor kept journals of his journey they have not survived. His first journal was stolen in Munich along with all of his possessions, and he repeatedly mourns 'those thousands of lines, the flowery descriptions, the *pensees*, the philosophic flights, the sketches and verses! All gone'.[91] The long summer of travelling between country homes described in *Between the Woods and the Water* went largely unrecorded for he 'gave up keeping my diary for a while on the principle... that these static intervals were irrelevant in a record of travel'.[92] The source material that Leigh Fermor used when writing the books forty years after the journey took place is ambiguous. Artemis Cooper believes that only one has survived which largely covers the contents of the third leg of the journey not explored by this thesis.[93] As a result the texts are largely written from Leigh Fermor's memory and are his 'attempt to complete and set in order, with as much detail as I can recapture, the earliest of those disjointedly recounted travels'.[94]

Being mostly structured from memory, details are frequently forgotten or omitted. Setting out from Limburg in the Netherlands, he 'can't remember under what mountainous eiderdown or

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[87] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.72.
[88] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.176.
[89] Beller & Leerssen (ed.). *Imagology*, p.448.
[90] Holland & Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters*, p.2.
[91] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.121.
[92] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.108.
[93] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.320.
[94] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.2.

in what dank cell I slept that night'.[95] Even when he did have notes to go on, they proved to be minimal. His notes for Szolnok in Hungary are 'just the name of the town and the cheery doctor who put me up: the delicious, boiling hot, scarlet and orange carp soup bursting with paprika we had for dinner is remembered but unrecorded'.[96] As Leigh Fermor himself alludes to, he wrote the texts 'surrounded with a cloud of provisos and hedged bets'.[97] As such he is free to create his own narrative, emphasising certain things and forgetting others. Paul Fussell proposes that 'travel writing is at best a mediation between fact and fiction', and this is certainly true of Leigh Fermor's texts.[98]

For Artemis Cooper the third book of the trilogy proved so difficult for Leigh Fermor to write precisely because he found it hard to correlate the details from the one surviving diary with the narrative he had written.[99] This surviving diary has been the subject of academic interest, and was treasured by Leigh Fermor as proof that he had completed the journey.[100] After his belongings were stolen in Munich his replacement passport, 'faded, torn, dog-eared and travel-stained, crammed with the visas of vanished kingdoms' in all kinds of different alphabets' served as a reminder of his journey.[101] The passport sat on his desk when he wrote the books, and the reference to 'vanished kingdoms' is another obvious nostalgia for a lost Europe. Leigh Fermor furthermore feels obliged to demonstrate the elephantine prowess of his memory as a means of authenticating his narrative. For example walking along the Cerna river in Romania he writes that he 'must have stored up an almost photographic memory of this valley for when I travelled along it twenty years later'.[102]

These processes of linking of the past and the future are examples of the texts' 'parallax' structure. This parallax structure stems from the time between the journey and the book's publication; *A Time of Gifts* was published in 1977 when Leigh Fermor was 62 years old although he set out on the journey at the age of 18. *Between the Woods and the Water* was published even later in 1986. The use of parallaxes as a narrative structure has been explored by Gregor Moroz in the only other piece of academic research into Leigh Fermor's texts. For Moroz a parallax is a metaphor for a travel narrative such a Leigh Fermor's 'in which the narrator, an experienced traveller, contrasts his experienced persona with himself at the beginning of his mind-transforming wanderings'.[103] In the introduction to *A Time of Gifts* Jan Morris also alludes to this dual authorship in describing how 'half a century of experience separates the two Leigh Fermors with one 'looking back across the great gulf of experience and history'. To Morris it is as if the book 'is the work of two separate writers, coming to the task from opposite directions, but blending their talents in a display of intergenerational collaboration'.[104]

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[95] *Ibid*., p.34.

[96] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.60.

[97] *Ibid*., p.2.

[98] Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Travel Writing Between the Wars*, p.203.

[99] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.

[100] Cenci, S. (2016). 'The Smell of an Old Journey: The Conservation of the Travel Diary of Sir Patrick Leigh Fermor'. *Studies in Conservation, 61*, pp.277-279.

[101] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.123.

[102] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.249

[103] Moroz, 'Parallaxes as Means of Organizing Memory in Travel Narratives, p.43.

[104] Morris, J. (2005). 'Introduction to the text' In P. L. Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*. London: John Murray, p.VIII.

This separation of the author into two separate persons is a repeating narrative device throughout the texts, and allows Leigh Fermor to jump from the past to the future. For example upon seeing carob trees on the Hungarian plain he writes how 'a few years later I sometimes used to stem hunger with them on the southern rocks of Crete' during the war.[105] Writing about his time with Baron Pips Schey in Czechoslovakia he looks to the future, noting that they remained in letter correspondence for the rest of Schey's life despite never meeting again.[106] Morris summarises the effect of parallax on the texts perfectly; 'A Time of Gifts is evoked by two people: the carefree young drop out who experienced it, and stored it up in memory and diary, and the experienced author who knowing more about history turned it into art'.[107] This ties back to the idea the identity of the wandering scholar; it is impossible to assess how much scholarly knowledge came from the older Leigh Fermor compared to how much the younger Leigh Fermor knew at the time of his journey. Cooper recognises that Leigh Fermor repeatedly writes 'I learnt later...' While this is 'very colloquial, it makes it clear that he was learning as he wrote', and 'as he relived the walk he looked things up as they occurred to him'.[108] A Time of Gifts was even initially titled Parallax by Leigh Fermor for he recognised 'the difference in the appearance of an object seen from two different angles', and a felt it was a good way to draw attention to the gap between the younger traveller and the senior writer.[109]

Without wanting to encroach too much into the theme of lost Europe that shall be explored in the next chapter, the parallax structure is at its most dramatic when discussing the consequences of the Second World War. Leigh Fermor was travelling at a time of great historical upheaval. Describing the singing of regional songs by Nazi troopers in a German inn, Leigh Fermor writes how 'it was impossible, at that moment, to connect the singers with organised bullying and the smashing of Jewish shop windows and nocturnal bonfires of books'.[110] Towards the end of his time in Germany he writes that although Hitler had been in power for ten months, the 'range of horror was not fully yet unfolded', but despite this the 'rumours hinted at countless unavowable tragedies'.[111] It is seriously unlikely that the younger Leigh Fermor could have predicted the tragic outcomes of Nazism at that time. As will be explored by the following chapters, as a cultural commentator on the history of Europe Leigh Fermor is capable of trading places; by a rhetorical sleight of hand, he can appear as both behind the times and up to date. However I am in agreement with Moroz in that the parallax structure generates a 'dramatic and nostalgic' power in the texts.[112] Cooper describes the parallax structure as 'a wonderful way of disarming his readers' making them more receptive to his interpretation of Europe.[113] This nostalgic interpretation a lost Europe will be explored in much greater detail in the following chapter.

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[105] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.48.
[106] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.330.
[107] Morris, 'Introduction' to *A Time of Gifts*, p.VIII.
[108] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.52.
[109] *Ibid*., p.325.
[110] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.44.
[111] *Ibid*., pp.147-9.
[112] Moroz, 'Parallaxes as Means of Organizing Memory in Travel Narratives, p. 45.
[113] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.363.

Leigh Fermor's reputation as a British war hero plays a complex part in his self-presentation. As identified by Jan Morris 'the Cretan adventures of 1942 pervades the narrative of 1933'.[114] Perhaps the best example of the parallax structure and the one for which Leigh Fermor is most well-known is his interaction with the captured Nazi general during the Second World War. Talking about how he recited Horace's Odes in *A Time of Gifts*, he launches into his recollection of the wartime incident.

> One of the [Odes] came to my rescue in strange circumstances a few years later. The hazards of war landed me among the crags of occupied Crete with a band of Cretan guerrillas and a captive German general whom we had waylaid and carried off into the mountains three days before…[115]

The general begins to mutter Horace's Ode under his breath, where upon Leigh Fermor joins in and finishes it for him. Leigh Fermor comments that, 'It was very strange. As though for a moment, the war had ceased to exist. We had both drunk at the same fountains long before'. It is strange that Leigh Fermor should choose to include this recollection when it had no obvious connection to his European journey of 1934. One could read into its inclusion as a subtle attempt to demonstrate his heroism, and his ability to set aside national rivalries even in times of war. To Leigh Fermor they are bound by a shared European heritage of history and literature.

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[114] Morris, 'Introduction' in *A Time of Gifts*, p.VIII.
[115] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.94.

Chapter 2

3.1 'An in-between times' - The contemporary Europe that Leigh Fermor travelled through
3.2 Nostalgic images of a lost Europe - An under recognised European narrative?
3.3 The importance of history to Leigh Fermor's idea of Europe

Aided by the parallax structure of narration, Leigh Fermor's texts are not only an account of his travels but also a telling of history. This chapter will examine the history of Europe that Leigh Fermor presents in his texts; both his interpretation of the historical period that he lived through and his perception of a European civilisation with common historical ties. To Gerard Delanty all telling of history is shaped by personal opinion in some way, and 'it is important to understand that history is never objective, but always subject to evaluation and judgement. It is this process of evaluation and judgement that ascribes values to periods and trends in European history'.[116] Using this framework of analysis we can scrutinise Leigh Fermor's telling of history for the value judgments that it holds.

The first part of this chapter will propose that Leigh Fermor walked through Europe at a significant historical period. The Europe he travels through in some cases has pre-modern elements that were to be lost forever. The aristocratic elite that he frequently encounters on his journey are similarly in decline. Nazi Germany is the country most caught in transition to modernity; the presence of the Nazis overshadows his time in the country and contrasts heavily with the pre-modern images that he constructs. The parallax structure is used here to heighten a sense of foreboding in regards to the horrors that the Nazis were to unleash in future years. Despite this, Leigh Fermor attempts to portray himself as non-political, and in some instances he paints individual Nazis in a sympathetic light.

The second section of this chapter will look at the role of nostalgia in the vision of Europe that Leigh Fermor constructs. It will be argued that the parallax structure of memory is used to heighten a sense of nostalgia for a Europe that was to be permanently changed by the Second World War. This narrative of a 'lost Europe' is comparable to that of Stefan Zweig, and is important for it continues to hold appeal for readers. Using Bo Stråth's scholarship on the relationship between historiography and myths, it shall be contended that the images of lost Europe that Leigh Fermor and Zweig construct are the deliberate construction of such a myth, and that they hold great power.[117]

The last part of this chapter will look in greater detail at the interpretation of European history presented in Leigh Fermor's texts. The history that he presents is extremely transnational and fosters the idea of a Europe that is bound by common historical roots. This common history will be discussed in relation to Pim den Boer and Roberta Guerrina's scholarship on the importance of history to ideas of Europe.[118] A focus on Roman and Medieval history in the wider geographical context of Europe is in fitting with scholarship on the history of the idea of

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[116] Delanty, G. & Campling, J. (1995). *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, p.9.
[117] Stråth, B. (2000). *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community*: H*istorical Patterns in Europe and Beyond.* Bruxelles: P.I.E.-Peter Lang; Stråth, B. (2011). *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other*. Brüssels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang S.
[118] Guerrina, *Europe: History, Ideas, Ideologies*; Den Boer, *The History of the Idea of Europe.*

Europe. The transnational history of the declining elites that he encounters means they are attributed greater prominence in his interpretation of European history. In both instances Leigh Fermor ties Britain historically to the continent. This goes against Benjamin Grob Fitzgibbon's study that British history and European history have been artificially separated and that British identity is tied to that of empire.[119]

2.1 'An in-between times' - The contemporary Europe that Leigh Fermor travelled through

Leigh Fermor journeyed through Europe at a fascinating time in its history. Nearly the whole of the continent had been engulfed in the First World War between 1914 and 1918 and the Second World War was to follow in 1939. Most countries he travels through were badly affected by the global economic crisis, and Italy and Germany had fallen prey to the virulent political forces of Nazism and Fascism. Much of Central Europe had previously existed within the multi-cultural Austro-Hungarian empire under the Habsburg monarchy, but the break up of this empire saw the complete restructuring of Europe's political map and its peoples in disarray. National borders were redrawn under the Treaty of Versailles and previous occupants of one country found themselves ruled by another.[120] In terms of Europeans themselves it was an in-between times; 'still alive in the public consciousness was the old Europe of princes and the peasants but also apprehension of what was to come'.[121] It is this friction that will be explored in this chapter.

Leigh Fermor travels through a Europe of peasants and traditions that in some cases were pre-modern. Walking from Bruchsal he spends an evening in the company of a German peasant family that one cannot imagine existing in Europe after 1945:

A dozen faces peered up in surprise, their spoons halted in mid-air, and their features, lit from below by a lantern on the table, were as gnarled and grained as the board itself. Their clogs were hidden in the dark underneath, and the rest of the room, except for the crucifix on the wall, was swallowed in shadow.[122]

He constructs further caricatures of times-gone-by along his journey. Walking through a wooded area of Bavaria, Leigh Fermor chances upon a team of lumberjacks, 'loden-clad figures in clouted boots who live among deer and squirrels' who would appear through the trees with 'ice on his whiskers and his eyebrows and a pipe with a lidded china bowl'. The details of these lumberjacks and their vanishing way of life are 'so hoarily ancient and redolent of feudal forest law' to Leigh Fermor.[123] In Vienna he remarks on the:

[119] Grob-Fitzgibbon, B. (2016). *Continental drift: Britain and Europe from the End of Empire to the Rise of Euroscepticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[120] Gerwarth, R. (2016). *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End*. London: Penguin.

[121] Morris, 'Introduction' in *A Time of Gifts*, p.VIII.

[122] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.80.

[123] *Ibid*., pp.178-179.

cabbies in bowler hats who conversed in the Vienna dialect while they straightened the blankets on their horses' quarters and gave them their feed in buckets. Some of these were as heavily whiskered as their masters.[124]

These descriptions of extinct characters instantly create historical images in the reader's mind that transport us back in time. The buildings he passes are also redolent of a time gone by. Recounting the frequent schlosses that he passed in Germany, Leigh Fermor describes them as 'an angular relic of the dark ages', with a 'coach-house full of obsolete carriages', now empty buildings filled with 'solemn portraits' and whose outer walls are 'mottled with lichen' and statues 'pockmarked' with moss.[125] Slovakia is rich with images of a world between modernity and pre-modernity. Boarding a bus in the village of Kövecsespuszta in Czechoslovakia, among the 'peasants in high boots, sheepskin caps and fleece jerkins' Leigh Fermor notices a 'country gendarme, dripping with sweat in a thick greatcoat; his belt with a revolver and truncheon and a sword'.[126] Leigh Fermor had recently passed 'a troop of cavalry exercising in a field nearby'.[127] While he does not explicitly describe these scenes as historical or extinct, these images again feel pre-modern. This imagery corresponds with imagery of Vesna Goldsworthy's *Inventing Ruritania* that will be explored in greater detail in the next section. For Cooper Leigh Fermor actively sought these visions of the past, that he liked to think 'he could still see Europe as the Congress of Vienna had left it: a sort of eternal, cultural Europe that lay untouched behind its cities, factories and railway lines; a continent where peasant life was dictated by the round of seasons and feasts of the church, where strange costumes were worn as real clothes and not donned for the tourist trade'.[128]

Barbara Korte writes of 'chronotopes', referring to travel as a spatio-temporal experience. Every piece of literature artistically constructs a chronotope (a time-space). To Korte space and time are fundamental to how we perceive what we are reading, but travel writing is primarily discussed in terms of space rather than time.[129] Using this theory we can consider Leigh Fermor's to have a highly developed chronotope; in reading them we are travelling across Europe, but also back through time. This is an important artistic choice on Leigh Fermor's behalf. To David Lowenthal the journey of recovering or returning to the past through nostalgia is a common one, but one that has the potential to attract massive audiences. For Lowenthal this nostalgia can be 'at once nurturing and burdensome', for it allows us to make sense of the present whilst imposing powerful constraints on how we interpret the present. In texts such as Leigh Fermor's, some aspects of the past are celebrated whilst others are downplayed, as each generation reshapes the legacy of the past in line with its current needs.[130] In this vein Leigh Fermor is mourning the loss of the Europe he knew through the texts.

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[124] *Ibid.*, p.253.

[125] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, pp.156-157.

[126] *Ibid.*, p.317.

[127] *Ibid.*, p.313.

[128] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.53.

[129] Korte, B. (2008). 'Chrono-Types: Notes on Forms of Time in the Travelogue', in Zilcosky, J. (ed.) *Writing Travel: The Poetics and Politics of the Modern Journey*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, p.26.

[130] Lowenthal, D. (1985). *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.19

The elite that Leigh Fermor frequently encounters upon his journey are diminishing in this transition to modernity. To Peter Bugge, Europe after the First World War was a 'culture in crisis'; the old values of the upper class were beginning to disintegrate and politics and society seemed to rest on shifting foundations.[131] This declining influence can be seen in the members of the upper class that he meets. A count of the old dual-monarchy near Salzburg still signs with his imperial title, but 'the empire and the kingdom had been dismembered and their thrones were empty...the engraved words croaked loud of spent glories'.[132] Earning money in Vienna, Leigh Fermor sketches an old admiral from the Austro-Hungarian empire who is trapped in the past, though 'he declared...that he was still an *active* Admiral from whom, with the loss of Trieste and Fiume - his navy had retired'.[133] Leigh Fermor stays with his friend Hans in Bratislava, an Austrian elite now a citizen of the Czechoslovakia due to the recent change in national boundaries. Hans cannot get used to the modern situation and still uses the old name of Pozsony for the city. Leigh Fermor comments that 'for its old Hungarian overlords the city's recent change of nationality and name and nature seemed the ultimate sorrow'[134] Similarly when he speaks with a Hungarian who is now technically a Czechoslovak citizen, Leigh Fermor writes 'I do sympathize. It must be terrible having one's country cut up like this and ending on the wrong side of the border'.[135] These elite seem aware of their fate in a changing Europe. Discussing the changing situation in Germany, Pip Schey tells Leigh Fermor that 'he had many German friends, but few had survived the recent changes. How could they? It was if an entire civilisation were sliding into calamity and taking the world with it'.[136]

He is undoubtedly sympathetic towards the faded glories of past elite, and it is also revealing that Leigh Fermor barely focuses on the rise of democracy and suffrage in these societies that took place in the 1930s. Dina Gusejnova emphasises that these elites were among the minority who had benefited from Europe's imperial past by enjoying the existence of special honours, cultural goods and the benefits of a multicultural identity. Amongst their peoples however, imperial governments were perceived as holders of an oppressive, alien type of rule that went against the interests of the majority of their metropolitan, peripheral and colonial subjects.[137]

Instead Leigh Fermor chooses to focus on Europe's lost past of peasants and traditions. Artemis Cooper also notices Leigh Fermor's obsession with the past world of the elite. In this case of the Austro-Hungarian empire he was 'well aware that it had been swept away by the First World War, and that new nations and political tensions were rising from the rubble, but Paddy was more interested in what survived'.[138] Perhaps naively Leigh Fermor thinks that everyone looks at the elite decline within the old Austro-Hungarian empire with sadness, in that the 'eclipse of a familiar landmark was bewailed as yet another symptom of dissolution', and that 'many looked back to those times with the longing of the Virgilian farmers and

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[131] Den Boer, *The History of the Idea of Europe*, p.10.

[132] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.153.

[133] *Ibid*., p.238.

[134] *Ibid*., p.269.

[135] *Ibid*., p.333.

[136] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.323.

[137] Gusejnova, D. (2016). *European Elites and Ideas of Empire, 1917–1957*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.xxvi.

[138] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.51.

shepherds in Latium when they remembered the kind reign of Saturn'.[139] His journey in a way attempts to rekindle the lost world of the elite. Leigh Fermor felt that the recently deposed Habsburgs pervade his journey in that 'my Austrian itinerary had infected me long ago with the sad charm of the dynasty'.[140] For Holland and Huggan, such travel writing and telling of history should be considered as occupying a space of discursive conflict. While it claims validity by referring to actual places and events, these are assimilated into a highly personal vision.[141] The myth of 'lost Europe' that Leigh Fermor constructs shall be explored in the following section.

It is Germany that is most visibly caught in the process of modernisation. While Nazism is ascending there are glimpses of old Germany everywhere. Nazism overshadows the entirety of Leigh Fermor's time in Germany. Arriving in Goch (his first German town), he describes how 'the town was hung with National Socialist flags' with shops full of 'swastika armbands, daggers for the Hitler Youth, blouses for Hitler Maidens and brown shirts for the grown up S.A men'.[142] Nazism remains present even to the exit border, for as he crosses the border from Germany into Austria he notes that 'inside the customs-house hung the last picture of the Führer'.[143] It is clear why Leigh Fermor doesn't like the Nazis that he meets, for they clash with the cultured and civilized Europeans that he sought out. At a party in Stuttgart he takes an instant dislike to his host and 'bets he's a terrific Nazi' and emphasises how uncultured he is: 'the house was hideous - prosperous, brand new, shiny, and dispiriting', with 'the only book in sight' being a antique '17th century vellum-bond Dante' that had been carved into a cigarette case.[144]

The parallax structure of memory allows Leigh Fermor to write with an emphasised foreboding about the Nazis. Seeing Nazis patrolling the town square in Goch, he describes how their commander and 'the rasp of his utterance, even robbed of its meaning, struck a chill'.[145] Seeing a swastika flag in Ulm, it 'hinted that there was still trouble ahead'.[146] Such foreboding is surprising considering how much Leigh Fermor tries to distance himself from politics. This foresight is only made possible through the parallax structure, and is perhaps slightly dramatised and fictional. Despite this dramatised sense of foreboding however, he paints some Nazis that he meets in a soft light. The Nazis that he had seen on parade are later humanised when he sees them in a bar. He describes how 'they looked less fierce without their horrible caps. One or two, wearing spectacles, might have been clerks or students'. Germany on the cusp between tradition and modernity is perfectly visualised when the troop begin to sing from 'a rich anthology of regional songs', of 'dreamy celebrations of the forests and plains of Westphalia' nostalgically tinged with 'homesickness'. On the walls of the inn hung traditional pictures of Frederick the Great and Bismarck alongside one of Hitler wearing a 'scowl of great malignity'.[147] Later Leigh Fermor belittles the Nazi Storm Troopers as looking

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[139] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.161.

[140] *Ibid*., p.302.

[141] Holland & Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters*, p.10.

[142] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, pp.40-41

[143] *Ibid*., p.150.

[144] *Ibid*., p.88.

[145] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.42.

[146] *Ibid*., p.104.

[147] *Ibid*., pp.42-44.

like 'brown-paper parcels badly tied with string'[148], and describes a Nazi in Munich suffering from drinking too much beer:

> Halfway up the vaulted stairs a groaning Brownshirt, propped up against the wall on a swastika'd arm, was unloosing, in a staunchless gush down the steps, the intake of hours. Love's labour lost.[149]

This humanising description makes Leigh Fermor's account both nostalgic and tragic knowing the devastation the Nazis were to unleash upon Europe in the Second World War. This portrayal of the Nazis is odd considering their crimes against humanity in the Second World War, but arguably it demonstrates that Leigh Fermor's belief in a pan-European culture (that included Germany) overrode his desire to demonise the Nazis.

Leigh Fermor can impart this interpretation of history through the authority of his travel texts and by his reference to actuality. For Jan Borm, travel texts such as Leigh Fermor's are a 'narrative characterised by a non-fiction dominant that relates (almost always) in the first person a journey that the author supposes to have taken place in reality'.[150] While travel accounts can be viewed as historical sources, the information they contain is precarious and they can be far more useful as sources for the history of mentalities or changes in conditions influencing the perception of self and other.[151] In this vein Leigh Fermor portrays himself as resolutely non-political. He acknowledges that he completely ignores the contemporary politics of the region, and admits that he is not very 'inside Europe'.[152] In Germany he labels himself 'ill-prepared' for any talk of politics during this period' due to absence of political discussion his naturally conservative and traditional upbringing of school and family.[153]

Cooper also recognises that 'although he was walking through Germany at one of the most significant moments in its modern history, Paddy's head was full of the romance of Germany's past'. As his biographer she reveals Leigh Fermor even admitted in his notebooks 'if only I had less of a medieval passion, more of a political sense', 'I would have drunk in, sought out so much more'.[154] While he is travelling during this turbulent time in history, current events only form the backdrop of his account and are not focused on. Leigh Fermor reaches Vienna during the 1934 February Uprising, or the Austrian Civil War. Drawing upon historical hindsight enabled by the parallax structure, he describes how he only realises afterwards that he was caught up in historical events in Vienna for 'everything in the mood of the city conspired to reduce the scale of events, it was easy to misunderstand them and I bitterly regretted this misappraisal later on'.[155] A long description of the events follows, with Leigh Fermor realising the significance of travelling before the 'final disaster of the Anschluss in 1938, when Austria disappeared as an independent nation until the destruction of the Third Reich'.[156] Talk of

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[148] *Ibid*., p.118.

[149] *Ibid*., p.115.

[150] Jan Borm (2004). 'Defining Travel', in Hooper, G. & Youngs, T. *Perspectives on travel writing* (Studies in European cultural transition v. 19). Aldershot: Ashgate.

[151] Beller & Leerssen (ed.). *Imagology*, p.447.

[152] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.2-3.

[153] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, pp.138-144.

[154] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.44.

[155] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.244.

[156] *Ibid*., p.221.

political events in Western Europe is slow to make its way over to the East, and then is short lived. When he hears news of the Night of the Long Knives in July he writes that 'nobody knew how to interpret these bloody portents for a day or two; and then the topic died…'[157] When the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss was assassinated in a failed Nazi coup, Leigh Fermor notes that 'gloom doesn't last longer than breakfast'. Despite having been in Vienna a few months previously it felt distant news and that he 'would have needed something a lot more drastic and closer' for him to focus on it.[158]

2.2 Nostalgic images of a lost Europe - An under recognised European narrative?

The nostalgic theme of a 'lost Europe' is overarching throughout the texts and is particularly present as he leaves certain cities to continue his journey. He dwells upon Rotterdam that the 'beautiful city was to be bombed to fragments a few years later', and that 'I would have lingered, had I known'.[159] He ruminates that he would have adapted his route to see the old city of Blenheim if he 'could have foretold that three-quarters of the old city below would go up in explosion and flame a few years later'.[160] While the subject of eastern Europe lost to communism will be the subject of the third chapter of this thesis, in looking back at the city of Prague he dwells that 'it was a last glimpse of Prague which has had to last me from that evening to this day'.[161] The parallax structure of Leigh Fermor's narrative perspective discussed in chapter one makes this loss particularly poignant for as a reader as we are experiencing these cities in the texts in the narrative present before learning of their later destruction.

This destruction particularly affects Leigh Fermor for his personal connections are caught up in the conflict. Leigh Fermor reflects in Romania that 'every part of Europe I had crossed so far was to be torn and shattered by war', and that 'all the countries traversed by this journey were fought over by two mercilessly destructive powers; and when war broke out, all these friends vanished into sudden darkness'.[162] He writes back to the proprietors of the Red Ox inn in Germany who had hosted him over New Year's eve. For Leigh Fermor this 'was one of several high points of recollection that failed to succumb to the obliterating moods of war', but he discovers that the family had been wiped out and the son he had spent time with was killed while fighting for the Nazis in Norway.[163]

Leigh Fermor's enthusiasm for staying with the faded glamour and glory elite throughout his journey is a way of bringing this nostalgic past and his historical imagination to life. In many cases the elite that he stays with hark back to this bygone era and Leigh Fermor is engrossed in their nostalgia for it . Baron Pips Schey is perhaps the epitomy of this; he paints a romanticised and upper class vision of 'fashionable Europe at the turn of the century' that 'rose

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[157] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.141.

[158] *Ibid*., p.164.

[159] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.29.

[160] *Ibid*., p.104.

[161] *Ibid*., p.310.

[162] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.115; 'two merciless powers' refers to Nazi and communism. The latter will be explored in the third chapter.

[163] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.78.

out like an emanation of absurd and captivating splendour'.[164] Schey himself is fascinated and partly nostalgic for Europe's recent past. He tells Leigh Fermor 'how he had listened to older people, just as I was listening to him, describing an anterior France of the Second Empire, the Franco-Prussian War and the Siege of Paris'.[165]

Particularly in countries of the old Habsburg empire this elite were experiencing a diminishing of power and resources and were struggling to come to terms with the modernity of the new nation states where they now belonged.[166] In Budapest, Leigh Fermor stays with the daughter of a man who 'had been governor of Fiume before the war', who is as almost as obsessed with lost Europe as he is. She fills Leigh Fermor with 'fascinating stories about the lost world of Trieste, Fiume, Pola and the Istrian peninsula'.[167] To Gusejnova, these Eastern European elites had lived through an age in which empires had declined yet imperialism still persisted. Moreover their ideas of empire had been formed in a trans-imperial context that reflected the character of the elite sociability during the bell époque period as well as the cultural traditions of a trans-European experience and education. This elite had been highly international and frequently had ties to Britain. A count outside of Salzburg regales Leigh Fermor with stories of Victorian Britain: of 'antediluvian pheasant stands at Chatsworth', 'late-Victorian grouse drives at Dunrobin, 'ancient balls were conjured up and dinners at Marlborough House'. Perhaps because the recent past is brought closer to home Leigh Fermor 'is fascinated by all this'.[168] Artemis Cooper believes that Leigh Fermor was so popular with his hosts for he made them feel like they were a part of living history rather than a society in decline.[169]

This portrayal of a 'lost Europe' draws its narrative power from a feeling of nostalgia. For Holland and Huggan, travel writing is powerful medium for generating nostalgia for other times and places, even as it recognises that they may by now have "lost" their romantic aura.[170] For Fred Davis nostalgia is a sociological phenomenon, 'a restitutive link by which people can preserve their identities in the face of unprecedented cultural change'.[171] In her scholarship on the concept of 'The Golden Age' Elizabeth Rogers argues that such nostalgia meshes easily with many aspects of the Golden Age narrative. The concept of the Golden Age has evolved from mythical and literary origins. The concept is used to codify ideas about periodisation, and words and images are used to 'recreate this elastic, mutable narrative'.[172] For Rogers nostalgia is 'a structure of feeling, a mode of remembering, and an interpretative stance' that has been linked by many scholars to the emergence of modernity, industrialisation and urbanisation. Such as nostalgia can create 'a shared cultural history beyond personal memory', and in the case of Leigh Fermor this could be the creation of a collective memory of lost Europe.[173]

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[164] *Ibid*., p.322.

[165] *Ibid*., p.232.

[166] Gusejnova, *European Elites and Ideas of Empire*, p. xxvii.

[167] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.22.

[168] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.154.

[169] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.70.

[170] Holland & Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters*, p.8.

[171] Davis, F. (1979). *Yearning for Yesterday: A Sociology of Nostalgia*. New York: Free Press, p.105.

[172] Rogers, E. (2016). *The Golden Age. Nostalgia in word and image.* Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, p.IX.

[173] *Ibid*., p.xviii.

Ann Rigney writes that specific attention should be paid to the role of artistic genres in cultural memory, including how history is presented in literature. Alongside art, literature plays a distinct role in memorial culture as an agent of remembrance. It brings certain topics to the foreground of public attention in an aesthetically interesting form.[174] This is particularly true of Leigh Fermor's travel texts.

Judging from their continued reprinting, nostalgic accounts that look back at a Europe that was lost to the Second World War such as Leigh Fermor's have proved to be popular with readers. Another such account that has also proved popular to readers is Stefan Zweig's *The World of Yesterday*, recently translated again into English and republished by Pushkin Press.[175] An article in the Economist describes that 'Zweig incarnated the interwar ideal of the cultivated European', who 'was witness to Europe's catastrophe'.[176] Zweig looks backwards to a past golden 'Age of security', the era of security and innocence that preceded the First World War within the old Habsburg empire. Leigh Fermor does not hark as far back as Zweig as he was only born in 1915. He instead reminisces back to the time of his walk in the 1930s from the second half of the 20th century, for a Europe in many ways on the cusp of modernity as detailed earlier in this chapter. However Fermor is partly nostalgic for the golden age of security despite not having experienced it. He comments on the sun bleached books in Count Jenö's Hungarian estate as a memento of this time, 'faded by the last summers of the Habsburg monarchy and redolent of those peaceful times when, apart from the habitual ragged fusillade in the Balkans, scarcely a shot was fired between the battle of Sedan and Sarajevo'.[177]

While Zweig's *World of Yesterday* is more explicitly a memoir of his life it provides interesting scope for comparison with Leigh Fermor's travel texts. The two authors were both popular within their own lifetimes and share a transnational style of narration with a focus on Europe. Both Zweig and Leigh Fermor could be characterised as enthusiastic Europeans; both share a love of history and literature and art from around the continent. Both authors relate their lived experience to the continent, and both cultivated exceptionally international networks of European friends. While this may sound rather simplistic basis for comparison, more importantly their accounts share a common focus in looking back nostalgically at Europe's recent past. Both Zweig and Leigh Fermor saw the Europe they knew tore apart by war. The Second World War dismayed Zweig to the extent that he committed suicide in Brazil in 1942, for he felt that Europe had 'destroyed itself'.[178] While Leigh Fermor is not as pessimistic as Zweig he felt he witnessed the same sweeping away of the past in the short 20th century.

Both accounts also share the same elite focus. To Marleen Rensen, Zweig was part of network of intellectuals who exchanged ideas on the future Europe and the role of literature in the revitalisation of European values. This network was highly mobile and shaped their view

[174] Beller & Leerssen (ed.). *Imagology*, p.362.

[175] Zweig, S. (1943). *The World of Yesterday*. London: Cassell.

[176] The Economist. (2016). *Why Europeans are reading Stefan Zweig again*. [online] Available at: https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21712169-writer-wildly-popular-his-time-now-seems-more-apt-ever-why-europeans-are-reading [Accessed 27 Jun. 2018].

[177] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.126.

[178] Zweig, S. (1943). *The World of Yesterday*. London: Cassell, p.436.

toward Europe through cross border encounters.[179] While he is less intellectual, Leigh Fermor's texts also undoubtedly have this focus on a mobile European elite. His account is very much structured around a declining European elite with nearly every host from Munich onwards belonging to this vanishing upper class, and his interpretation of a 'lost Europe' is also based on these cross border encounters. For both authors, transnational personal connections supersede nationalism which demonstrates a belief in a shared European culture over the politics of national rivalries. Stefan Zweig cultivated a working partnership with the Belgian poet Romain Rolland across the Western Front during the First World War.[180] Using the parallax structure when writing in Vienna, Leigh Fermor describes how he later fought against the unit of one of his German friends from this time during the forthcoming Second World War. He does not hate his now enemy, and even in the heat of battle his 'thoughts flew back to the winter of 1934 and the tunes and jokes and guessing games, the candle light and the scent of burning pine cones when nothing was flying through the air more solid than snowflakes'.[181] The imagery used he is evocative and nostalgic for simpler and more jovial past times using warm and cosy imagery that is more reminiscent of the Christmas period than the battlefields of Crete.

While they have similarities in style, this thesis seeks to assess the significance of the continuing popularity of nostalgic Europeans like Zweig and Leigh Fermor. Part of the appeal of both authors is that they position themselves as non-political. Zweig remained outside of politics his whole life and much to the chagrin of his fellow persecuted Jews across Europe, he never even openly criticised the Nazis.[182] Instead the Europe and the European values that he promoted was one of a shared culture and values. Leigh Fermor never makes explicit calls for European unity; the Europe that he envisioned was one intertwined with shared history, literature and culture. By avoiding politics these accounts can prove influential in shaping perception of Europe and European values for others. Their complete non-focus on politics drives the message that it is not simply politics binding Europe together, but the idea of genuine common unity in a diverse continent. They provide seductive accounts of a Europe of shared culture and values and they reassure us that today's political disunity may prove temporary.

This vision of the past draws similar power and is similar to that of myth. Bo Stråth realises the importance of myth and memory in constructing collective identities. For Stråth Europe is an 'abstraction' and the product of constructed collective memory, and 'the point of departure for discussing Europe is the myth created by history'. Images and myths such as this one of 'Lost Europe' emerge from historiography and interpretations of history and culture. Furthermore collective memories of Europe occur within the matrix that myths such as Zweig and Leigh Fermor's vision of a 'lost Europe' provide. Historiography cannot be separated from myth building; the construction of images of the past is the building of interpretive frameworks and thus the construction of myth.[183]

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[179] Rensen, M. (2014). 'Exemplary Europeans - Romain Rolland and Stefan Zweig'. *European Studies: A Journal of European Culture, 32* (1), pp.173-188 p.174.

[180] *Ibid*.

[181] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.249.

[182] Rensen, *Exemplary Europeans*, p

[183] Stråth, *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community*, pp.19-27.

Citing Levi-Strauss and Foucault, Stråth argues that such tellings of history are ideological and political. In this vein historians don't stand above the processes that they are analysing but is part of them.[184] As such we can ask why Leigh Fermor and Zweig are trying to impart this vision of a lost Europe to their respective readers. It is here that both Zweig and Leigh Fermor's reshaping of history into this myth of a 'lost Europe' is important. Both accounts draw their authority by having 'lived' through these historical periods they are now nostalgic for. Zweig saw the world wars transform Europe dramatically between 1881 and 1942, whereas Leigh Fermor saw Europe change with the Second World War and subsequent Cold War. These texts provide highly readable and popular visions of Europe that are soaked with nostalgia and enthusiasm for a shared European culture, and prove particularly relevant in a time of European identity crisis.

Leigh Fermor's vision of Europe was deliberately constructed and was no accident. That Leigh Fermor was working from memory due to the loss of his diaries is some proof of this. For Cooper *A Time of Gifts* was 'eleven chapters of writing that had been built up, layer upon layer, over the years' with 'levels of writing were so folded over one another' 'that it reads like a journey across a continent that exists somewhere between memory and imagination'.[185] Cooper references this collective memory in that Leigh Fermor was 'making a novel of his life - and his readership would expect the story to be true - he was also creating a new memory, shaped and coloured by his imagination'.[186]

2.3 The importance of history to Leigh Fermor's idea of Europe

As discussed in the last chapter, a knowledge of European history forms a large part of Leigh Fermor's interpretation of Europe. The contents of this history have been the subject of this chapter. While the first parts of this chapter examined how Leigh Fermor constructs the narrative of a 'lost Europe' throughout the texts, this last section will look in detail at some of the history that he writes about in the texts. While it is varied in subject and dispersed throughout the texts, the repeated transnational nature of this history goes some way towards creating a conception of Europe that is bound by common historical roots. This history that he presents is open to analysis in relation to 'the idea of Europe' present within it, and will be compared to existing scholarship on the importance of history to the idea of Europe.

For Leigh Fermor, Europe is tied by hundreds of interwoven strands of history. The history that he describes is extremely transnational in focus, and is the only way he can make sense of things. Talking of the history of John Hunyadi, the White Knight of Hungary, Leigh Fermor contextualises him as 'coeval to Joan of Arc and the War of the Roses'. It is only through this method of comparison that he 'can fix figures in their historical backgrounds'.[187] His account is brimming with transnational history and Jan Morris identifies Leigh Fermor's 'particular intellectual specialty of historical linkage - finding connections between cultures, peoples and

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[184] Stråth, *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other*, p.22.
[185] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.363.
[186] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.65.
[187] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.130.

pedigrees'.[188] His texts move beyond a personal interpretation of his travels and his life and can be interpreted as a historical analysis of the continent.

Changing notions have been attached to the concept of Europe throughout history, and a sizeable scholarship exists on the importance of history in this idea of Europe. This scholarship seeks to ask how Europe has been conceived and constructed by Europeans and the importance of history in this process. To Roberta Guerrina 'the importance of history to the analysis of the idea of Europe is important not only to the understanding of the foundations of European culture and society, but also to shed light on the processes that have become embedded within this ideal'.[189] While there is a strong inclination to re-examine the history of Europe in order to search for a European idea of history, it is a feature that is readily available in Leigh Fermor's texts. While his discussion of history is transnational in most instances it is never explicitly tied to a European identity as such. Instead there are three strands of historiography that are especially prominent in the texts: a shared Roman history within most of Europe, a similar shared Medieval history brought together by Charlemagne and the crusades, and the lineage of Europe's aristocratic elite representing a recurring transnational history within Europe.

The unity of Greco-Roman and Christian Europe is one interpretation of European history. Leigh Fermor is often drawn to the transnational history of the Roman Empire. Hungary formed the frontier of the empire and when looking at a bas-relief of Mithras in the Roman ruins of Aquincum north of Budapest, he notes that Mithras was 'a favourite of the legions, he was worshipped all along the frontier and there was hardly a camp between Carlisle and the Black Sea without one of his shrines', which prompts him into transnational interpretation of Hungarian history from the Roman empire to the Magyars from Asia who followed.[190]

The transnational history of the medieval period is even more interesting to Leigh Fermor than the Roman history. For Leigh Fermor medieval details 'quicken the pulse'[191], and his 'copious reading' on the Middle Ages and Dark Ages at school clearly shaped his historical interests.[192] The transnational history of Charlemagne is repeatedly touched upon. In Hungary he describes how the 'last stretch of my itinerary is still linked with the great emperor: he had seemed to preside over the whole of the journey so far'.[193] Passing the town of Aachen he writes that 'if I had realised this was Aix-la-Chapelle, and merely the name of Charlemagne's capital in German, I would have headed there at full speed'.[194] As the Holy Roman Emperor of much of Europe, Leigh Fermor felt that Charlemagne is significant in European history. When describing the transnational history of Central Europe's tribes and peoples people during the middle ages, he others the Turks and Mongols as 'long plaited savages', and when 'Charlemagne destroyed their enigmatic sevenfold rings of fortification and put an end to them,

[188] Morris, 'Introduction' in *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.X.
[189] Guerrina, *Europe: History, Ideas, Ideologies*, p.78.
[190] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.34.
[191] *Ibid*., p.84.
[192] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.9.
[193] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.55.
[194] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.45.

all Europe heaved a sigh of relief'.[195] This image of the Turks as Europe's 'other' is another recurring trope within his telling of history.

The Crusades are another transnational feature of this Medieval history, and one in which Britain has shared ties to the continent. He writes that 'little is known about them in England, but these faraway campaigns invariably assembled stirring and eccentric figures from the British Isles'.[196] He also details how Christianity spread from Britain to Germany to the extent that 'monks from south-east England, the West Country and the Shires were soon seated on all the earliest bishops' thrones of Germany'.[197] For Guerrina the legacy of Christendom during the Medieval period has led to the annexation of Christianity to the European landmass.[198] Leigh Fermor acknowledges this: in the Carpathian Uplands in Romania he notes how 'the valleys and woods of the Danube had been the theatre for momentous battles between Christendom and Islam'.[199] Identifying battlefields in the landscapes that he sees frequently leads him into monologues on transnational history. The Marchfield in Slovakia symbolises a Europe constantly at war to him:

The Marchfield...was another region that history has singled out for slaughter: wars between Romans and the Germanic tribes at first, dim clashes of Ostrogoths, Huns, Avars and the Magyars later on, then great mediaeval pitched-battles between Bohemia and Hungary and the Empire. Archduke Charles, charging flag in hand through the reed, won the first allied victory over Napoleon at Aspern.[200]

The transnational elite are crucial in his interpretation of European history. Speaking to a count near Persenbeug about the prefix 'von' in Austrian surnames, this becomes 'the cue for an excursus on Central European aristocracy… the answers led him to a lightning disquisition on the Holy Roman Empire and how the tremendous title had pervaded and haunted Europe from Charlemagne to the Napoleonic Wars'.[201] Leigh Fermor is fascinated by historical and often transnational lineage of the elite that he stays with. In Germany he stays with a family that had relocated across Europe despite losing everything:

The Lipharts were a White Russian family: more specifically they were from Estonia and, like many Baltic landowners, they had taken flight through Sweden and Denmark after the loss of their estates at the end of the war.[202]

This family are a remnant of a northern elite scattered over Europe who have lost everything, And 'their parents were captivating survivals of the decades when Paris and the South of France and Rome and Venice were full of northern grandees'.[203] Leigh Fermor is naturally drawn to studying elite genealogy when he has time in the libraries of the country mansions

[195] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, pp.51-53.

[196] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.32.

[197] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.132.

[198] Guerrina, *Europe: History, Ideas, Ideologies*, p.76.

[199] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.195.

[200] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.265.

[201] *Ibid*., pp.187-188.

[202] *Ibid*., p.124.

[203] *Ibid*., p.125.

he stays in, describing how the 'score of temptations lured one to trifle the morning away', particularly studying 'genealogies gleaming with scutcheons tricked or illuminated in faded hues'.[204] As discussed in the first part of this chapter he perhaps views this aristocratic elite slightly benevolently. He describes the network of Central and Western European nobles (of which Baron Pips Schey's family is a part) as having 'played an important part in the life of Central and Western Europe'.[205] The international nature of European empires enabled the spread of this transnational elite, for it was 'during the last three centuries that the Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary became cosmopolitan'.[206] Again Britain is included in this transnational elite European history. Describing the importance of horse riding in Austria, Leigh Fermor notes how many Austrian elite 'have a soft spot for the British Isles on purely equestrian grounds', as many elites travelled to Britain for the Grand National. Horse riding is very much a European network with the horses themselves imported from Italy and Slovenia in the area around Fiume.[207]

To Pim den Boer there are fragments that enter the dominant discourse on Europe at various historical stages. Before the French revolution the term Europe had been utilized as a geographical concept and had been associated with the concept of liberty in the time of the Ancient Greeks and Romans, with Christendom in the 15th century, and with civilization in the 18th century.[208] Leigh Fermor's interpretation of history chimes with these fragments of discourse. It also fits with Samir Amam's study of Eurocentrism in historical analyses, which draws attention to the relationship between who is recounting history and the assumption about civilisation that transpire from such accounts.[209] Leigh Fermor sees Europe as historically tied, with the transnational elite that he is nostalgic for representing the last bastions of this transnational European civilisation. Leigh Fermor's historical foci are revealing in the light of Roberta Guerrina's assertion that 'the analysis of history and the importance attributed to one or another historical periods are dictated by the ideological foundations of the person telling the story'.[210]

Returning to the theme nostalgia explored in the last section it is interesting that Leigh Fermor ties British history to that of the continent. For Benjamin Grob Fitzgibbon British history and European history have been artificially separated to this day, resulting in an insular and Anglo-centric British historiography which has resulted in British Identity being tied to its empire over a European heritage.[211] Holland and Huggan write of the imperial nostalgia that is often present in British travel writing, that 'after empire' the anxieties of British travel writers are often subversively linked to a sense of threatened cultural origins, which vie with the pleasures of curiosity for new experiences of place. In concurrence with this Debbie Lisle writes that the 'discourse of nostalgia' is attractive to travel writers for it allows them to 'avoid engaging with and taking responsibility for the conflicts and challenges of today'.[212] I am in agreement with

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[204] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.124.

[205] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.311.

[206] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.114.

[207] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.254.

[208] Den Boer, *The History of the Idea of Europe*, p.10.

[209] Amim, S. (1988) *Eurocentricism*. Zed: London, p.209.

[210] Guerrina, *Europe: History, Ideas, Ideologies*, p.76.

[211] Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Continental drift*, pp.3-5.

[212] Lisle, D. (2012). *The Global Politics of Contemporary Travel Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.40.

Grzegroz Moroz that Leigh Fermor is not trying to construct directly imperial nostalgia.[213] I would argue the his interpretation of European history throughout the texts (to which Britain is intertwined) is nostalgia for Europe as a whole. How this nostalgia is stronger for an Eastern Europe 'lost' to communism will be explored in the following chapter.

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[213] Moroz, 'Parallaxes as Means of Organizing Memory in Travel Narratives, p.42

Chapter 3

4.1 Traditions of writing between East and West
4.2 Leigh Fermor's texts as a counter oriental narrative
4.3 The East 'lost' to communism - a heightened nostalgia for a lost Europe

Leigh Fermor's interpretation of Europe and its history is hardy uniform across the continent. This chapter will examine how his interpretations of both his surroundings and history are different in Eastern Europe. The Eastern Europe that Leigh Fermor portrays is more backward than Western Europe, and the nostalgic images of 'lost Europe' that he constructs throughout the texts are much stronger here. The reasons for this are twofold: he had more exposure to the declining elite classes in the East, and the East was to be more dramatically changed in the time after his journey. While the Second World War dramatically affected these areas, they were doubly affected by communism following the war. The elite classes were to be caught up in these changes, resulting in their downfall. Furthermore Leigh Fermor travelled back to Eastern Europe and wrote both texts while most of Eastern Europe was still communist. His reactions to what he saw made him feel even more that the Europe he had known was changed forever.

The first part of this chapter will look at how Leigh Fermor's texts fit within the traditions of writing between East and West. Scholarship by Larry Wolff, Maria Todorova and Vesna Goldsworthy will be explored as to how traditions of stereotyping Eastern Europe have been constructed within literature.[214] These scholars have not overtly considered Leigh Fermor's travel texts within their theories, so this chapter will attempt to assess how his texts fit within them, or whether they should be adapted. In some ways Leigh Fermor's texts conform to these stereotypes. He portrays the Eastern Europe that he visits as a space imbued with myth. He also constructs extremely backward images of Eastern Europe; the customs of the people are extremely old fashioned and the peasant scenes that he describes could be from over thousand years ago. Superstition and elements of savagery are tied to this backwardness, and a repeated focus on gypsies and their traditions strengthens Orientalised images of Eastern Europe within the texts.

However Leigh Fermor doesn't completely 'orientalise' Eastern Europe. The second part of this chapter will explore how several themes within his texts go against an orientalised conception of Eastern Europe. The aristocratic elite with which he stays through most of his eastern journey are cosmopolitan and connected to the rest of Europe culturally. Leigh Fermor also considers Eastern Europe as connected to the rest of Europe physically. Its buildings have architectural ties to the West and it is geographically tied to the West by the Danube river. Finally Leigh Fermor is ambiguous as to what should be considered Eastern Europe, for he constantly redefines what should be considered 'eastern' the further he travels East (as far as Bulgaria). In this regard, the countries of Eastern Europe that he travels through are a diverse scattering of nationalities and ethnicities and are far from homogeneous. This makes it less and less clear who he considers Eastern European.

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[214] Wolff, L. (1994). *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*. Stanford: Stanford University Press; Todorova, M. (2009). *Imagining the Balkans*. New York: Oxford University Press; Goldsworthy, V. (1998). *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination*. New York: Columbia University Press.

The third part of this chapter will look at Leigh Fermor's images of 'lost Europe' within the context of Eastern Europe. These nostalgic images are much stronger in Eastern Europe for several reasons. Leigh Fermor celebrated the scenes of backwardness in these areas far more than in the West. It shall also be proposed that Leigh Fermor spent much more time in the company of the elite in these areas (these experiences form nearly the entirety of *Between the Woods and the Water*), and so mourns their decline more. This elite class were dramatically affected by the period of communism that followed the Second World War. It shall be argued that this vision of a European elite was implicitly written in contrast to the communist Eastern Europe that existed at the time he wrote the texts. In preparing to write the books he also returned to Eastern Europe multiple times and was horrified by the changes that communism had wrought. His horror is greater reflected within the heightened images of lost Europe here than in similar images constructed of the rest of the continent.

As stated at the beginning of this thesis, travel writing is significant in that it produces and reproduces cultural images and cultural boundaries within Europe. By treating Eastern Europe as a separate entity to be analysed by this third chapter, this thesis has partly fallen in the trap of othering Eastern Europe, a process of which scholars are becoming increasingly aware. It is difficult to classify precisely what constitutes Eastern Europe, and as shall be demonstrated even Leigh Fermor is ambiguous about this. For simplicity this chapter will consider this divide cartographically and treat the stretch of his travels east of Vienna as 'Eastern Europe'. While this is perhaps an oversimplification, a detailed analysis of how Leigh Fermor treats each of the Eastern European countries that he travels through differently is beyond the scope of this thesis.

3.1 Traditions of writing between East and West

An established scholarship exists around the stereotypes of Eastern Europe, and this section will explore how Leigh Fermor's texts fit within the literary traditions of writing between East and West.

In general terms, national stereotypes have been historically constructed within literature but have spread beyond this and have continued to persist. Joep Leerssen identifies national stereotypes as having been constructed as early as medieval times, but were only started to be typified and classified in the 17th and 18th century encyclopaedias and poetics. Within these national stereotypes behaviour was deemed largely due to mechanical factors like humours and temperament, or physical factors like climate.[215] These national stereotypes and clichés continue to hold power, for despite being invoked ironically and humorously between author and reader, they are 'also used half-seriously'; thus the currency of national stereotypes continues to be perpetuated.[216]

Stereotypes of Eastern Europe as a region have a more specific lineage. For Manfred Beller, while the differentiations between North and South were largely determined by climatological arguments, the differentiation between West and East reflected historical events and political and religious cleavages. To Beller the mythical character of the East is demonstrated by the

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[215] Beller & Leerssen (ed.). *Imagology*, p.66-67.
[216] *Ibid*., p.74.

mobility of the imputation of 'Easterness'.[217] Several scholars have looked in more detail at theories (pertaining to these stereotypes) of 'inventing Eastern Europe'.

Larry Wolff identifies that Western European perceptions of the Eastern Europe have been constructed within travel and wider literature since the Enlightenment. How the East is portrayed in literature is important, for these literary images shape and perpetuate perceptions of Eastern Europe in the imaginations of the reader and the wider public. For Wolff the 'distinction within Europe [between East and West] admitted a greater degree of proximity, similarity and ambiguity'. This emphasising of similarities presumed a subordination which paralleled that of the Orient. This 'demi-orientalisation' provided a model for constructing a scale of backwardness and development, and the result has been the construction of perceptions of Eastern Europe as a mystical, backwards, oriental and violent place.[218]

In *Inventing Ruritania,* Vesna Goldsworthy discusses how 19th century literature gave Eastern Europe a feeling of 'mystique', despite awareness of the diversity of the area increasing as the Ottoman empire retreated away from it. The concept of Ruritania refers to the mental mapping of the characteristics of 'Easterness' onto the area.[219] Leigh Fermor travels to Eastern Europe partly in search of myth, and he even alludes as to how much Eastern Europe actually resembles Ruritania and the fairy tale elements that surround this concept:

> How closely the geography of Austria-Hungary and its neighbours approximated to the fictional world of earlier generations! Graustark, Ruritania, Borduria, Syldavia and a score of imaginary kingdoms, usurped by tyrants and surrendered by fights for the throne, leap into mind: plots, treachery, imprisoned heirs and palace factions abound and, along with them, fiendish monocled swordsmen, queens in lonely towers, toppling ranges, deep forests, plains full of half-wild horses, wandering tribes of Gypsies who steal children out of castles and dye them in walnut juice or lurk under the battlements and melt the chatelaines' hearts with their strings.[220]

Jan Morris also recognises this mental mapping of Eastern Europe in Leigh Fermor's texts. For Morris the 'almost Ruritanian' places that *Between the Woods and Water* describes is 'a generic place that no longer exists - almost a fictional place now', but 'in 1934 was still recognizable within the cultural penumbra of the lost Austro-Hungarian empire'.[221]

In a way Leigh Fermor seeks mythical and wild places upon his travels. Crossing the Hungarian Plain transports his imagination to thoughts of 'affable highwaymen and brigands who held travellers to ransom, drove away flocks and herds and levied tribute from noblemen islanded in their castles'.[222] Looking to the Romanian bank of the Cerna River he clearly associates the country with myth, describing how he 'longed to get an idea of the habitat of those mythical sounding princes'.[223] Elsewhere he describes Transylvania as a region where

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[217] *Ibid*., p.317.
[218] Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p.13.
[219] Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania*, p.43.
[220] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.194.
[221] Morris, 'Introduction' in *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.IX.
[222] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, pp.74-75.
[223] *Ibid*., p.261.

'obscurity reigns'.[224] Later in the Romanian leg of his travels he directly reflects that he 'was meditating on the links between myth and history in these regions' when describing the Eastern European countries he travelled through.[225]

At two points upon his journey Leigh Fermor considers journeying south to Italy but ultimately chooses to continue East in search of myth. The first time, in Vienna, he opts for the 'mythical territory' of Eastern Europe as 'the Carpathians and the Great Hungarian Plain and the Balkan ranges and all these mysterious regions which lay between the Vienna Woods and the Black Sea brought their rival magnetisms into play'.[226] Later on in Budapest he is again tempted by Italy but is put off 'by all the mysteries of Eastern Europe that I would miss'.[227] Leigh Fermor treats Eastern Europe as a tempting puzzle to be solved. Travelling through Czechoslovakia he describes how 'every day...I was surrounded by fresh clues', but the 'accumulating fragments were beginning to cohere like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle'.[228]

Expanding upon Larry Wolff's research Maria Todorova discusses the concept of 'Balkanism'. The term refers to the 'imputed ambiguity' attributed to the region in that the Balkans are perceived as physical and mental 'in-between space'. Drawing upon Said's *Orientalism*, the Balkans as an in-between space invokes labels such as 'semi-oriental', and for Todorova, the image of the region has not evolved historically which has cemented an image of backwardness, barbarism and savagery.[229]

Compared to his experiences in the West, Leigh Fermor is more explicit about the backwardness of the peasants in Eastern Europe. In perhaps his strongest description of their backwardness, he describes lifestyle of the peasants in the Carpathian Uplands as 'biblical'.[230] These peasants are rustic to the extent that every single piece of their clothing had 'come off the back of their flocks'.[231] Modernity is unwelcome to these rural peasants and they treat visitors with suspicion, for they are normally 'tax-gathering, census-compiling, exaction of grazing dues, the search for malefactors, deserters or runaway recruits overdue for their military service'.[232] Leigh Fermor repeatedly describes how in these rural areas 'the only traffic was donkey-carts and long, high-slung waggons [sic] fitted with hooped canvas'[233], and on a later countryside drive with István he notes how 'no mechanical vehicle except ours desecrated the quiet of these byways'.[234] Travelling through Transylvania he reflects that 'the industrial revolution had left these regions untouched and the rhythm of life had remained many decades behind the pace of the West', thus clearly separating Europe in half.[235] It is also

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[224] *Ibid.*, p.102.

[225] *Ibid.*, p.269.

[226] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.250-251.

[227] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.27.

[228] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.272.

[229] Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p.59.

[230] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.199.

[231] *Ibid.*, p.240.

[232] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.226.

[233] *Ibid.*, p.86.

[234] *Ibid.*, p.182.

[235] *Ibid.*, p.96.

in fitting with Wendy Bracewell's discussion that Eastern Europe has often been defined in comparison or in its relationship to a 'core' Western Europe.[236]

This backwardness is not only visible within the peasants' live but also seems to be permeated within the societies of Eastern Europe. Leigh Fermor describes how the 'ancient feudal relationships may have evaporated but hardy symbols still survived in doffed hats, kissed hands and ceremonious forms of address'.[237] It is this 'formal kissing of the hands of men by household staff or peasants' that 'seemed strange' to Leigh Fermor, for 'it was the custom all over Eastern Europe and after a while it seemed not so much servile so much antiquated, a hoary ritual surviving, like fealty, from feudal times, which is exactly what it was'.[238]

Johannes Fabian discusses such temporalizing discourse in his scholarship on 'Time and the Other'. For Fabian the literary trope of the 'ethnographic present' can be used with historical imagery, resulting in the construction of a static image of the observed society as frozen in the past.[239] In Eastern Europe Leigh Fermor continually makes such comparison to history. At one point in Hungary, when he describes how the names of his companions, Bálint and Géza, made them seem 'like contemporaries out of the Doomsday Book' and felt that they 'ought to have been passing a drinking-horn from hand to hand'.[240]

Part of Eastern Europe's backwardness stems from the superstition of the Eastern Europeans. In Hungary Leigh Fermor visits a shepherd who 'unfolded tales of spirit, fairies and werewolves', noting that 'all the country people thereabouts believed in these supernaturals and dreaded them; werewolves lurked, ready to change shape at dusk, and woe to man or beast who drank the rainwater out of a bear's footprint!'[241] In the same Hungarian village he describes the local tradition of hanging a virgin's bloodied bedsheet out of the windows on the night of marriage, and that 'cries of acclaim would hail the display of a gory sheet… from a brides window in proof of maidenhood now ended'.[242] This example of backwardness is partly tied to that of savagery.

This image of savagery is inferred elsewhere. Leigh Fermor stereotypes Eastern Europeans as hating their neighbouring nations. He is surprised to hear from one his hosts in Hungary that the Hungarians don't hate the Poles, for 'what a relief to find an exception to the usual East European of neighbours!'.[243] He stereotypes the Hungarians as offering their ladies readily, for 'ever since the beckonings from the windows of Schlossberg and the headwaiter in the Astoria asking Hans and me which of the ladies we would like. Hungarians are keen and direct about all this'.[244] He even portrays the Czechoslovakian prostitutes themselves that he encounters as less civilised, for they 'were not their Viennese sisters, who could slow up a

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[236] Bracewell, & Drace-Francis, *Under Eastern eyes*, p.viii.

[237] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.104.

[238] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.26.

[239] Fabian, J. (1983) *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object.* New York: Columbia University Press, p.81.

[240] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.16.

[241] *Ibid*., p.138.

[242] *Ibid*., p.150.

[243] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.111.

[244] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.332.

bishop with the lift of an eyelash'.[245] This savagery seems to stem from the nature of political power in these societies, for he felt that the 'Romanian rulers were as illiberal and oppressive to their own subjects as the Hungarians to theirs'.[246] In keeping with his aversion of politics little comment is made about the political reality of these societies.

The Gypsies are another recurring feature in his journey through Eastern Europe. Leigh Fermor others them significantly from his first sighting of them in Bratislava. The Gypsy children who surround him are described as 'snot-caked half-naked Mowglis who pummelled each other for precedence'. The children are eventually called off by a nearby Gypsy blacksmith 'as bronzed-hued as an Inca' who 'egged them on semblance of rebuke in a stream of words from beyond the Himalayas'.[247] While curious of their way of life he writes negatively of the Gypsies when he encounters them. Encountering Gypsies in Romania he scathingly describes their way of life:

in their invariable way managing to turn a corner of the forest into a slum, had settled here with tents and dogs and hobbled horses; but their squalor was redeemed by the wildness of their looks.[248]

Spending a night with Gypsies on the Hungarian Plain he paints a picture of them as grubby and disgusting: 'The whole tribe might have fled half an hour ago from a burning slum' and 'gave no evidence of a thousand or two thousand years' of practice pitching camp'. Leigh Fermor again treats them as a historical people but one that is un-European, for their camp 'encouraged the notion that they had barely changed since they left Baluchistan or Sinde or the banks of the Indus'.[249]

Leigh Fermor does not trust the Gypsies and spends a sleepless night in Hungary worrying whether they will steal his horse. In Romania, Gypsies try to scam Leigh Fermor into buying the gold they have found, and 'offered to sell me the lot, making them dance like tinsel across his head-and-heart lines as he spoke'.[250] Despite this negativity he does romanticise their lifestyle and admires them in some ways. The same Gypsy who tries to sell him the gold is a polyglot who spoke not only Romany, but also 'Rumanian and Magyar with equal fluency'. While he couldn't read Leigh Fermor's map he 'was not the less clever for it'.[251]

3.2 Leigh Fermor's texts as a counter oriental narrative

Both Todorova and Wolff write of the semi-oriental image of Eastern Europe and how this has resulted in an image of Eastern Europe as 'geographically inextricable from Europe, yet culturally constructed as the other'. In contrast the West has a built a 'positive and self-

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[245] *Ibid*., p.280.
[246] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.104.
[247] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, pp.274-276.
[248] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.201.
[249] *Ibid*., p.47.
[250] *Ibid*., p.202.
[251] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.204.

congratulatory' image of itself against this.[252] This is a fascinating hypothesis against which to compare Leigh Fermor's texts, for in some ways Leigh Fermor's texts run against this Orientalised narrative of Eastern Europe.

Leigh Fermor's interpretation of the East partly goes against that of Wendy Bracewell. To Bracewell the Balkans and Eastern Europe have been presented as a 'museum of masculinity' by western travellers. While the area has been gendered as male, the area has been represented in relations of domination in the relationship between male and female. There exists a gendered geography of a feminized, passionate and passive East that is subordinate to western culture.[253] Leigh Fermor's representation of the elite class that he stays with for much of his journey goes against this, for they seem well integrated with the rest of Europe. At a summer party in Romania he notes how the Romanians he meets are cosmopolitan. They all wear 'well-cut Paris country clothes' and 'the pearls of the women...transported us to the pages of *Vogue*'. 'All of them spoke English extremely well', but also 'conserved amongst themselves in French as though it was their first language'.[254] At a similar party in Budapest he describes how 'many of these people talked English; when an exception cropped up, German was used'.[255]

Despite their peripheral status the elite see themselves as part of a transnational elite European culture. In rural Hungary Leigh Fermor notes how 'where the hospitable Hungarians felt cut off from life, visitors from the west were greeted with embraces'.[256] These transnational ties are brought closer to home for Leigh Fermor in that the elite frequently have ties to Britain. Baron Pips Schey 'had spent several years in England at the beginning of the century and he recalled those long-fled seasons with all their gleaming details intact'.[257] The son of the Countess Denise and Count Jozsi in Hungary is 'going to Ampleforth in a few terms', and asks Leigh Fermor what it is like.[258] This background of upper class festivities and of public schooling is again perhaps revealing of Leigh Fermor's own social class.

Alongside these elite ties, there are several physical and visual features of eastern Europe which tie it to the West. The Danube river that Leigh Fermor follows for much of his route is one element of physical geography that links the west and the east. Making no distinction between East and West he calls the Danube the 'icy heart of Europe'.[259] He frequently details Europe's make up through its interlinking rivers, but it is the Danube that 'strings itself like a thread through a bead and drops across the map of Europe plumb for a hundred and eighty miles'.[260] Architecturally Eastern Europe is also tied to the West, a relationship that is particularly clear in Prague. Suggesting a 'spiritual allegiance' to the rest of Europe he describes how 'Prague sums up all that I had gazed upon since stepping ashore in Holland'.[261] Correlating the idea of Europe with a shared Christian religion, he comments when looking

[252] Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p.59.
[253] Bracewell (2005), 'New Men, Old Europe', pp.88-89.
[254] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.133
[255] *Ibid*., p.25.
[256] *Ibid*., p.96.
[257] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.322.
[258] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.84.
[259] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.13.
[260] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.349.
[261] *Ibid*., p.288.

upon Prague's cathedral that 'the town [Prague] was as indisputably a part of the western world', for the church fitted within 'the traditions of which the West is most justly vain'.[262] This sentiment is echoed when seeing Prague's university, which has a rich history as 'one of the most ancient and famous in Europe'.[263] The architecture of estates and castles belonging to the elite are another such link between the West and East. Upon reaching the edge of Romania, he feels sad there will be no castles to the east. These 'had been a last outpost of the architecture of the West', and Leigh Fermor 'brooded with homesickness on feasts and libraries and stables' that had become a feature of his trip since Munich.[264]

Leigh Fermor is ambiguous and constantly redefines where Eastern Europe begins, and it is worth analysing where Leigh Fermor starts to orientalise the East along is route. In *A Time of Gifts*, Leigh Fermor feels that Austria represents the 'last bastion' before the 'wild east'[265] to the extent that he says 'East of Vienna, the Orient begins'.[266] Eastern Europe seems to begin at Bratislava, for while the Turks had occupied the Slovakia over two centuries ago, the 'trilingual public notices and street names' also make him feel that he 'has crossed more than a political frontier'.[267] His differentiating of Eastern Europe through the noting of signs of backwardness and savageness also begin here. Looking back towards the Marchfield of Lower Austria from a vantage point near the border he describes a 'penultimate glimpse of Maria Theresa's kind world', painting an image of Western Europe as kind and civilised.[268] Hungary is portrayed more consistently than Czechoslovakia as oriental and Eastern. An example of this is when he stops one evening at a village on the Hungarian plain, which he describes as having 'something indefinitely oriental in the atmosphere of the place'.[269]

Language forms another barrier between East and West, and Leigh Fermor perhaps others Eastern Europe more because of his unfamiliarity with Eastern European languages. Crossing into Czechoslovakia from Austria, he leaves the last country where he can recognise the language. 'I realised I was at last in a country where the indigenous sounds meant nothing at all'.[270] An inability to communicate with those around him, apart from the elite who frequently spoke English, French or German, is perhaps a reason he others the Eastern Europeans more.

In some ways Leigh Fermor actually set out to encounter the orient within Europe. To Artemis Cooper, Leigh Fermor's real goal was always Greece rather than Constantinople, but 'to walk from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople… keeps you firmly in Europe while taking you right to its edge'. This route 'crosses cultural as well as geographical boundaries, and to the romantic imagination it sounds a good deal farther'.[271] Generally speaking upon spending time in a country, Leigh Fermor starts to differentiate it less as Eastern European. It is when he reaches Bulgaria however that he feels he is at the edge of Europe. It acts as the edge of

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262 *Ibid*., p.300.

263 *Ibid*., p.295.

264 Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.252.

265 Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.266.

266 *Ibid*., p.269.

267 *Ibid*., p.270.

268 *Ibid*., p.284.

269 Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.63.

270 Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.267.

271 Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.35.

Europe for he 'had never met anyone who has been to Bulgaria', and while both Hungary and Romania 'looked Westward to Vienna, Berlin, London and Paris', the 'benighted regions of the Balkans remained terra incognita'. Bulgaria is treated as mysterious and oriental, and only sixty years earlier had been under Ottoman rule as 'a province of an empire stretching deep into Asia'. In contrast while Hungary and Romania had also been occupied by the Turks, they had 'left no trace beyond the smoking of long-stemmed pipes' in these countries.[272] This Ottoman legacy shaped Leigh Fermor's expectations about Bulgaria, for 'it seemed the darkest, most backwards and least inviting country in Eastern Europe except Albania'.[273]

Leigh Fermor's published travel texts only take him up to Bulgaria, but the Bulgarians that he meets are distinctly othered as non-European, for to him 'these were the last descendants of those victorious nomads from the borders of China!' On the island of Ade-Kaleh (an ethnic Turkish outpost within modern Romania that was to be submerged during the construction of the Iron Gates hydroelectric plant in 1970), he notes how the Ottoman Empire was present through 'victories long eclipsed, but commemorated here and there by a minaret left in their possessions like a spear stuck in the ground'.[274] The Turks and their Ottoman legacy form Europe's other here, and make the divisions between East and West more distinct. While his posthumous text *The Broken Road* details Leigh Fermor's later journey through Bulgaria and his arrival in Constantinople, it is not the subject of this analysis.

His othering of Eastern Europeans is less clear for the East he describes is a diverse mix of peoples rather than homogenous nation states. One example are the Swabian Germans that existed as a separate culture within Hungary. Leigh Fermor describes how 'as much German as Magyar was to be heard on the half-awake quay of Visegrád, for the speakers were Géza's Swabians'.[275] That same afternoon he reaches Szentendre in Hungary, where he notes that 'the townspeople were the descendants of Serbians who had fled from the Turks three centuries ago'.[276] For Katarina Gephardt this still constitutes othering however , for whether it is presented as an asset or a threat, the ethnic diversity of the region emerges as a shared focus and central interpretive challenge.[277] At times Leigh Fermor does see the ethnic diversity of Eastern Europe as a difficulty. Describing the ethnic divides between the Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania, he felt that 'it was this geographical position, isolated in a sea of Romanians, which places the ethnological problem beyond solution.[278] Czechoslovakia seems to epitomise the ethnic troubles of East and Central Europe. Leigh Fermor describes how the Sudetenland was 'a fierce amputation for Hungary, a double-edged gift for Czechoslovakia, and [hinting at the Nazis] rife with future trouble'.[279] In Bratislava, all the bars seem segregated by ethnic group and are full of almost historical peasant figures dressed in traditional costume. All are othered by the 'alien sounds' of their Slavic languages, and he describe the pubs as a 'drinking hell'.[280]

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[272] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.253.

[273] *Ibid*., p.254.

[274] *Ibid*., p.266.

[275] *Ibid*., p.19.

[276] *Ibid*., p.20.

[277] Gephardt, K. (2005). "The Enchanted Garden" or "The Red Flag": Eastern Europe in Late Nineteenth-Century British Travel Writing. *Journal of Narrative Theory*, 35(3), p.294.

[278] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.165.

[279] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.272.

[280] *Ibid*., p.273.

Leigh Fermor tends to exoticise Europe as a whole rather than just Eastern Europe. Setting out on his journey from England he describes Europe as a 'thousand wonders waiting'.[281] He deliberately planned his route to encounter the exotic and travels to countries where he won't hear languages that he knows. In doing so, 'flights of unknown syllables would soon be rushing into purged and attentive ears'. [282] Whether set in the West or the East of Europe the texts arguably act as one long appraisal of Europe's rich culture and history. For Holland and Huggan, readers of travel literature are eager consumers of exotic, culturally 'othered' goods.[283] Exoticism refers to the admiration and delight elicited from foreign lands and cultures, where the foreign country is positively valorised and seen as a preferable alternative to one's domestic culture. The idea of exoticism is linked to dissatisfaction with domesticity, and with the romantic notion of wanderlust and escapism.[284] Arguably the readers of Leigh Fermor's texts expect to read about an exotic Europe and seek this othering. The books allow escape from the present's homogeneity by allowing the reader to go on a journey through Europe in terms of space and time.

3.3 A heightened nostalgia for an Eastern Europe 'lost' to communism

Leigh Fermor's nostalgic images of 'lost Europe' are much clearer in Eastern Europe. One of the reasons for this is that the lost images of pre-modernity that he saw in upon his journey were more pronounced here. Leigh Fermor is more openly nostalgic when in the East, and in a way he both celebrates the backwardness of these areas and sought it out far more than in the earlier stages of this journey. Crossing the Great Hungarian Plain Leigh Fermor describes the lives of the peasants he see in a nostalgic way. A girl spins a weaving wheel that is 'beautifully polished by generations of toil', and the 'only one I have ever seen in use'. [285] Celebrating this backwardness, he notes after describing this scene that 'there was not a single way life could be improved'.[286] Artemis Cooper felt that Leigh Fermor was drawn to these peasant scenes in the countryside for he 'found it easier to surround himself with the beautiful, illusory continuum of history, which connected him to a past that made no demands'.[287]

By travelling to these rustic areas of Eastern Europe it was as if he was travelling through time as well as space. In his opening letter to Xan Fielding, Leigh Fermor acknowledges his nostalgia for this backwardness, writing that 'the next decade swept away this remote, country-dwelling world', and he wrote the books 'with a glow of retrospective magic which the intervening half-century has enhanced'.[288] Cooper recognises that Leigh Fermor is delighted by the backwardness of these peasants in Hungary, for 'their outfits and tools would have been recognisable in the Bronze Age'. In doing so he ignores the fact that the Hungarian

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[281] *Ibid*., p.30.

[282] *Ibid*., p.18.

[283] Holland & Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters*, p.II.

[284] Beller & Leerssen (ed.). *Imagology*, p.325.

[285] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.57.

[286] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.58.

[287] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.49.

[288] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.2.

peasantry were among the poorest and least emancipated in Europe.[289] She even goes as far to suggest that Leigh Fermor was comforted by the historic scenes of horses and carts and people out in the fields with scythes.[290]

This nostalgia can also be seen for the elite that he stays with over the long summer that is described in *Between the Woods and the Water*. Leigh Fermor knew that this way of life was under threat, but to him the estates that still existed then were charming in their rusticness. Describing the estates of Hungary that he travelled between, he recalls that 'charm and *douceur de vivre* were still afloat among the faded decors indoors, and outdoors, everything seemed to delight'. Even in the 1930s he felt that the owners of these estates were 'homesick for the past', for 'they lived in a backward-looking, a genealogical, almost a Confucian dream and many sentences ended in a sigh'.[291] Leigh Fermor is so openly nostalgic for this lost way of life, he even acknowledged that although 'the charms of the place and its inhabitants sound unrelievedly and improbably perfect'. '[he was] aware of this, but can only set it down as it struck me'.[292]

In concordance with the ideas of 'Lost Europe' outlined in the last chapter, the images of a lost Eastern Europe are an even stronger version of this. The Eastern Europe that Leigh Fermor knew was also to be dramatically affected by the Second World War, but was doubly affected by the communist era that followed it. Using the parallax structure of memory to join the past and future, he refers to the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Russians: 'Thinking of Czechoslovakia, I was to remember it much later on, when the horrors of occupation from the West were followed by long-drawn-out and still continuing afflictions from the East; both of them still unguessed at then'.[293] The 'lost city' of Prague draws out even stronger personal feelings about the fate of the city: 'I thought about Prague often later on and when evil times came, sympathy, anger and the guilt which the fate of Eastern Europe had justly implanted in the West, coloured my cogitations'.[294]

As early in his journey as Germany he writes with hindsight about the damage communism was to have on Eastern Europe. Leigh Fermor felt he 'had no inkling of the immeasurable influence that it was about to exert on people of my age' and 'not a hint of the unquestioning ardour and the disillusioned palinodes that lay in wait for most of my later friends'. Leigh Fermor asserts his elite friends around Europe were 'old fashioned liberals' and is again revealing of his own class in his feeling that he 'was spared by geographical fluke'.[295] Communism changed everything for the elite in Eastern Europe, to the extent that Leigh Fermor even felt the need to change the names of István and Angela. This was done in order to protect them, for 'many things have changed since those easy-going times'.[296] Leigh Fermor had a particular affinity to Eastern Europe and his network of friends there, and could never come to terms with the societal upheaval that took place under communism.

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[289] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.62.

[290] *Ibid*., p.380.

[291] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.105.

[292] *Ibid*., p.72.

[293] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.282.

[294] *Ibid*., p.300.

[295] Fermor, *A Time of Gifts*, p.p.144 - Double check this is eastern Europe and not just Nazi Germany

[296] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.136.

He is also perhaps more sentimental about the demise of the Eastern European elites for they feature more prominently in his travel account through this part of Europe. This is partly due to the split in his travel accounts; from Munich onwards he had copious letters of introduction which meant that he spent much more time in the company of the elite in these areas. Whereas *A Time of Gifts* was spent mostly walking on foot in the depths of winter, a long summer spent house hopping between the estates of Eastern Europe forms nearly the entirety of *Between the Woods and the Water*. Leigh Fermor admits to this change in his journey multiple times. Staying with István in Hungary he admits that 'he had swerved so widely from my austere programme' while travelling from estate to estate in the summer.[297] In his letter to Xan Fielding (and again referring to the fictional image of the bohemian tramp) he writes that although he:

> set out from Holland meaning to mix with chance acquaintances and fellow tramps...by the time I got to Hungary and Transylvania I found myself having a much easier time of it than I had expected or planned: ambling along on borrowed horses, drifting from one country-house to another, often staying for weeks or months under patient and perhaps long-suffering but always hospitable roofs.[298]

As explored in the previous chapter, this elite class were already in decline before the Second World War. However they seem more aware of it in Eastern Europe. Speaking to Heinz Schramm in Romania, Leigh Fermor felt that to this Eastern European network, 'nobility meant so much more than heraldic baubles and forms of address'. To them 'it signified membership of a legally separate order with a whole array of privileges'. Leigh Fermor felt the 'chasm [that] yawned still', for 'much of the of the ancient aloofness and awe hovered about the descendants of country dynasts and their heraldic emblems were scarcely out of sight'. For this elite, despite 'the disasters of war, fallen fortunes, changes of sovereignty and loss of estates', circumstances had 'left the ascendancy...improbably intact'.[299] Such a poetic description of this faded elite increases the feeling of nostalgia in the texts. Despite their geographical location, this elite are connected with the rest of Europe, conversing with Leigh Fermor in foreign languages such as English, French and German, or recounting stories of years spent in Western Europe. However this cosmopolitan mobility has waned since the First World War and the elites are sad with modernity. Talking with Leigh Fermor about the state of affairs in Hungary, István 'poured new drinks and sighed; how provincial and constricted the world had become''[300]

Leigh Fermor's sense of nostalgia is also particularly strong in Eastern Europe for he saw the destructiveness of communism with his own eyes. In preparing to write the books he also returned to Eastern Europe multiple times and was horrified by the changes that communism had wrought. This horror is greater reflected within the images of lost Europe than in the rest of the continent. In her biography of Leigh Fermor, Artemis Cooper felt that 'Leigh Fermor was already well acquainted with the destructiveness of East European communism' since on his previous trips he had seen the 'roads going nowhere, the hunger and waste brought about by

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[297] *Ibid.*, p.152.

[298] *Ibid.*, p.1.

[299] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.246.

[300] *Ibid.*, p.137.

collectivization'.[301] After the success of *A Time of Gifts* he flew to Budapest in 1982 to refresh his memories of Hungary in order to write *Between the Woods and the Water*. To Cooper there is no doubt that he was influenced by what he saw of communist Hungary.[302] He returned again in 1985 to show the complete typescript to several close Hungarian friends that were featured in the book such as Elmer von Klobusitzky (who Leigh Fermor had given the pseudonym István in the books). In a letter to his friend Diana Cooper he writes how he was dismayed with Elmer's situation. Elmer now lived on the eastern side of Budapest in a bleak concrete block of flats surrounded by rubbish and graffiti, but had recently been moved recently to an old people's home where he shared a room with five other men. Elsewhere on his trip he met the children of one of the estates that he had stayed at, who were now 'tilling in the communal fields'. One had even 'been arrested by the Russians and sent for ten years to Siberia'.[303]

This dismay was even stronger in Bulgaria, as Leigh Fermor was 'utterly crushed' by revisiting the country. To Cooper he 'kept expecting to see familiar sights round each corner, only to find they were gone; it was like 'his own memories were being eradicated by the visit'.[304] In his own words 'Sofia had changed from the cheery little Balkan capital into the HQ of a dim and remote Soviet province'.[305] For Cooper these desolate visits 'reaffirmed his memories and inspired the writing of *Between the Woods and the Water*, and led to nearly every noble 'house and its inhabitants [being] affectionately romanticised'.[306]

Leigh Fermor's nostalgic vision of the East being coloured by the contemporary communist occupation is in fitting with Stråth's theory that myth is memory and history in a 'ceaseless transformation and reconstruction'. For Stråth the 'image of the past is continuously reconsidered in the light of the ever changing present', and the telling of history is 'dependent upon the context of the present in which questions of the past emerge'.[307] It is here that Leigh Fermor use the parallax structure to tie the past and the present is particularly poignant. Describing the nature of political power in Romania, it allows him to comment that 'they were fierce times in Eastern Europe; and they still are'.[308]

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[301] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.379.

[302] *Ibid*., p.370.

[303] Fermor, P. and Sisman, A. (ed.) (2016). *Dashing for the Post: The Letters of Patrick Leigh Fermor*. London: John Murray, pp.353-354.

[304] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, p.379.

[305] Fermor & Sisman (ed.) *Dashing for the Post*, p.380.

[306] Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*, pp.376-379.

[307] Stråth, *Myth and Memory in the Construction of Community*, p.24.

[308] Fermor, *Between the Woods and the Water*, p.104.

Conclusion

While this thesis has travelled across the width of the European continent alongside Leigh Fermor, it is time for this journey to come to an end. It has been demonstrated that, while Leigh Fermor sought a Europe bound by common culture and history upon his travels, this was a nostalgic search for a Europe rooted in the past. While the texts may describe his youthful adventuring through Europe, they were written and narrated by an older Leigh Fermor who was more nostalgic for this lost past and who desperately searched for the glimpses of it that remained.

The interaction with memory that this entails proves crucial to both books. As a result of the parallax structure, the narrative is split between the past time of his journey and the future time of his writing. As a rhetorical device it allows Leigh Fermor to jump seamlessly between the past and the present, enabling him to write in a way that both captures the younger Leigh Fermor's boyish charm and the older Leigh Fermor's wisdom and knowledge. It lends narrative power to the images of lost Europe that he constructs, for Leigh Fermor has experienced this past and can contrast it with the narrative present.

The Europe that Leigh Fermor was travelling through was in many ways on the cusp of modernity, and many of the things he describes were to completely destroyed or changed by the effects of the Second World War. He is implicitly critical of the period under communism that followed the Second World War in Eastern Europe; a criticism of communism (still present at the time of the book's writing) forms the 'elephant in the room' of his narrative. Despite his sympathy for Eastern Europe, Leigh Fermor's texts also conform to the tradition of writing against Eastern Europe as a backwards and savage place. While there are elements of his narrative that go against this trend, they certainly form the lesser part of his narrative.

The two tiers of class (the peasants and the elite) that Leigh Fermor encounters throughout Europe stem from this lost past, and he only lightly deals with the contemporary changes that were happening to the societies he travelled through at the time of his journey. Despite this criticism, the texts remain a wonderful journey across the European continent and back into its past. Leigh Fermor's personality and enthusiasm for knowledge permeate the texts, and the rich descriptions of history, literature and language that ensue read as a beautiful tribute to European culture.

This thesis has attempted to alert scholars of the scope for analysis and research that Leigh Fermor's travel texts provide. However it is far from a comprehensive study of Leigh Fermor and his writing. By conducting a close study of only *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*, it has only looked at the themes of identity and ideas of Europe that Leigh Fermor established between Holland and Romania. Due to the complications presented by artificially constructed nature of the unfinished *The Broken Road*, there has not been the space to conduct a close analysis of it within this thesis. However that book is certainly of use to scholars, for there is certainly scope for analysis as to how Leigh Fermor includes Bulgaria within his conception of Eastern Europe, or whether he others with it alongside Turkey as a demarcation of the orient.

I have also not chosen to incorporate Leigh Fermor's interpretation of Greece and its importance within Europe. The latter half of *A Broken Road* is set in Greece, along with Leigh

Fermor's other travel texts *Mani* and *Roumeli*. As the south-eastern edge of Europe, and a nation where he spent a significant part of his life, it would be interesting to analyse how Leigh Fermor's depictions of Greece correspond with the same themes of identity and nostalgia for Europe's past that this thesis has explored.

Finally this thesis has largely treated *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water* as a single and coherent travel narrative. In doing so it has readily jumped between the two texts despite them being published nearly a decade apart. There is certainly scope for analysis into the effect of this time on the differences of the two books.

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