

A “LAND OF EMIGRATION.”
EUROPEAN EXILE AND THE AMERICAN IMAGINARY IN SAUL
BELLOW’S *THE DEAN’S DECEMBER*

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Abstract: Starting from the representation of Europe as a “land of emigration” for the Americans in the work of one of the most prodigious American expatriates, Henry James, this paper looks at the image of Europe in a selection of American texts from across different historical periods and media of representation, investigating the extent to which Europe is a land of exile in the American imaginary. More specifically, this paper will look at the extent to which the center-margin model of colonialism is subverted and inverted in this new geography, in which America is akin to an imperial metropolis and Europe becomes an outpost of imposed or voluntary isolation. Moreover, the paper will examine the extent to which the myth of Ovid as poet-in-exile is echoed in American artistic experiences, for example in the “lost generation”. By investigating a diverse corpus of primary texts, the paper will also attempt to provide a cultural model transcending media of expression and historical periods.