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Andrea Goulet, *Legacies of the Rue Morgue: Science, Space, and Crime Fiction in France*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. viii + 295 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. $65.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 978-0-8122-4779-4.

Review by Sharon P. Johnson, Virginia Tech.

Exquisitely researched, intriguing, intelligent analyses, as well as sharply written prose, *Legacies of the Rue Morgue* does just that: it shows the legacies of Edgar Allen Poe's short story, the "Murders in the Rue Morgue" and how it has shaped French fiction from mid-nineteenth century France to contemporary times. Yet, such a statement is an injustice to this book's remarkable scholarly breadth. It is as absorbing as it is erudite—an illuminating, sweeping work that masterfully draws on many critical fields of study, such as psychoanalysis, trauma theory, animal studies, detective fiction criticism, including postcolonial and non-Western crime fictions, the sciences of geology, paleontology and cartography, and spatial and geocritical studies of narrative. It takes the reader on an investigative journey through social spaces above and below ground while mapping out the commonalities, shifts, and evolutions of the crime fiction genre. The earth's geological layering of history with its bones and skulls are some of the clues that help solve crimes.

Goulet's prologue uses Poe's short story as a point of departure and a theoretical frame to analyze French crime fiction—from popular nineteenth-century *feuilletons* and the sensationalist press to twenty-first-century novels in the *Série noire* as well as the detective-centered *roman policier*. In 1841 France, Poe's short story was perceived as "radically" original, and for Goulet, one sees its influences in the texts above "from its uneasy relation to rationality to the local/global logic of a nation dealing with internal crime and colonial violence" to the way it "registers a specific spatial imaginary...that brings the philosophical and scientific concerns of the nineteenth century to bear on the narration of crime and its investigation" (p. 3). Poe foregrounds place—setting and situated-ness. For the detective Dupin, it is only "through an active engagement with specific location—by combining on-site observation of architectural layout, with, precisely, his knowledge of Paris as a world-linked capital—that [he] is able to solve the 'analytical' mystery'" (p. 5). That said, Goulet hopes to use Poe's text too as "non-normative—that is, as counter rational, gruesome and conflicted—as any of the sensational murder narratives that were excised from the most purified accounts of the *roman policier*" (p. 7).

Chapter one, "Mapping Murder," is Goulet's introduction in which she wishes to demonstrate how "shifting scientific and philosophical discursive contexts, from Cuvierian geology to Deleuzian deterritorialization, have imprinted the spatiotemporal logics of the crime fiction tradition in modern France" (p. 13). The book is divided into three parts: part one, "Archaeologies," traces a vertical (archeohistorical) axis to spaces underground, such as the catacombs, quarries and caves; part three, "Cartographies," maps out a horizontal (cartological) axis of urban space; and part two, "Street Names," intersects these two other axes. The public and private spheres also intersect—the violence in the street due to the city's revolutions is juxtaposed with the violence found within the private apartments of the city's inhabitants.

Returning to Poe's detective story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," Goulet stresses that her narrative joins a Bachelardian "metaphorics of the underground" with Levi-Strauss's analysis of the "geological analyst" in the role of the detective who "digs up truth, connecting buried bones to violent history" (p. 21). In Goulet's analyses of French crime fiction, that history is buried in the terrain of the French nation: "national identity is at stake in even the most private-seeming investigations into the criminal underground; ...fresh corpses lie in the same jumbled terrain as the skeletons of a national past" (p. 21)—an image that is literalized by a pre-World War I lithograph of a Lord Lister adventure and a scene in Didier Daeninckx's 1985 novel *Métropolice* in which the author imbues his text with a similar layered history of national tragedy. Here the novel's main character discovers that a subway tunnel opens up into a quarry which turned into a deadly refuge for Communard fighters. "In this way," Goulet writes, "the nation's buried traumas continue to haunt the spaces of modernity" (p. 21). Beyond the tropes of "cyclic revolt," the twentieth-century crime stories also increasingly represented "trans-border issues of colonialization and globalization" (p. 21). Crime-street fiction finds its origins in Poe's crime narrative named after the street "rue Morgue." In chapters six through eight, crime-map fictions "call on cartographic authority," which ends up being as much of a ruse as Poe's use of pure rationality in the beginning of "Rue Morgue" (p. 33). Poe's legacy is a "spatial imaginary" that "anchors formal tensions between reason and disorder" in the sites of the home, city, and nation (p. 251).

Part one, "Archaeologies," almost half of the book's length, is a three-part development in which subterranean spaces are the criminal topographies of the novels and the stratigraphical branch of geology allows one to read past eras and clues by finding and deciphering buried secrets to solve crimes. In this way, the Earth Sciences discoveries made during the nineteenth century mark the narrative form of fictional crime.

Chapter two, "Quarries and Catacombs: Underground Crime in Second Empire *Romans feuilletons*," studies catacomb and geological fictions that have a three-prong focus: domestic crime, political revolution, and cataclysmic geology (p. 76). They also offer a different spatiality than Haussmann's geometrical and horizontal topography of streets and neighborhoods by "mapping a jagged Cuvierian geohistory onto the narrative form itself"—that is, the novels' time frames jump forward and backward. Berthet's serial novel *Les Catacombes de Paris* (1867), for example, "allegorizes the seismic effects of earlier political revolutions on modern urban crime through the prism of scientific debates between cataclysmic deluge [Cuvier] and continuist history [Lamarck, Leyell]" (p. 15). *Les Carrières d'Amérique*'s (1860) vertical spatiality parallels and destabilizes the high/low hierarchies of the modern capitalist city, for a series of "chasms and upthrusts" show the possibilities of both "brutal descent and sudden ascent" (p. 60). In the twentieth century, Gaston Leroux and Souvestre and Allain switch from the fictional bandit villains of the underground to larvae and ghosts and update the tropes of nineteenth-century crime fictions through pastiche, de-realization, and doubling (pp. 73-74).

Chapter three, "Skulls and Bones: Paleohistory in Leroux and Leblanc," analyzes costal town settings as "sites of intersection between national historiography and paleontological discourse" (p. 80) Through the image of bones in caves, different representations are foregrounded concerning France's relation to its past and future—the personal and European national identities of the protagonists in Leroux's *Le Parfum de la dame en noir* (1909) and Leblanc's *La Comtesse de Cagliostro* (1924). Instead of having the urban city be the site for crime fiction, it is the sea that swallows and returns bodies. Its skulls and bones in pre-historic caves introduce "a deeper History in the form of paleontological discourse" (p. 83). "The reconstructive science," Goulet argues, "thus serves as an idealized model for detective forensics, which attempts its own figural resurrection of the past" (p. 90). It is one that the detective Rouletabille rejects for Cartesian reasoning and abstract thought, yet one that Arsène Lupin embraces, for his logic represents "the modern historiography's archival thrust" wherein his investigations rely on finding documents, clues, or caves and buried treasure from the past to solve his crime (p. 95).

Chapter four, "Crypts and Ghosts: Terrains of National Trauma in Japrisot and Vargas," moves from the caves and quarries to manufactured cemeteries and crypts in which "fantasmatic contents both conceal and reveal the haunting traumas of individual psyche and national terrain" (p. 117). Trauma theory, as conceptualized by Abraham and Torok, provides a theoretical framework to interpret the trauma-marked underground terrains of the French nation and the crypts and rifts they contain that resist decipherability or analysis: "these 'archaeological' novels consistently connect personal loss to trauma at the collective level, so that shameful, unspeakable family secrets (incest, adultery, illegitimacy) become themselves symptoms of broader national and political systems of violence" (p. 119). For Pierre Verdaguer, the genre is obsessed with the wounds of France's unresolved past and therefore national memory underlies these archaeological fictions, even if the setting is the prehistoric era. By the end of the twentieth century, "new formulations of an archaic territorial logic [are] at work in the crime fiction genre" (p. 156). The detective becomes an archivist, even a crypto-analyst who is capable of reading buried traumas in the earth and in other characters' psyche.

Part two, "Intersections," is an "interlude" between part one and part three that is one chapter in length. It is named "Intersections" for the ways in which the novels' imaginaries elucidate the vertical (part one) and the horizontal (part three) axes of Goulet's book. These intersections encompass relationships between the past and present, space and time, true crimes and fictitious ones, reason and disorder, political insurrection and domestic drama (pp. 159, 168).

Chapter five, "Street-Name Mysteries and Private/Public Violence, 1867-2001," studies several street-name mysteries that echo how France specified crimes by their locations in its sensationalized news (called *canards sanglants*) and popular news stories in the mass circulation presses. For the novels Goulet analyzes, the "street addresses of these titles act as realist anchors in contemporary maps, while self-consciously situating the latter-day novels in a generic tradition begun by Poe with the Rue Morgue" (p. 25). Some Third Republic crime stories use streets from *vieux Paris* as a dangerous city setting for their plots, acting as a "critical hinge" ...between private crimes 'de la rue' and public violence 'dans la rue'" (pp. 164-65). Later, in her corpus of twentieth- (Malet) and twenty-first-century street-name mysteries (Daeninckx and Radoman), the street acts as a "literal intersection of space and time, while the titular address—a sign of both interior life and public access—reconnects the private crimes of the whodunit tradition to the political engagement of the modern-age *noir*" (p. 172).

Part three, "Cartographies," seeks to show that the French *roman policier* tradition powerfully articulates the "rationalist/nationalist pairing" (p. 31). Here, maps play a central role in the narratives' crime stories. Also, anxieties about violence "correlate deeply to fears of broken state boundaries, especially as the nation enters the twentieth century" (p. 31).

Chapter six, "*Terrains Vagues*: Gaboriau and the Birth of the Cartographic Mystery," foregrounds Gaboriau as the founder of a kind of crime novel that included a map, first showcased in his 1868 *Monsieur Lecoq*. "Mapping is mastery" (p. 196), Goulet initially states, and Gaboriau's detective (and novel) distinguished themselves by including this new cartographic skill which was emerging as systematic in real crimes come mid-century. Unfortunately, the detective's map does not solve the crime mystery. Following Dominique Kalifa's lead, Goulet suggests that one observes a gap in *Monsieur Lecoq* similar to a gap in the *roman policier* genre between the use of rational systems of knowledge (such as maps) to solve a crime and the use of the sensationalistic language of cliffhangers or pulp fiction to describe a crime. This gap placed more emphasis on the event over reason, mere chance over inductive reasoning (p. 200). Such a gap is wider still in Leroux's 1907 *Le Mystère de la chambre jaune*, where "the emerging empiricism and sensationalism of early twentieth-century scientific discourse works to undercut Rouletabille's [the detective's] avowed rationality" (p. 203). For Goulet, Leroux's detective is particularly effective in having readers visualize "the pull between the ideology of Rationalism and the ragged realities of space, time and crime" (p. 207).

Chapter seven, "Mapping the City: Malet's Mysteries and Butor's Bleston," shows that both authors demonstrate a "playfully subversive spatiality that exposes the limits of social order and investigative closure" (p. 209). While Malet and Butor play with the "open-closure" crime motif and present the city as a labyrinth, they do so differently (pp. 207, 215-16, 221). Focusing on the latter, Malet uses real streets and alleyways "whose criminal threats are sociologically and politically anchored" while the fictional city of Bleston may be understood as "symbolic of an urbanity at once modern and timeless" (p. 210). While their "spatial metaphorics" seem to delineate Malet as a traditional detective writer and Butor as a counter-detective novelist, their linguistic strategies blur such distinctions (pp. 209-10). Adding to this layering, the authors destabilize references by playing with the formal conventions of novel and map (pp. 210-11). This chapter seeks to show how in Malet's and Butor's texts "spatial and textual references collide over the troubling social reality of criminal violence"; how the map's "atemporal spatiality works with the temporality of narration" and what the authors' crime scene maps "can tell readers about modern and postmodern geographical imaginations" (p. 211).

From mid-nineteenth-century crime novels to the French *néo-polar* of the late twentieth century, spaces and modes of connectivity shift in the fictions of Dantec and Radoman from trains and telegraphs to international data trafficking and mass-mediated global violence (p. 224). First situating the semantically and geo-politically charged meanings of the "Balkans," Goulet, in chapter eight, "Zéropa-Land: Balkanization and Schizocartographies of Dantec and Radoman," foregrounds how Dantec and Radoman "present dystopic visions of Europe menaced by the Balkans as a 'shadow-space' of cartographic disorder, brutality and crime" (p. 229). Both of their imaginary settings inscribe the *noir* with the "topographical psychopathology of the 'supermodern' world map" (p. 225). Dantect's *Babylone Babies* (1999) even proposes a topography that goes beyond globalization and into "interplantetary, cybernetic, psychic and neuromolecular territories" (p. 240). In Radoman's triology *La ballade d'un Yougo* (2000), Nice becomes not only a "present-day template for the shadow space" of the main character's resuscitated home town of Belgrade but a "cartographic center of the new post-apocalyptic world" (pp. 235, 239), shedding light on the novel's "true interest"—the devastations and disintegration of the Balkans (pp. 236-37, 240). Finally, Deleuze and Guattari's notions of schizoanalytic cartography inform Goulet's reading of Dantec's *Babylone Babies*; here a new world is created that requires new cartography that the character Marie navigates successfully, as will the detective Toorop, with assistance. A different kind of mapping of criminal terrain is needed from the one that "had served as the fundamental epistemological condition for the modern detective novel from Poe to 2000" (p. 240). The new world order no longer needs the investigative, analytical detective who was equally a staple in the *policier* genre for over a century (p. 250).

I have very few criticisms of *Legacies of the Rue Morgue*. While a bibliography would have been appreciated, such a preference is less an issue with Goulet's book as it is with publishing house conventions. Also, at times the analysis of Radoman's novel was difficult to follow in chapter five, yet this I sense is more a reflection of *6, rue Bonaparte*'s complex and shifting spatiotemporal dimensions, with the conflation of two places—Nice and the Balkans—as well as the past and present of a narrator who is a paranoid schizophrenic with multiple identities, using the first, second, and third person to relate his investigation of a crime!

In sum, sophistication, intricacy of argument, critical breadth and mastery of a range of cultural discourses are all features of Andrea Goulet's *Legacies of the Rue Morgue*, which analyzes 150 years of crime detective novels. The reader takes part in the acts of interpretation—that of the detectives and that of Goulet—throughout the extensively varied works included in her corpus. Goulet's eight chapters with their wonderful close readings coupled with her notes illustrate the work of a rigorous scholar with analytical prowess and a most impressive critical apparatus. Scholars and students (both undergraduate and graduate) interested in (French) crime fiction, theories on space, or nineteenth-century Earth studies related to French literary studies will find Goulet's book a remarkably rich and satisfying read.

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