



Kazaaam! Splat! Ploof!: The American Impact on European Popular Culture since 1945

Gordana Crnkovic

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Observing European debates about EuroDisney, McDonald's, Hollywood films and television programs, and other vehicles of alleged 'Americanization,' one might imagine that Europe was in serious risk of losing its distinct cultural identity in the melting pot of American pop culture. The loaded charge of 'kitsch' is a central aspect of the debate, with Disney stories, for example, branded as simplified travesties of authentic European folk tales. But the relationship between European and American popular cultures is vastly more complex. Reciprocal and interactive, it is a relationship in which the European-American partnership (for example, in cinematic ventures) has become quite common. And again, artifacts which have a certain meaning and reception in America may have a completely different meaning and reception in Europe; in effect behaving as different artifacts altogether. And finally, as this book shows, American cultural influences have penetrated not only the popular realms of European television, fashions, fast food, and rock music, but also such domains as youth organizations, literature, UFO culture, and religious faith.



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