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SUMMER 1981

Vol. 22, No. 2

EXTRAPOLATION



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ISSN: 0014-5483

Contributors

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Elizabeth Anne Hull teaches science fiction at William Rainey College in Palatine, Illinois. She has published articles on teaching science fiction in *Essays in Arts and Sciences* and on Robert Heinlein in *Extrapolation*, including a review of his *Number of the Beast*. She also has articles on Heinlein, Lloyd Biggle, Jr., and Judith Merrill pending publication in *Twentieth Century Science Fiction Writers*.

Ted Krulik teaches English at Bushwick High School in Brooklyn, New York. He has been an SFRA member since 1975 and a lifelong science fiction enthusiast. George Elrick identifies him in *Science Fiction Handbook* as having coined the term "The Fishbowl Effect," an explanation of what science fiction attempts to do.

David J. Lake is Reader in English at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. He has published a book and many articles on the problems of Jacobean dramatic authorship as well as articles on H. G. Wells in *The Wellsian*, *Science-Fiction Studies*, and *The Stellar Gauge*, a critical anthology. His forthcoming fiction book, *The Man Who Loved Morlocks*, is a sequel to and a rewriting of *The Time Machine*.

Alexei and Cory Panshin are science fiction writers and critics. Their most recent books are *Earth Magic*, a novel, and *SF in Dimension*, a collection of twenty-two essays. "Science Fiction and Dimension of Myth" is a background study for their forthcoming book *Masters of Space and Time: The Story of Science Fiction*. The Panshins live on a farm in Pennsylvania with their two-year-old son Adam.

Robert Plank, after a long career in psychiatric social work, now teaches the psychology of literature at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. Many of his publications deal with this topic, and several have appeared in *Extrapolation*. He is currently working on a book about the psychological aspects of Orwell's *1984*.

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THE LAUNCHING PAD

■ Donald A. Wollheim has agreed to participate at the M.L.A. meeting in New York next December in a dialogue concerned with his career as a pioneer writer and editor as well as the publisher of DAW Books. As author of *The Universe Makers*, he has presented one of the most important accounts of the development of the field of science fiction. I regret that I cannot yet provide the exact time and place of the session. I'll give it as soon as I can.

As yet the decision of the M.L.A. Executive Committee regarding the creation of a continuing Science Fiction Discussion Group has not yet been made. The committee will not meet until sometime in May. Again, I'll pass on that information as soon as I have it.

One last item regarding M.L.A.: thanks to Professor Patrick G. Hogan, Jr., of the University of Houston for chairing last year's meeting, and to Hal Hall of Texas A & M University for leading the discus-

sion. It was in the worst possible time-slot of the meeting, being scheduled for the last meeting time of the convention. Incidentally, Pat suggested that we might co-edit a volume of essays concerned with science fiction and religion/philosophy. If anyone is interested in contributing to such a collection, please write to either one of us. I might add that the third volume of *Voices for the Future* is almost ready to go to the publisher and should be completed by the time this issue is published. Its actual publication date will be some time in 1982.

By the time this issue is out, SFRA will be holding its annual meeting at Regis College in Denver. Professor Charlotte Donsky is chairman. While it will be too late for you to participate in the program, this notice may appear in time for you to attend that meeting. I regret that I must miss it because I'll be teaching summer school and

The Launching Pad

cannot get away from Wooster, primarily because I'll be on leave next year. I hope that at least some of the papers will appear in *Extrapolation*.

Denver is, of course, also the setting for this year's Worldcon from September 3 to 7. Those interested in attending should write to Denvention Two, Box 11545, Denver 80211. Clifford D. Simak and C. L. Moore are to be the Guests of Honor.

Incidentally, the special issue of *Extrapolation* devoted to women in science fiction has been postponed at least one issue so that there may still be time to submit an article. I hope that a number of books written by various women can be reviewed in that issue. Speaking of reviews, my thanks to those of you who volunteered. By this time I should have sent you items to be reviewed. Those of you who would like to review fiction, either please let me know or send in reviews of books that you think should be brought to our readers' attention.

I noted in this issue of *Science-Fiction Studies* that Darko Suvin will no longer be an active editor. I

am sorry to see him retire, for he brought to the study of the field a perspective that none of us who are products of American culture can duplicate. I hope that *SFS* will continue to flourish. I am also pleased that one of its editors, Charles Elkins of Florida International University, will be on the Executive Committee of the Science Fiction Discussion Group when its formation is approved.

As I said, I will be on leave next year, but this will not interfere with editorial matters regarding *Extrapolation*. I want to spend at least part of the autumn in England, where I hope to consult with some old friends, like I. F. Clarke and Brian Aldiss, and meet some individuals, like Brian Stableford, with whom I have corresponded. In the winter I plan to be in California, primarily in the Los Angeles area, and I hope that I can attend some of the west coast conferences and conventions that I would not ordinarily be able to make.

For now, have a good summer.

T.D.C.

Wells's Time Traveller: An Unreliable Narrator?

DAVID J. LAKE

■ Like many other readers of science fiction, I have long had a profound admiration for H. G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895).¹ Through teaching it to university students, I see a new richness in it each year; and like Bernard Bergonzi,² I am especially impressed by its mythical and poetic profundity. But more and more, I have also come to notice that the Time Traveller's account of the Morlocks will not stand up to rational scrutiny. In spite of his repeated claims and arguments, there is no good reason to suppose that the Morlocks are in fact mentally degenerate, or even that they could, in their circumstances, ever have become so. Not that this is a defect in Wells's novella: far from it. It merely adds a pleasing ambiguity and complexity to the whole work, a demand that the reader shall read carefully between the lines. For I submit that the Time Traveller must be regarded, at least in part, as an unreliable narrator.

I use the term "unreliable narrator" nearly in the sense given to it by Wayne C. Booth in his *The Rhetoric of Fiction*.³ Such a narrator (at least up to the 1890s) is not a deliberate liar, but his moral attitudes and/or his perceptiveness differ to some extent from those of the author: in general, he may be relied upon for observed facts, but not for interpretations.

Of course, there is an area of vagueness and uncertainty here. Can there be *any* "observed facts" which do not involve some interpretation? The whole trend of modern epistemology, of the psychology of perception, and indeed of post-Einsteinian physics, would be to say "no," and it is well to bear this in mind during the ensuing discussion; but at least there are surely some observations which for all practical purposes lie outside the gray area.

Extrapolation, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0001 \$01.00/0

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For instance, when the Time Traveller says that the Morlocks removed his Time Machine into the pedestal of the White Sphinx, we can take it as a certainty that they did just that. And the broad outlines of his descriptions must be accurate: when the Traveller says the Morlocks were “dull white” in color, with “large greyish-red eyes” (Ch. 5; p. 49), then they were so. But even here, as to precise details, Wells has not left us unwarned: he makes the Traveller preface this description with the remark, “My impression of it is, of course, imperfect.” There are many similar remarks. *Caveat lector* and even more so, very much more so, when it comes to the Traveller’s copious theorizings as to the intelligence-level of the Morlocks and the evolutionary process by which they have come to be what they are.

I will now show that it is not at all impossible for Wells to be using an unreliable narrator in 1894, the year when he was composing the final version of *The Time Machine*. Wayne Booth has given an impressive list of unreliable narrators in the fiction of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, beginning at least as early as the significant figure of Swift’s Gulliver.⁴ There were plenty of precedents, and in the 1890s the breed of “unreliables” was multiplying rapidly. Moreover, Wells’s own narrators, through many novels and short stories, differ greatly in reliability.

Most unreliable of all, probably, is the first-person narrator of the two stories “My First Aeroplane” and “Little Mother up the Mörderberg” (1910), who is an irresponsible, unfeeling fool. In the early science fiction we have some very interesting cases of differing degrees of reliability. There are several semi-comic “cards” who tell tall stories: the Taxidermist of “The Triumphs of a Taxidermist” and “A Deal in Ostriches,” the scarred man of “Aepyornis Island,” and others. On the other hand, in “The New Accelerator” (1901), the first-person narrator is probably intended as a persona of Wells himself;⁵ yet he displays obvious and blatant social irresponsibility in agreeing to release the Accelerator on the open market, airily brushing aside the certain criminal consequences in the last paragraph of the story—an attitude Wells could not possibly have condoned. Then again, and perhaps more importantly, in “The Remarkable Case of Davidson’s Eyes” (contemporary with *The Time Machine*: published March 1895), there is emphasized a clear distinction between observed fact and interpretation. The narrator Bellows gives his eye-witness testimony of the phenomena, and then in the last two paragraphs mentions Professor Wade’s interpretation concerning the Fourth Dimension, remarking: “The reader may grasp this argument, but I certainly do not” (p. 283). At this point, of course, the reader grasps the argument perfectly, and smirks in superiority over the obtuse narrator. Bellows concludes: “His theory seems fantastic to me. The facts concerning Davidson stand on an altogether different footing, and I can testify personally to the accuracy of every detail I have given.”

Indeed, this distinction between “facts” and “interpretation” is insisted

upon again and again in Wells's early science fiction stories. For instance, it shapes the whole structure of "The Plattner Story" (April 1896), which is divided by the narrator into an "exoteric" portion, which is certainly true, and an esoteric central narrative which rests only on Plattner's testimony, and therefore may be false or hallucinatory.

The Time Machine, of course, has just this same structure—with the minor difference that here both narratives are in the first person. The outer narrator seems a reliable person, possibly another persona of Wells himself; he is not credulous, but in the end he is won over to believe the Time Traveller's story—which is a point in that story's favor. Nevertheless, even the Time Traveller emphasizes the visionary nature of his tale: "No. I cannot expect you to believe it. Take it as a lie — or a prophecy. Say I dreamed it in the workshop" (Ch. 12; p. 87). And Wells himself underlines the sub-junctivity of the story by his title for the end-of-the-world chapter in the 1895 editions: "The Further Vision." Here the word "further" implies that the whole journey until now has also been a "vision."

However, this argument must not be pressed too far. Within the overall fictional frame, these hints toward incredulity mostly work the other way. By telling us that we need not believe, we are actually being encouraged to believe wholeheartedly—and thus to show our imaginative superiority over the Traveller's stodgy bourgeois guests. On the face of it, *a priori*, there is no reason to suspect the Traveller's reliability. And he is nowhere undercut by an obvious tonal irony—there is nothing in the text as blatant as the concluding paragraphs of "Davidson's Eyes" and "The New Accelerator." So what grounds are there, in this case, for suspicion?

I think the essential point has been hinted at often enough by various critics, in particular by Bergonzi, who stresses the Time Traveller's snobbery: he identifies with the Eloi, in spite of their almost total lack of intellect and their quite total lack of social cohesion, because they are the representatives in the future of the aristocrats of his own time; conversely, he has a passionate hatred of the Morlocks, at least partly because they are descendants of the nineteenth-century working class. Bergonzi points to the many other Wellsian heroes who aspire toward upper-class heroines, and decides: "The Traveller's gradual identification with the beautiful and aristocratic—if decadent—Eloi against the brutish Morlocks is indicative of Wells's own attitudes, or one aspect of them" (p. 56).

Yes, the Traveller does reflect Wells's attitudes in part; but perhaps only in part. Wells notoriously had an ingrained dislike of the Great Unwashed of his own day (see Bergonzi, pp. 150-55), and this is probably manifested in the Traveller's feeling that the Morlocks are "filthily" cold to the touch (Ch. 6, p. 54), that there is an unpleasant odor when they breathe around him (Ch. 6, p. 58), and so forth. But could Wells sympathize with an aristocrat without the least trace of irony? The story itself makes this unlikely.

After all, it is one great irony of the plot that those who formerly metaphorically devoured the poor are now being literally devoured by them. (Or are they? I will discuss this point below.)

There is also another factor at work, producing bias in the Traveller's consciousness and attitudes. I have argued at length elsewhere⁶ that the Traveller associates the Murlocks with ideas of death, the grave, hell, corpses—so much so that when he is cornered by them during the forest fire he is driven well beyond reason by sheer horror; he even believes that he is asleep in a nightmare and *bites himself* “in a passionate desire to awake” (Ch. 9, p. 77). This almost insane horror of the Morlocks is structurally vital in binding together the two parts of the story, the Morlock episode and the end-of-the-world episode, which otherwise have no *logical* connection. The splitting and partial degeneration of the human race are due to socio-political mistakes, but no social wisdom will serve to avoid the cold death of the Sun. The Morlocks, however, are symbolic forerunners of the death of the whole world. They are so at least for the Time Traveller, and through him for the bourgeois Victorian reader. But this less-than-rational loathing which the Traveller has for the Morlocks renders him a far from unbiased witness in describing them and their abilities, and in theorizing about the processes which may have led to their emergence.

First, some points of actual description: according to the Traveller, the Morlocks are “filthily cold to the touch” (Ch. 6, p. 54). “Filthily” may be acceptable—though that in itself is a value judgment; doubtless the Morlocks smell fine to themselves—but why “cold”? The Morlocks are primate mammals, and therefore must be warm blooded. Human skin may indeed be sometimes coolish, and we can save the Traveller's credibility by supposing that the Murlocks have some adaptation which allows them to conserve heat by retaining the blood supply away from extremities such as fingers. But is it not equally likely that the Traveller is exaggerating? He feels they are cold because he thinks of them as walking corpses—or reptiles. The latter suggestion is borne out by his remark on their “great, *lidless*, pinkish-grey eyes” (Ch. 6, p. 58; emphasis added). Snakes have lidless eyes; primates do not. There is no reason why the Morlocks should have lost their eyelids, and indeed, in the crisis situation of this scene it is highly unlikely that the Traveller is observing scientifically. He is merely registering the impression that the Morlocks have their eyes open wide, and he adds “lidless” to denigrate them by associating them with a lower and less human life-form.

The next point I wish to discuss is not a factual observation but a deduction. The Traveller will have it (*passim*) that the Morlocks are degenerate, a low life-form; he compares them variously to lemurs, rats, reptiles, spiders, worms, and ants; and he asserts that they run their underground factories and supply the Eloi with garments not through intelligence but by blind

instinct: "They did it as a standing horse paws with his foot" (Ch. 7, p. 60). "Ant-like" (Ch. 7, p. 64) carries the same suggestion. Yet on one occasion he is forced to admit (what should be obvious): "The Under-world being in contact with machinery, which, however perfect, still needs some little thought outside habit, had probably retained perforce rather more initiative, if less of every other human character, than the Upper" (Ch. 10, p. 79). And even here, the qualification "if less of every other human character" is contradicted by the plain facts of the story. In reality, the Morlocks throughout show many essentially human traits which the Eloi lack: curiosity and initiative, when they drag the Time Machine into the pedestal of the Sphinx; self-defense, when they repel the Traveller's intrusion into their "underworld" (Ch. 6); *intelligence*, when they open the Sphinx pedestal, revealing the Time Machine as a bait to catch the Traveller (Ch. 10); and social cooperation throughout, in all their battles with this gigantic intruder into their world. It is quite likely, indeed, that the band of Morlocks which follows the Traveller and Weena from the Palace of Green Porcelain is in communication with the band whose headquarters are near the Sphinx—that in fact the Morlocks of Surrey are conducting a concerted campaign against the invader. By the last morning of his stay in their world, they have every motive to trap and if necessary to kill him: for by now he has slaughtered quite a few of them and damaged a wide tract of countryside by starting a forest fire. Yet even then, the description of the last fight in the pedestal suggests that they would still prefer to capture the Traveller alive, along with his machine: they are clutching at him, not raining blows on him (Ch. 10, pp. 80-81). Of course, this is exactly how intelligent and scientific-minded humans would behave if confronted with a unique alien and his vehicle. Or rather, it is how intelligent humans *should* behave. I am afraid that if we were in the position of those Morlocks—confronted with an intriguing but dangerous alien—we would most likely take no risks, but kill him while he slept during the first available midnight.

All of these points might have occurred to the Traveller as rational considerations; yet they did not. He might even have felt a certain sympathy with the Morlocks,⁷ since he and they were equally engineers and shared an interest in machinery. He exults in visiting the great industrial museum, the Palace of Green Porcelain, and notices that the Morlocks also visit it (Ch. 8, p. 68), but he does not draw the likely conclusion that they too want to look at the exhibits! And they certainly are interested in his Time Machine. They are the one intelligent species that the Traveller finds, yet he blinds himself to the plain evidence of their intelligence. I am afraid he must certainly be convicted of social or racial prejudice and of psychological trauma.

The Traveller's irrationalism leads him also into ludicrously false reasoning as to the evolutionary development of the Morlocks. He is certain that

they are *un*-intelligent, nearly as mindless as the Eloi, and so he devises a specious devolutionary argument to account for his supposition. He uses a good Wellsian argument about the Eloi and then extends it to another case where it is absurdly inappropriate. The Eloi have lost their intelligence by too easy a life, a life lacking challenge—therefore the Morlocks have lost *their* intelligence by a *hard* life down in the tunnels and the factories! (At least, this is what the Traveller's argument must be; he never makes it explicit.) And this is a total non sequitur. Hard conditions coupled with the vital necessity of maintaining life-support machinery across *hundreds of thousands* of years would certainly *not* lead to stupidity. On the contrary, such conditions would select for physical toughness (not the same thing as large size or brute strength) and intelligence, probably also for social cohesion against the Upperworld oppressors.

Certainly they would need intelligence. What power sources are the Morlocks drawing on for their machinery? We are not told, but the machines work with so little fuss that they are almost certainly electrically driven. The Traveller notices no puffs of steam or pollution from furnaces in the Underworld. Did the Morlocks always have a smoothly functioning electrical system? Probably not: there must have been a severe power shortage in the past at some stage, so that their lighting failed and their eyes adapted to very low levels of illumination. And after that, there must have been a recovery, and such recovery would require Morlock intelligence to engineer. In any case, electricity is only a medium, not a source of power. Fossil fuels will not last 800,000 years, and Wells was writing before the first hint of nuclear energy; so the only real possibilities are geothermal power or the various modes of solar or solar-derived power. Geothermal power is rather localized, and none of these sources are available to folk who merely skulk in tunnels under Surrey. One is forced to the conclusion that the Morlocks have a world-wide system, possibly a world-wide power grid, and in some places they probably have power-collectors on the surface. For all the Time Traveller knows to the contrary, they do have these—in other parts of the world.

This leads me to another point: the Traveller is a great fellow for making wild extrapolations. He has roamed over just a small area of Surrey, yet he is certain that this is a typical and adequate sample of the whole Eloi-Morlock world. One view across the Thames valley, and he is sure that “the whole earth had become a garden” (Ch. 4, p. 35). Yet for all he knows, the Morlocks may have solar power stations in the Sahara desert, or even in surface cities. They would not have to brave any sunlight since they could work by night and sleep indoors by day, like the people in “The Country of the Blind.” Surrey may be only a nature reserve, a game park—where it is the intelligent practice of the keepers to clothe their Eloi animals, and so

keep them from perishing of cold in the nights and the winters. But the Traveller is certain that the Morlocks' behavior to the Eloi is not one of benevolent conservation: no, they eat them. Well, this *may* be true. The Eloi are certainly very afraid of the Morlocks, but the evidence for Eloi-*eating* is actually very thin and shaky. It rests on one positive fact and on one negative supposition.⁸ The positive fact is that the Traveller observes in the Underworld a table "laid with what seemed a meal" and on it a red joint of some large animal (Ch. 6, p. 57).⁹ The negative supposition is that there are no large animals left in the whole world, apart from the Morlocks and the Eloi, simply because the Traveller has not seen any. But this need not be true: the Morlocks could have herds of cows or sheep in Kent, Sussex or Middlesex, or indeed anywhere but in Surrey. Moreover, there is one piece of evidence that they do have herds, for one of the Eloi is described as wearing a "leather belt" (Ch. 3, p. 28). Such leather could certainly not be made of Eloi-skin.

Granted, this may be merely a mistake by Wells. Or it may not be. What *is* certain is that the Time Traveller always jumps to the worst possible conclusion about the behavior of the Morlocks. Sometimes he will admit a point in their favor and then later ignore it, replacing it with his more usual prejudiced impressions. This process is exemplified by the matter of the Morlocks' language.

On his visit to the Underworld, the Traveller in one place admits that the Morlocks do have articulate language: "I tried to call to them, but the language they had was apparently different from that of the Over-world people; so that I was needs left to my own unaided efforts . . ." (pp. 56-57). That is, he made no further effort toward friendly communication, though this is *not* how he behaved when confronted for the first time with that other strange language, that of the Eloi. And promptly, three paragraphs later, we see him trying to downgrade the Morlock speech to mere animal noises: "They clutched at me more boldly, whispering odd sounds to each other" (p. 58). Later, during the fight in the wood, he records that they were "making uncanny noises to each other" (Ch. 9, p. 77). During the last fight in the pedestal, he hears not words but "murmuring laughter" (Ch. 10, p. 80).

One wonders if the narrator has suppressed or forgotten something. In particular, if he heard no intelligible words from the Morlocks, where did he hear the name "Morlock" itself? There is no positive clue in the text. The word is simply introduced in the midst of a discursive passage: "Morlocks—that, by the by, was the name by which these creatures were called—" (Ch. 5, p. 53). Called by whom? Surely not by the Eloi. The Traveller makes it abundantly clear that he could never get the Eloi to discuss the matter of what was lurking down in the wells. Moreover, if "Eloi" and "Weena" are

typical Eloi words, each with open syllables and no consonant clusters, then “Morlock” does *not* sound like a word in that language. It sounds, of course, rather more like English. Either the Traveller has created it from his own subconscious, or else it is a word which he has heard used by the Morlocks themselves. It is more probably the latter.

This is another small point—perhaps another mere slip by Wells, who certainly devised the word “Morlock” for its richly horrific suggestions of *Moloch* and *mors*. But when one finds the Time Traveller so obstinately prejudiced, one wonders about it. One wonders also about the great number of disclaimers with which the Time Traveller qualifies his theories as to what was going on in the year 802,701 and what chain of evolutionary events had led to that year’s situation. His last such caveat (à propos of the Morlocks’ supposed “cannibalism”) is especially emphatic: “It may be as wrong an explanation as mortal wit could invent. It is how the thing shaped itself to me, and as that I give it to you” (Ch. 10, p. 79). With the words “shaped itself to me” Wells underlines the subjective element in the Traveller’s narrative. There are many similar passages. And sometimes the Traveller himself does not deny that he is acting irrationally. So, in Chapter 7, he reasons correctly that the Eloi are mere “cattle,” and if the Morlocks do eat members of another species they can hardly be called “cannibals”: “I even tried a Carlyle-like scorn of this wretched aristocracy in decay. But this attitude of mind was impossible. However great their intellectual degradation, the Eloi had kept too much of the human form not to claim my sympathy, and to make me perforce a sharer in their degradation and their Fear” (p. 65). This could hardly be clearer: the Traveller judges books by their covers, or races by their mere outward appearance. He is indeed “sharing the degradation” of the Eloi. He is degrading himself below the level of a rational, reliable witness, and becoming instead a subject for some rather complex ironies. His main role in the story, in fact, is to be not an active hero but an emoting victim, a role which he pursues through the world-end eclipse on the terminal beach.

It may be that I am pressing the case for the Time Traveller’s unreliability too far, or considering it too closely. Some of the little slips or discrepancies in the text may arise from the essential nature of this novella—it *is* a novella, not a full novel, and its impact is delivered largely by suggestion; thus there are many loose ends which might be neatly tied in a full-length novel. Perhaps the Traveller is not so much completely “unreliable” as he is frequently ambiguous. How nasty *are* the Morlocks, actually? We cannot really say, since we have no witness other than the Traveller himself. Perhaps the question itself is ultimately meaningless; nastiness is hardly an objective quality of anyone or anything.

Several parallels may be instructive: those of Prendick, the narrator of

The Island of Doctor Moreau (1896), and of the great original on whom Prendick in his latest phase is based, Swift's Gulliver. Prendick is mostly a reliable narrator, though in his emotionalism, his mistakings, and his sufferings he often resembles the Time Traveller; and in the last chapter, which is modelled closely on Gulliver's return from the Houyhnhnms, there is a shifting irony, sometimes Prendick's own conscious irony directed outward at "civilized" humans, sometimes an authorial irony directed in the first place inwards at Prendick's own simple-minded remarks. This shift seems to occur in the following passage: "I feel as though the animal was surging up through them; that presently the degradation of the Islanders will be played over again on a larger scale. I know this is an illusion, that these seeming men and women about me are indeed men and women for ever, perfectly reasonable creatures, full of human desires and tender solicitude, emancipated from instinct, the slaves of no fantastic Law—beings altogether different from the Beast Folk. Yet I shrink from them. . . ." ¹⁰ The middle sentence of this passage seems to me to have the same quality of authorial irony as some of the utterances of the Time Traveller. As Prendick momentarily considers present-day humanity as "perfectly reasonable," so the Time Traveller constantly considers the doomed and decadent Eloi as essentially human—in spite of his own more rational knowledge and against all the evidence—and considers the clever Morlocks as essentially inhuman, also against all the evidence.

The uncertainties of interpretation, too, are like those that often arise with a semi-unreliable narrator: they are very like the case of Gulliver. Is Gulliver *right* to love the Houyhnhnms, while totally detesting Yahoo-humans? Critics are in disagreement to this day, for Swift's ironies are complex, and often shift rapidly within each book of *Gulliver's Travels*. *The Time Machine* is certainly Swiftian. We have it on Wells's own testimony that he prepared himself for the writing of the book by "a cleansing course of Swift and Sterne. . . ." ¹¹ As in the case of Gulliver, is the Time Traveller *right* to sympathize with the Eloi and to detest the Morlocks? Artistically, the answer is emphatically "yes"; but the author need not endorse his narrator's moral judgment.

I do not think my reading of *The Time Machine* makes it in any way a worse book—quite the reverse. We have heard much in the past about the contrast between the "enlightened" Time Traveller and the "benighted" or "Eloi-like" dinner guests;¹² and this view is certainly in part valid. The Time Traveller is often the author's mouthpiece, and his theories of devolution are designed to *épater les bourgeois*, including the bourgeois at his dinner table. But there is also the other aspect, in which the Time Traveller is himself at one with the Eloi, "sharing their degradation and their fear." For we must all share their degradation and their fear if the story is to work

upon our emotions as Wells designed it to do. The ironies are complex, rich, and Swift-like. The Time Traveller, no less than Prendick, is a worthy successor to Gulliver.

Notes

1. My references to *The Time Machine* and all Wells's short stories are to *The Complete Short Stories of H. G. Wells* (London: Benn, 1927). But there are so many current editions of *The Time Machine* that for readers' convenience I have usually also given a chapter reference: the first number in the parenthesis. E.g., (Ch. 5; p. 49) = "Chapter 5, page 49."
2. *The Early H. G. Wells: A Study of the Scientific Romances* (Manchester: The University Press, 1961); see especially Chapter 2. Further references are contained in the text.
3. (Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961). Booth defines "unreliable narrator" on pp. 158-59.
4. Booth, pp. 320-21 and 429-34. Authors who use unreliable narrators include Swift, Sterne, Defoe, Fielding, Emily Bronte, Poe, Melville, Dostoevski, James and Stevenson.
5. The narrator is a writer (p. 929) who lives in the Folkestone area, exactly Wells's own circumstances when the story was published in 1901.
6. "The White Sphinx and the Whitened Lemur: Images of Death in *The Time Machine*," *Science-Fiction Studies* 6 (1979), 77-84. A fictional re-handling, including a psychoanalysis of the *Time Traveller*, occurs in my novella *The Man Who Loved Morlocks* (Melbourne: Hyland House, in press).
7. Mark M. Hennelly, Jr., in "*The Time Machine*: A Romance of 'The Human Heart,'" *Extrapolation*, 20 (1979), 154-67, has claimed that the Traveller "identifies with both [Morlocks and Eloi] in order to reintegrate these now 'distinct animals' " (p. 164). But he presents no evidence which substantiates this remarkable claim. While I agree with Hennelly that the Traveller's character contains Morlock elements, and that he does empathize with the Morlocks (slightly) during their helpless suffering in the fire, I see no place in the text where the Traveller *consciously* accepts the Morlocks as fellow-humans, as brothers, and I find dozens of places where he rejects them. He *should* say, with Prospero, "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine." But he does not. Like many of Wells's ironically undercut heroes (e.g., in *The War of the Worlds*) he is a good alien-hater.
8. There is perhaps a second piece of negative evidence: that there are no "aged and infirm" among the Eloi (Ch. 5, p. 45). This may be because the Morlocks kill the Eloi before they can age; but again, it may not. The Eloi are very neotenous (Ch. 4, p. 33): perhaps they show no visible signs of age until they reach a sudden die-off point like salmon. Sexual selection could produce this condition.
9. There are actually several possibilities here, which the Traveller's hasty impression does not rule out. "What seemed a meal" is a judgment, not an observed fact. It could equally be a specimen of dissection: the Traveller may have intruded into a surgery or a biology laboratory.
10. *The Works of H. G. Wells, Atlantic Edition*, 28 vols. (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1924-27), II, 171. Hereafter cited as Atlantic Edition.
11. Atlantic Edition, Preface to I, xxi. Wells also acknowledged the Swiftian influence on *Moreau*; see Atlantic Edition, Preface to II, ix.
12. See, among others, Hennelly, p. 159; but Hennelly is quite right here in recognizing the spiritual linkage between the Dinner Guests and the Time Traveller.

Science Fiction and the Dimension of Myth

ALEXEI AND CORY PANSHIN

■ The practice of mythmaking is so universal among mankind that it might be called a characteristic human activity. Mythmaking is the presentation in story and song, ceremony and drama, of accounts of the origin and destiny of things, cast in terms of encounters with transcendence in another world not our own.

The pattern of mythmaking is so much the same in all places and at all times that a contemporary student, Joseph Campbell, has analyzed many different examples of myth in his useful and suggestive book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* and found “always the one, shapeshifting yet marvelously constant story.”¹ Campbell calls this underlying structure “the monomyth,” borrowing his term from a literary antecedent, James Joyce’s massive dreamwork *Finnegans Wake*. Campbell writes: “The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation—initiation—return*: which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth.” And he summarizes the monomyth: “*A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow men.*”²

The “region of supernatural wonder” which Campbell distinguishes from “the world of common day” is the dimension of myth, the realm of the creative imagination. This place has many names. As a name of convenience, let us call it the “World Beyond the Hill.”

The World Beyond the Hill is the realm of infinite possibility. All things, *Extrapolation*, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0002 \$01.00/0

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known and unknown, are to be found in the World Beyond the Hill before they are to be found in our world. According to myth, the things of our world are “created” only when venturing heroes bring them back from the World Beyond the Hill as boons for their fellow men.

In myth, the World Beyond the Hill is close at hand—but distant. You cannot easily get to it. There are barriers and distances intervening, like the deadly deserts that surround and protect Oz. But this other world does have an essential connection with our own, so that with an effort of will, like the astral projection that carries John Carter to Mars, it is possible to make the transition.

We can catch a glimpse of the location and the paradoxical nature of the World Beyond the Hill in the broadest imaginings of science fiction. In Robert Heinlein’s novella “Waldo” (*Astounding*, August 1942), a Pennsylvania hex doctor alerts the title character to the existence of “another, different, but accessible, world.”³ Waldo describes this world:

Think of another continuum much like our own and superposed on it the way you might lay one sheet of paper on another. The two spaces aren’t identical, but they are separated from each other by the smallest interval you can imagine—coextensive but not touching—usually. There is an absolute one-to-one, point-for-point correspondence, as I conceive it, between the two shapes, but they are not necessarily the same size or shape. . . . I think of it as about the size and shape of an ostrich egg, but nevertheless a whole universe, existing side by side with our own, from here to the farthest star.⁴

In some ways, the World Beyond the Hill is very like the world of common day. Everything that we know to exist here, exists there, “one-to-one, point-for-point.” But the World Beyond the Hill is also marvelously different from anything we know. Things that are impossible here are possible there. The World Beyond the Hill contains wonders on end: magical abilities, fabulous creatures, strange beings, places that are alive. In the World Beyond the Hill all things are possible.

There is an indication of this in another classic science fiction story, Fredric Brown’s *What Mad Universe* (*Startling*, September 1948). In this story, the main character, a science fiction pulp magazine editor, is transported by the explosion of a failed moon rocket into another universe—which proves to be his image of the bizarre world that a callow science fiction fan might dream up. At the climax of the story, Mekky, a transcendent intelligence, tells the protagonist of the number of rooms that are to be found in the mansion of the World Beyond the Hill. Mekky says:

. . . Out of infinity, *all conceivable universes exist*. There is, for instance, a universe in which this exact scene is being repeated except that you—or the equivalent of you—are wearing brown shoes instead of black ones. There are an infinite number of permutations of that variation, such as one in which you have

a slight scratch on your left forefinger and one in which you have purple horns. . . . And there are an infinite number of universes, of course, in which we don't exist at all—that is, no creatures similar to us exist at all. In which the human race doesn't exist at all. There are an infinite number of universes, for instance, in which flowers are the predominant form of life—or in which no form of life has ever developed or will develop. And infinite universes in which the states of existence are such that we would have no words or thoughts to describe them or to imagine them.⁵

Fascinating as these science fiction descriptions are, they do not do complete justice to the World Beyond the Hill. A fuller and more complete portrait—the most suggestive that we know—is to be found in *The Meccan Revelations*, a great synthesis of ancient knowledge by Ibn Arabi, the thirteenth-century Sufi poet and writer. This book, so far untranslated in full into any Western language, was banned in Egypt as heretical as recently as 1979.⁶ Ibn Arabi's description of the World Beyond the Hill—the mythic dimension—is cast as myth. He says that when God had created Adam as the origin and archetype of all humanity, there was a surplus of the leaven of the clay. From this, God created the palm tree. After the palm tree was created, there still remained a portion of the creative clay equivalent to a sesame seed. "And it was in this remainder," Ibn Arabi says, "that God laid out an immense Earth." He writes:

Since he arranged it in the Throne and what it contains, the Firmament, the Heavens and the Earths, the worlds underground, all the paradises and hells, this means that the whole of our universe is to be found there in that Earth in its entirety, and yet the whole of it together is like a ring lost in one of our deserts in comparison with the immensity of that Earth. And that same Earth has hidden in it so many marvels and strange things that their number cannot be counted and our intelligence remains dazed before them. . . . A multitude of things exist there which are rationally impossible, that is, a multitude of things about which reason has established decisive proof that they are incompatible with real being. And yet!—all these things do indeed exist in that Earth. . . . In the whole of all the universes that make up that Earth, God has especially created one universe in our image (a universe corresponding to each one of us). . . . In that Earth there are gardens, paradises, animals, minerals—God alone can know how many. Now, everything that is to be found on that Earth, absolutely everything, is alive and speaks, has a life analogous to that of every living being endowed with thought and speech.⁷

Behind the old and special language, aimed at a thirteenth-century Islamic audience, we can perceive that what is being described is the same Other World invoked by Heinlein and Brown, and more. Instead of being the size of an ostrich egg, as in Heinlein, the vast universes of the World Beyond the Hill are compressed into the size of a sesame seed. Notwithstanding this, our familiar universe, in its entirety, next to the World

Beyond the Hill is like a ring lost in the desert. The World Beyond the Hill is so multiplex and infinite that it contains within itself a universe corresponding to each one of us and a multitude of things which are rationally impossible.

In the course of his chapter on the World Beyond the Hill, Ibn Arabi continues on to describe the penetration of the Earth of Sesame by human beings, and what they discover there. Again, the language is not of our own time. But the experience that is being described is clearly the same as Joseph Campbell's monomyth. Ibn Arabi says:

A marvelous race of forms and figures exist on that Earth, of an extraordinary nature. They keep watch over the entrances of the ways of approach lying above this world in which we are. . . . Whenever one of us is searching for the way of access to that Earth . . . the first condition to be fulfilled is the practice of mystical gnosis and withdrawal from the material body. Then he meets those Forms who stand and keep watch at the entrances to the ways of approach, God having especially assigned them to this task. One of them hastens towards the newcomer, clothes him in a robe suitable to his rank, takes him by the hand, and walks with him over that Earth and they do in it as they will. He lingers to look at the divine works of art; every stone, every tree, every village, every single thing he comes across, he may speak with, if he wishes, as a man converses with a companion. Certainly they speak different languages, but this Earth has the gift, peculiar to it, conferring on whomsoever enters the ability to understand all the tongues that are spoken there. When he has attained his object and thinks of returning to his dwelling place, his companion goes with him and takes him back to the place at which he entered. There she says goodbye to him; she takes off the robe in which she had clothed him and departs from him. But by then he has gathered a mass of knowledge and indications and his knowledge of God has increased by something he had not previously envisioned. I do not think that understanding ever penetrates in depth with a speed compared to that with which it proceeds when it comes about in that Earth of which I am speaking.⁸

The sojourn in the World Beyond the Hill is more tranquil in Ibn Arabi than in Joseph Campbell. In Campbell's version of the monomyth, transcendence must be faced and conquered. A victory is won. In Ibn Arabi's account, the wayfarer meets transcendence in a less aggressive and more cooperative guise. But the result is the same. We can equate the creative boons brought back by Campbell's mythic freebooters with the not-previously-envisioned increase of knowledge gained in the World Beyond the Hill by Ibn Arabi's mystic travelers.

A fascinating account of a trip into the World Beyond the Hill—and how it might appear to an outside observer—is given by the contemporary anthropologist Peter Furst, who accompanied a group of Huichol Indians in Mexico on their sacred peyote hunt. Furst says that before they begin, the Huichols undergo a rite of purification which is intended to reverse “the

pilgrim's passage through life to adulthood and return him or her symbolically to infancy and a state akin to that of spirit. The Huichols say: 'We have become new, we are clean, we are newly born.' "

Furst continues: "Having symbolically shed their adulthood and human identity the pilgrims can now truly assume the identity of spirits, for just as their leader is Tatewarí, the Fire God and First Shaman, so they become the ancestral deities who followed him on the primordial hunt for the Deer-Peyote. In fact, it is only when one has become spirit that one is able to 'cross over'—that is, pass safely through the dangerous passage, the gateway of Clashing Clouds that divides the ordinary from the nonordinary world. This is one of several Huichol versions of a near-universal theme in funerary, heroic, and shamanistic mythology."⁹

This near-universal theme, of course, is the monomythic passage into the region of supernatural wonder. And we may notice that the Huichol method of transition from this world to the World Beyond the Hill is exactly that stated by Ibn Arabi in the thirteenth century: "Whenever one of us is searching for the way of access to that Earth . . . the first condition to be fulfilled is the practice of mystical gnosis and withdrawal from the material body."

Once the Huichols have become spirit, they proceed to make the transition into the Other World under the eye of their anthropologist companions. Furst marvels:

That this extraordinary symbolic passage is today located only a few yards from a heavily traveled highway on the outskirts of the city of Zacatecas seemed to matter not at all to the Huichols, who in any case acted throughout the sacred journey as though the twentieth century and all its technological wonders had never happened, even when they themselves were traveling by motor vehicle rather than on foot! Indeed, to us nothing illustrated more dramatically the time-out-of-life quality of the whole peyote experience than this ritual of passing through a perilous gateway that existed only in the emotions of the participants, but that was to them no less real for its physical invisibility.¹⁰

The novices in the party are blindfolded by the shaman leading the pilgrimage, amid weeping and joking, and then taken a few hundred yards to "the mystical divide, the threshold to the divine peyote country."¹¹ Furst continues:

Visually, the passage through the Gateway of Clashing Clouds was undramatic. Ramón stepped forward, lifted the bow and, placing one end against the mouth while rhythmically beating the taut string with a composite wooden-tipped hunting arrow, walked straight ahead. He stopped once, gestured (to Kauyumarie, we were later told, to thank him for holding the cloud gates back with his powerful antlers), and set out again at a more rapid pace, all the while beating his bow. The others followed close behind in single file. Some of the blindfolded neophytes held fearfully on to those in front, others made it by themselves.

There are two stages to the crossing of the critical threshold. The first is called Gateway to the Clouds; the second, Where the Clouds Open. They are only a few steps apart, but the emotional impact on the participants as they passed from one to the other was unmistakable. Once safely 'on the other side,' they knew they would travel through a series of ancestral stopping places to the sacred maternal water holes, where one asks for fertility and fecundity and from where the novices, their blindfolds removed, are allowed to have their first glimpse of the distant mountains of Wirikúta. Of course, one would search in vain on any official map for places that bear such names as Where the Clouds Open, the Vagina, Where Our Mothers Dwell, or even Wirikúta itself, either in Huichol or Spanish. Like other sacred spots on the peyote itinerary, these are landmarks only in the geography of the mind.

It was in the afternoon of the following day that we reached the sacred water holes of Our Mothers, the novices having remained blindfolded all the while. The physical setting again was hardly inspiring: an impoverished *mestizo* pueblo and beyond it a small cluster of obviously polluted springs surrounded by marsh—all that remained of a former lake long since gone dry. Cattle and a pig or two browsing amid the sacred water holes hardly helped inspire confidence in the physical—as opposed to spiritual—purity of the water the Huichols considered the very wellspring of fertility and fecundity. On the peyote quest, however, it is not what we would consider the real world that matters but only the reality of the mind's eye. "It is beautiful here," say the Huichols, "because this is where Our Mothers dwell, this is the water of life."¹²

As this account so often reminds us, it is difficult if not impossible for those of us bound to the world of common day to perceive the realities of the World Beyond the Hill. The imperfections of our world veil and obscure the perfections that abound in the Other World. It puts one in mind of the traditional story of the would-be seeker who asks a mythic traveler to be shown something of the World Beyond the Hill. The venturer hands his inquirer an apple. The local person looks at it and protests, "This apple has a worm in it. Shouldn't an apple from the World Beyond the Hill be perfect?" And the traveler replies, "True, an apple from the World Beyond the Hill should be perfect. However, with your present state of mind, and seated as we are in this abode of corruption—this is as close to an apple from the World Beyond the Hill as you can get."¹³ In the same way, polluted mud holes are as close as we, with our present state of mind and seated as we are in this abode of corruption, are ever going to get to the sparkling waters Where Our Mothers Dwell in the World Beyond the Hill.

But which place is more real? Perhaps because the World Beyond the Hill is the realm of infinite possibility and the source of all our creativity, Ibn Arabi, in a chapter title in *The Meccan Revelations*, calls it "The Earth of True Reality."¹⁴ And it is not Ibn Arabi alone who considers the Other World to have a greater degree of reality than the world of common day. The character with the highest degree of knowledge in Heinlein's "Waldo,"

the Pennsylvania hex doctor, Gramps Schneider, says, "We live in the Other World. . . . The mind—not the brain, but the mind—is in the Other World, and reaches this world through the body. That is one true way of looking at it, though there are others."¹⁵ Similarly, when the Huichols journey as spirits into the World Beyond the Hill, it is "the place of origin"¹⁶ that they seek.

Let us look at one more short and provocative account of an excursion into the World Beyond the Hill and its result, from the viewpoint of the world of common day. This was written in the eighth century by the early British historian, the Venerable Bede, recounting the moment of inspiration of Caedmon, the first Christian poet in Britain. It has much in common with the testimony of science fiction writers of today like A. E. van Vogt and Philip K. Dick, who have found inspiration for their stories in dreams.¹⁷ Bede tells us that Caedmon was a cowherd. He was uneducated and knew no songs. When the harp was passed to him, he left the hall in humiliation, went to the stable and lay down to sleep:

While he slept, someone stood by him in a dream, greeted him, calling him by name, saying to him, "Caedmon, sing me something."

He replied, "I know not how to sing—that's the reason I left the feast. I am here because I cannot sing."

The one who spoke said: "No matter. You must sing to me."

"Well," he answered, "what shall I sing?"

The other responded: "Sing the beginning of created things."

At that, straight away Caedmon sang in praise of the Creator verses he had never heard.¹⁸

Again, what happens in this world, the world of common day, is drab and of no consequence to the worldly eye. Caedmon the cowherd goes off to sleep in the stable. He dreams. And when he awakens, he is suddenly and miraculously able to sing original verses to his fellows about the beginning of created things. This is his boon. We are not told what happens to Caedmon in the course of his dream, or what he sees—only a snatch of conversation. But we can recognize in the someone who greets him one of those transcendent Forms, described by Ibn Arabi, whose job it is to stand and keep watch at the entrances to the World Beyond the Hill and assist newcomers.

One point that emerges from all these accounts and deserves special note is the high degree of reflectivity of the World Beyond the Hill. Since it contains within it everything that exists in this world, the Other World is able to serve as a perfect mirror of the persons who enter it and their cultures. What one has in mind in entering the World Beyond the Hill absolutely determines what one sees, what happens to one, and what one carries away again. Entered aggressively, the World Beyond the Hill responds with

aggression. Boons must be wrested from it. Entered peaceably, the World Beyond the Hill offers robing maidens and strolling conversation.

The reflectivity of the World Beyond the Hill and the selectivity of those who enter it are alluded to in Ibn Arabi's depiction of the monomyth. This is what he means in saying that in the World Beyond the Hill there is a universe corresponding to each one of us.

There are further phrases in his description that suggest the selectivity and limitation of those who enter the World Beyond the Hill: The transcendent companion who waits at the entrance clothes him in a robe *suitable to his rank*. She walks with him over that Earth and they do in it *as they will*. Every single thing the newcomer encounters, he may speak with, *if he wishes*.

All this seems to indicate that what you see and do in the World Beyond the Hill is what you are prepared to see and do. There are an infinite number of places in the World Beyond the Hill. You, the mythic wayfarer, will enter those rooms and hold those conversations that are suitable to your nature and state of development, that are a mirror of *you*. The places that the Huichol choose to go in the Other World—like Where the Clouds Open and Where Our Mothers Dwell—are distinctly Huichol in character.

And the boons, the new knowledge brought back from the Other World, are also always in keeping with the culture and state of the traveler. As Ibn Arabi says, when the visitor has attained his object and gets the urge to return to his own dwelling place, he departs the World Beyond the Hill by the same door at which he entered. When Caedmon returns from his dream visit to the World Beyond the Hill to find himself waking in his bed of straw in the stable, the new gift that he has is the ability to sing to his fellow men of the beginning of created things—in seventh century British Christian terms. Even Ibn Arabi's description of the limitless world of the imagination invokes palm trees, sesame seeds, deserts, gardens, paradises and hells, and other images appropriate to the understanding of a thirteenth-century Islamic audience.

The imaginative reflectivity of the World Beyond the Hill is recognized in both of the science fiction stories we have used by way of example. And in the choices the protagonists each make out of the infinitude of options offered them, we can recognize the nature and limits of our own culture.

In Heinlein's "Waldo," the main character comes to the conclusion that he can imagine the World Beyond the Hill to be the way he wants it to be, impress his concept on his fellows, and the Other World will be that way. Heinlein writes: "The world varied according to the way one looked at it. In that case, thought Waldo, he knew how he wanted to look at it. He cast his vote for order and predictability!"¹⁹ Waldo chooses to imagine the Other World as a repository of power and no more than that: "To its inhabitants, if any, it might seem to be hundreds of millions of light years around; to him

it was an ostrich egg, turgid to bursting with power.”²⁰ And Waldo draws on that power to heal his own physical weakness, and to become a tap dancer, surgeon and popular personality.

At the conclusion of Fredric Brown’s *What Mad Universe*, the science fiction editor protagonist is given the opportunity to repeat the experience that first carried him into the World Beyond the Hill. He can travel to any variant universe that he is able to imagine. It is possible for him to go to a universe beyond description—if he is able to think of it. Or he can go to a universe where the style is brown shoes instead of black. The one he picks out of all infinitude is one that is exactly like the one he left except that he gets the girl, and that he owns his own chain of pulp magazines instead of working as an editor. Ah, such dreams!

From the viewpoint of the common day world, the mythmaking enterprise has two recognizable functions. In *Primitive Mythology*, the first book in *The Masks of God*, a four-volume study of myth, Joseph Campbell writes:

Functioning as a “way,” mythology and ritual conduce to a transformation of the individual, disengaging him from his local, historical conditions and leading him toward some kind of ineffable experience. Functioning as an “ethnic idea,” on the other hand, the image binds the individual to his family’s system of historically conditioned sentiments, activities, and beliefs, as a functioning member of a sociological organism. This antinomy is fundamental to our subject, and every failure to recognize it leads not only to unnecessary argument, but also to a misunderstanding—one way or the other—of the force of the mythological symbol itself, which is, precisely, to render an experience of the ineffable through the local and concrete, and thus, paradoxically, to amplify the force and appeal of the local forms even while carrying the mind beyond them.²¹

The duality which Campbell describes is represented in the pilgrims of the Huichol peyote hunt. The ordinary Huichol seeks to find his life and to discover what it means to be Huichol. The *mara’akáme* or shaman like Ramón has a very different experience in mind.

Peter Furst writes: “A *mara’akáme* embarks on the pilgrimage and the drug experience itself with a somewhat different set of expectations than the ordinary Huichol. He seeks to experience a catharsis that allows him to enter upon a personal encounter with Tatewarí and travel to ‘the fifth level’ to meet the supreme spirits at the ends of the world. And so he does. Ordinary Huichols also ‘experience’ the supernaturals, but they do so essentially through the medium of their shaman. In any event, I have met no one who was not convinced of this essential difference or who laid claim to the same kinds of exalted and illuminating confrontations with the Otherworld as the *mara’akáme*.”²²

We can also see the two functions of mythmaking—the support and confirmation of culture on the one hand, and the venture beyond cultural lim-

itation on the other—in the hopeful intentions of Hugo Gernsback for his new magazine, *Amazing Stories*, in 1926. Gernsback, from his very first editorial, hoped that “scientifiction” stories would be an inspiration that would lead cold-blooded scientists to envision and bring into reality new wonders. And Gernsback also hoped that where this new form of myth did not inspire, it would at least teach and inform: “Not only do these amazing tales make tremendously interesting reading—they are also always instructive. They supply knowledge that we might not otherwise obtain—and they supply it in a very palatable form. For the best of these modern writers of scientifiction have the knack of imparting knowledge, and even inspiration, without once making us aware that we are being taught.”²³

In short, from the viewpoint of the common day world, myth exists to serve culture. Myth teaches us to be Roman, or Huichol, or twentieth-century American. It reinforces societal belief. It confirms. It tutors painlessly. And in those cases where the imaginative voyager travels far into the World Beyond the Hill to regions unknown to him, or to his people, or to anyone, he will still exit by the same door through which he entered. Whatever boon he returns with will be accepted as an increment to the culture.

But the viewpoint of the common day world is not the viewpoint of the World Beyond the Hill. From that standpoint—one of greater reality, we should remember—culture is not primary, but secondary. Culture is solidified imagination, the sum total of boons and gifts, inventions and inspirations brought back from the place of origin by countless dreamers. Culture is a Moses basket keeping us safe as we float in the great waters of infinite possibility. Culture is higher reality’s way of keeping us from harm, as a baby’s playpen defines an area of knownness and separates the child from more possibility than he can handle.

Myth then is the reality. It underlies culture, validates it and gives it substance. Mythic imagination is the means of return to the World Beyond the Hill. Some humans return to the place of origin in order to discover how to repair and maintain their cultural ship. Others seek to add to it and alter it, and keep it on course.

Mythmaking is a constant, on-going, self-amending process. Myth—in our abode of corruption—does not exist outside the activity of mythmaking. There is no single, perfect and final Myth that all men should recognize and assent to. There is only the particular expression of myth in a certain time and a certain place for a certain audience.

If we are used to thinking of myth as given and final and perfect, it is because what we are most usually offered these days under the name of myth is not mythmaking as a present act, but the fossil remains of former mythmaking activity. Hawthorne’s *The Wonder Book*, Bulfinch’s *Mythology*, or Graves’ *The Greek Myths* are not actual Greek myth in any meaningful sense—no more than a stone footprint or a coprolite are a dinosaur,

particularly a dinosaur in its own proper context. Myth is for the moment, fully valid and meaningful only for the instant, the surroundings and the persons for whom it is being made. After that, a husk.

As an indication of the ephemerality of mythmaking, we might look at the moment that Isaac Asimov has identified as the highpoint in his enjoyment of science fiction:

It came in the month of August 1937, when I was spending the summer waiting for my junior year at Columbia to begin. In that month, the September 1937 issue of *Astounding Stories* arrived, and I remember the precise feelings that swept over me as I sat in the living room of our apartment and read the first installment of Edward E. Smith's new four-part serial, *Galactic Patrol*. Never, I think, did I enjoy any piece of writing more, any piece of any kind. Never did I savor every word so. Never did I feel so keen a sense of loss when I came to the end of the first installment and knew that I would have to wait a full month for the second. Never anything like it before. Never anything like it after.²⁴

This is myth at the right time and place and with the right person. And Asimov underlines the point we are making by writing further concerning *Galactic Patrol*: "Years later, I got a copy of the hardback version and sat down to relive past glories—but they weren't there. I found the book unreadable."²⁵

Myth in practice is not neat, tidy, rational and enduring. Myth is sloppy, contradictory, irrational and ephemeral. It is of the moment and for a purpose. It will be superseded. If the purpose of myth and the human culture that depends on myth is to carry the human psyche out of the abode of corruption and limitation toward the higher realities of the World Beyond the Hill, then myth will always supersede itself until the final object is attained.

It is now possible for us to recognize that Hugo Gernsback's requirements for contributions to *Amazing Stories*, as enumerated in an early editorial, were nothing less than the requirements of all mythmaking in any culture at any time. Gernsback wrote: "The formula in all cases is that first the story must be frankly amazing; second, it must contain a scientific background; third, it must possess originality."²⁶

The amazing quality is, of course, transcendence, the evidence or proof of the World Beyond the Hill. The fabulous forces and forms, the stones and villages that speak, the spirit forces that hold back the cloud gates with their antlers, who speak to us in dreams, who recognize and robe us—all these are transcendent. They amaze us; they are higher than we are; they may be learned from.

What Gernsback calls "a scientific background" we may equate with the best knowledge of the culture. This will be different knowledges and sciences in different cultures. This best knowledge is the measure by which transcendence reveals itself. Transcendence, the infinite power of creativi-

ty, is always beyond the best knowledge of the culture. It leads best knowledge. The boons that are won from transcendence in the World Beyond the Hill answer the problems of the culture and are added to the science of the culture as new best knowledge.

Finally, the third quality, originality, is the evidence and demonstration that the mythmaker has ventured into the World Beyond the Hill, there contacted transcendence and returned from the place of origins with something never seen before in our world. Originality is the demonstration of authenticity. And it is also the means by which the mythic/cultural enterprise extends and amends itself.

Notes

1. Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Cleveland: Meridian, 1956), p. 3.
2. Campbell, p. 30. Italics in original.
3. Robert A. Heinlein, "Waldo," in Heinlein, *Waldo and Magic, Inc.* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1951), p. 87. Since we wrote this essay, Robert Heinlein's *The Number of the Beast* has been published. It is a book with great relevance to the nature of the mythic dimension. We discuss some of the implications of Heinlein's book in "The Death of Science Fiction: A Dream," the new 30,000-word conclusion to the revised paperback edition of *SF in Dimension*.
4. Heinlein, pp. 91–92.
5. Fredric Brown, *What Mad Universe* (New York: Bantam, 1950), pp. 187, 188.
6. According to a story in *The New York Times*, 14 Mar. 1979, entitled "Egyptians Furious About a Ban on 12-Century Mystic's Work."
7. Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, "The Earth Which Was Created from What Remained of the Clay of Adam," in *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shi'ite Iran*, ed. Henry Corbin, Bollingen Series XCI:2 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1977), pp. 137, 138. This volume as a whole has great bearing on our subject, as does its companion volume, Henry Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn Arabi*, Bollingen Series XCI:1 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1969).
8. Corbin, pp. 139–40.
9. Peter T. Furst, *Hallucinogens and Culture* (San Francisco: Chandler & Sharp, 1976), pp. 116, 117.
10. Furst, p. 117.
11. Furst, p. 118.
12. Furst, pp. 118–19. We have reversed the original order of the first and second of these three paragraphs for narrative coherence.
13. Our version of this story is retold from Idries Shah, *The Sufis* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1964), pp. 63–64.
14. Corbin, p. 135. The full title of the relevant chapter of the original work, which is sometimes known as *The Book of the Spiritual Conquests of Mecca*, is "On the knowledge of the Earth which was created from what remained of the leaven of Adam's clay, and which is the Earth of True Reality, mentioning the strange things and marvels it contains."
15. Heinlein, p. 79.
16. Furst, p. 116.
17. For the influence of dreams on A. E. van Vogt and Philip K. Dick, see, A. E. van Vogt, *Reflections of A. E. van Vogt* (Lakemont, Ga.: Fictioneer, 1975), p. 78; and Philip K.

- Dick, "Man, Android and Machine," in *Science Fiction At Large*, ed. Peter Nicholls (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), p. 196.
18. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*. Our translation is based in part on the language of Vida D. Scudder's translation, published by Everyman's Library, 1910, as quoted in Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology* (New York: Viking, 1968), p. 112, and in part on our own rendering of the Anglo-Saxon as found in James R. Hulbert, *Bright's Anglo-Saxon Reader, Revised and Enlarged* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1935), p. 9.
 19. Heinlein, p. 102.
 20. Heinlein, p. 103.
 21. Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology* (New York: Viking, 1969), p. 462.
 22. Furst, p. 131.
 23. Hugo Gernsback, "A New Sort of Magazine," *Amazing Stories*, Apr. 1926, p. 3.
 24. Isaac Asimov, *Before the Golden Age* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974), p. 910.
 25. Asimov, p. 947.
 26. Hugo Gernsback, "Editorially Speaking," *Amazing Stories*, Sept. 1926, p. 483.

Gilbert Sorrentino's Science Fiction World in *Mulligan Stew*

FRANK CIOFFI

■ Max Lerner and Edwin Mims, Jr. remark in their 1933 article, "Literature," that serious literature frequently models itself after popular, even primitive forms of art in an attempt to capture some of the vigor, sincerity, and immediacy that characterize productions of the "folk mind." "All these literary allegiances," they say, "to the folk mind, to the hero cult, to the primitive mode of life, to preoccupation with sex activity—spring in common from the continually felt need for the rebarbarization of a literature in which the experience represented is continually threatening to grow thin."¹ Though science fiction is not routinely barbaric, it is sometimes primitive, frequently preoccupied with heroes and sexuality. Most of all, though, it is vigorous and popular.

Gilbert Sorrentino's recent novel, *Mulligan Stew* (1979), is a good example of Lerner and Mims's "rebarbarization." The novel is a crazy quilt of popular culture, "sub-literary" genres, and unusual narrative voices. Its basic story of a novelist writing his most recent work is interlaced with all variety of playful, parodic, and fictive allusions. Eventually this motley production exemplifies Sorrentino's main concern: "Surfaces, I'm interested in surfaces," he remarked in a 1974 interview. "For me, life is right in front of you. Mysterious because it is not hidden. I'm interested in surfaces and flashes, episodes."² While many surface glints and flashes in *Mulligan Stew* spring from popular forms and suggest the "folk mind," many also spring from more sophisticated sources. The end product is more than a mere collection of superficialities: it is a metafiction that is more vital and

Extrapolation, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0003 \$01.00/0

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accessible than much serious contemporary fiction, and more mimetic than “popular” formulaic art.

The overall framework for *Mulligan Stew*, however, is a conventional one, revealed through letters which the main character, Antony Lamont, writes to his sister, a professor named Roche, a former lover, a young poetess, and other characters who are neither unbelievable nor fantastic. They make up the usual associations we see often portrayed in traditional narratives: family, friends, enemies, professional acquaintances, business associates, and the like. This is the “realistic” level of *Mulligan Stew*—the straightforward, poignant story of a writer struggling to “find himself” both personally and artistically.

Mingled with this conventional dramatic situation are a number of other, less usual documents that surround Lamont’s life, influencing it slightly or greatly. They exemplify Sorrentino’s drawing upon popular, non-literary forms to make “art.” Lists are used, as in Sorrentino’s other novels, but to a much greater degree here. For example, there are five pages of book and magazine titles—*Cobbler, Rend My Shoe!* by Thom McCan; *The Male Lesbian* by K. Y. Geli; *Our Friend, the Cockroach*, by G. Blatta; *Nutcracker Sunday* by Gloria Shinem; *Say Yes to Love* by Molly Bloom; *Repairing Your Tree’s Crotch* by Henry Thoreau; and so forth.³ All of these titles recall, of course, jokes—some vulgar, some literary. There are, in addition, examples of evangelists’ advertisements; writers’ school brochures; capsule book reviews; a will; phrases from publishers’ rejection letters (as well as a number of rejection letters in their entirety); pornographic poetry (some titles: “Hot Bodies,” “The Sweat of Love,” “Panting God,” “The Slippery Flesh”); and a scientific article entitled “Recent Studies in Contravariant Behavior Processes in Complex Resolutions,” lampooned in footnotes Lamont (or Sorrentino) appends. Even a masque called “Flawless Play Restored: The Masque of Fungo” is included. Sorrentino’s “rebarbarization” is not only diverse but diachronic as well.

In addition to these often hilarious but sometimes self-indulgent parodies of commonly occurring cultural artifacts, the text and notebooks of Lamont’s most recent novel, *Guinea Red*, are included. This novel within the novel is described by Sorrentino himself in the aforementioned interview as being “a terrible book, I mean a really rotten book, but one that has its moments” (p. 29). It starts as a curious kind of detective novel: “How absurd to find myself in this dilemma! It was I who made Ned Beaumont what he was, anyone can tell you that. Perhaps not ‘anyone.’ Why should I kill him? If I did” (p. 1). Later, however, the novel becomes mystical/pornographic/romantic, and the title changes to *Crocodile Tears*. The narrator falls in love with a character named Daisy Buchanan—a decidedly all-American girl—but is thwarted and humiliated by two voluptuous practi-

tioners of the Black Arts named Corrie Corriendo and Berthe Delamode. All the action of the novel is actually flashback, antecedent to the scene described on page one.

Yet the most unusual instance of “rebarbarization” in *Mulligan Stew* is Sorrentino’s use of a science fiction parallel world to show us another side of his novelist, Antony Lamont. *Guinea Red’s* main character, Martin Halpin, records his own thoughts and actions apart from those that Lamont creates for him. Halpin discusses his situation with Ned Beaumont, the other main character of *Guinea Red*—they are both very unhappy with their employer, Lamont—and then decides to explore the world they inhabit. Halpin describes the first road he walks down: “It was straight and totally anonymous, and the trees along it, for all I know of them, were all the same as far as I could tell—same shape, height, color, etc. They were trees in a kind of generic way, ‘typical’ trees. They looked amazingly like drawings. The sun was above and behind me and did not, throughout my walk, move. I cast no shadow” (p. 152). There are a number of significant features of this “other world”: it is composed of characters who have appeared in any work of fiction, complete or incomplete, published or unpublished; it is itself a strangely nonrealistic landscape, a partially realized terrain; characters can take roles in works of several authors, though their careers are basically shaped by their first “employment.” Many of the characters are unhappy, since they are essentially slaves to writers who force them into often unpleasant roles; particularly, Lamont’s characters are vitriolic toward their creator (or employer) and claim he has ruined their lives. (One, for example, was cast as a heavy drinker in an early work of Lamont’s and now “he was fit only for the parts of English rotters in novels set in Africa or India, where he would sit on verandas all day long, drinking whisky in khakis” [p. 153].)

This portrayal of another world interacting with the supposedly real one resembles that in much science fiction—it suggests the existence of a mythical plane (another dimension, time period, alternate or parallel world) which interacts with the depicted or implied actual world. But it is interesting to note that *Mulligan Stew* is only one of Sorrentino’s works to employ this specific kind of rebarbarization. *The Sky Changes* (1966), *Steelwork* (1969), *Imaginative Qualities of Actual Things* (1971), and *Aberrations of Starlight* (1980) all borrow styles and methods that spring from popular forms—lists, jokes, advertisements, sub-literary genres—but *Mulligan Stew* is the first to flesh out the science fiction parallel world. Indeed, this special kind of ploy is at the center of the novel, and in a way subsumes all the verbal pyrotechnics which Sorrentino’s other novels have displayed. In his 1974 interview, Sorrentino was asked to describe his work-in-progress, the novel that was to become *Mulligan Stew*:

it's hard to describe. Certainly, it's comic. Have you ever read a book called *At Swim-Two-Birds* by Flann O'Brien? . . . Well, Flann O'Brien deals, partially, with characters in a novel living their own lives outside the novel. I think the idea came to me from reading *At Swim-Two-Birds* and what really delighted me is that Flann O'Brien makes it very clear in his book that a character can be used in more than one novel, as an employee. . . . And then another author can take him over and use him. . . . I've got characters from lots of writers in [the new novel in progress]. I tried it in *Imaginative Qualities* where I put Lolita in the book. That was *before* I read Flann O'Brien, oddly enough. (p. 29)

With *Mulligan Stew*, Sorrentino has found a metafiction/science fiction structure to coherently contain all the fragmented and often confusing pieces that usually comprise his work. What he calls "isolate flecks" can, in his most recent novel, work more than merely on their own individual energy. The lists he uses are not simply included as a clever change from the usual character-study, but as items that will show the reader facets of the world Halpin inhabits, and aspects of Lamont's character itself. The poems are not included merely as evidence that a certain character is a poor poet; as Lamont reads, analyzes, and dissembles about them to the author, his relationship to his own characters is prefigured. The "isolate flecks" of *Mulligan Stew* are part of the larger mosaic which concerns the process of making fiction.

While its component parts clearly connect *Mulligan Stew* to popular forms, the fact that it is finally a metafiction more explicitly links it with serious fiction. This kind of serious fiction eventually tapers off into science fiction. Sorrentino draws from three basic variants of the serious science fiction/metafiction novel: Pynchon's "realistic" fiction that seeks to uncover an informing—sometimes fictive, sometimes paranoid—structure beneath the commonsense phenomenal world (similar to much of the Strugatsky brothers' writing); Robbe-Grillet's novels that suggest there is no objective reality, only different versions of consciousness (much like the themes and concerns in the work of Stanislaw Lem); and finally the self-consciously metafictional Borgesian story that explicitly concerns writers and creators of fictions and posits an infinity of parallel universes (one science fiction variant of this would be Fredric Brown's *What Mad Universe*).

Mulligan Stew at once parodies and draws from all three of these metafiction/science fiction forms. As in *Gravity's Rainbow* and *The Crying of Lot 49*, an underlying and informing structure to reality is anatomized, a system whose workings are as arcane and byzantine as those of PISCES or "Achtung" or the Tristero. As in Robbe-Grillet, there are endlessly self-reflexive sections that in Flaubert's words (quoted by Albert Guerard) are "dependent on nothing external . . . held together by the

strength of . . . style, just as the earth suspended in the void, depends on nothing external for support.”⁴ (I am thinking of Sorrentino’s extended stylistic experiments such as the chapter written entirely in Shakespearean English.) Too, as in the metafiction of science fiction, there is a sense of infinite universes: “All possible combinations must exist,” Fredric Brown writes. “Then somewhere *everything* must be true. I mean it would be impossible to write a fiction story—because no matter how wild it sounds, that very thing must be happening somewhere.”⁵

What finally is so impressive about *Mulligan Stew* is that it achieves a convincing kind of mimesis while simultaneously showing that experience is not, ultimately, transcribable. The glimmers, glints, flashes, fragments, and episodes as well as the operative para-world very much mimic the sensory bombardment an average American citizen must endure every day, complete down to the evocation of the common feeling that there must be a comprehensible system underlying this at once complex and superficial congeries of events. But still, like the characters from Lamont’s *Guinea Red/Crocodile Tears*, the characters and events of *Mulligan Stew* are—the structure constantly reminds us—only a highly selective, fictionalized offering. As Sorrentino himself remarks in *Imaginative Qualities of Actual Things*, “These people aren’t real. I’m making them up as they go along, any section that threatens to flesh them out, and make them ‘walk off the page,’ will be excised. They should, rather, walk into the page, and break up, disappear: the subtlest tone or aroma (no cracks, please) is all that should be left of them.”⁶ Books like *Mulligan Stew*, to use Robert Scholes’s words “reveal the nature of reality by their very failure to coincide with it.”⁷

Mulligan Stew is, on one hand, serious fiction made more lively and interesting by its assumption of popular elements. On the other hand, it is a metafiction that parodies itself, presenting a metaphor for the fiction-writer’s situation of never possibly knowing or being able to show all sides to his characters. On the third hand—this is acceptable since we are discussing science fiction here—it is a kind of fiction that has a faithfulness to phenomenal reality in a world in which we are bombarded with conceivabilities turning into actualities. But finally what *Mulligan Stew* most strongly attests to is that when fiction does not work under the burden of mimesis, it is freed to do exciting things. Sorrentino ends his novel with a quotation about Cezanne that no doubt explains his own aesthetic approach: “He desired a synthesis that would allow him to *decorate* nature with the forms and colors that existed nowhere except in his own secret thought. Thus, his last painting nowhere shows forth nature’s splendors, but instead, is a failure precipitated by his surrender to the pleasures of the imagination” (p. 446). Sorrentino’s similar surrender is, ultimately, our gain.

Notes

1. Max Lerner and Edwin Mims, Jr., "Literature." *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1933), IX, 527. This citation was originally found in Philip Stevick, "Scheherazade Runs Out of Plots, Goes on Talking; the King, Puzzled, Listens: An Essay on the New Fiction," *TriQuarterly*, No. 26, p. 356. Stevick found the reference to Lerner and Mims in Wellek and Warren's *Theory of Literature*. My preference for the original source over both Stevick and Wellek and Warren stems from the Lerner/Mims emphasis on the folk mind and the specifically non-literary, in addition to their implied extension of this folk mind into popular genres. Stevick and Wellek and Warren focus exclusively on popular art in their evaluations of "rebarbarization."
2. Barry Alpert, "Gilbert Sorrentino—An Interview," *Vort*, 2, No. 3 (1974), 10. Subsequent references will be inserted in the text.
3. Gilbert Sorrentino, *Mulligan Stew* (New York: Grove, 1979), pp. 31–35. Subsequent references will be inserted in the text.
4. Albert Guerard, "Notes on the Rhetoric of Anti-Realistic Fiction," *TriQuarterly*, No. 30 (1974), p. 8.
5. Fredric Brown, *What Mad Universe* (1949; rpt. New York: Bantam Books, 1978), p. 193.
6. Gilbert Sorrentino, *Imaginative Qualities of Actual Things* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971), p. 27.
7. Robert Scholes, *Structural Fabulation* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1975), p. 7.

The Little Professor, Intuitionist: A Transactional Analysis of Isaac Asimov's *The Gods Themselves*

ELIZABETH ANNE HULL

■ Isaac Asimov, legislator of the Three Laws of Robotics, is widely credited as the man who made robots lovable. In *The Gods Themselves* (1972), Asimov accomplished an even more remarkable feat: he made us believe in, love, and admire an alien race. Much in the same way that *I, Robot* and the other robot novels counteracted *R.U.R.* and its kind, so *The Gods Themselves* counteracts our species paranoia represented by such stories as *The Puppet Masters* and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. Moreover, Asimov achieves this effect almost entirely through characterization, the proverbial Achilles' heel of science fiction according to most critics. Just as the robots (from the true friend R. Daneel to the gentle Robbie, through the compassionate Herbie and the humorous Brain, all the way to the complex, wise Stephen Byerly) all seemed a bit nobler than the mundane humans in the stories (including the cold Calvin and the plastic stereotypes Powell and Donovan), so the composite Estwald seems to be a symbol of hope and humanity, not just for his own race, but for us all.

For, despite the title of the middle section of the novel, the aliens from the other universe are not gods, of course. They may be more intelligent and certainly more powerful than we in some ways: for example, they can locate us and we can neither reach them on our own nor even infer their existence until we are contacted by them. Nevertheless, their advantage over us is only relative; they are not omnipotent or immortal, and they face the humanly understandable problem of surviving on an aging planet whose natural energy supply is nearly exhausted. We cannot help sympathizing with the problem. It is only more extreme than our own. In fact, as

Extrapolation, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0004 \$01.00/0

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Asimov projects the future in this novel, the "final solution" to their problem provides a semi-final solution to ours. As readers we care about the aliens' success and fate because our own is dependent on theirs.

The novelist's problem, then, is to make these aliens familiar in a way unusual enough to be interesting and convincing, avoiding the traps of sentimental anthropomorphism or, at the opposite extreme, dark mirror reflections which would leave us too distant. The characters must be like us and different from us simultaneously. For example, the aliens are quite different biologically: they assimilate radiant energy directly from light and/or radioactive minerals. Their molecular structure is less compact than ours and the parts of a single individual have independent consciousness and physical autonomy for a rather long time—at least until procreation is finished, which suggests beyond adolescence into "adulthood." When they finally do bond the triad into a permanent unit, they become genderless, "just Hard Ones of one kind."¹ (Asimov does use the pronoun *he*, the word *it* being satisfactory in our language and culture only for inanimate objects or the immature state of higher animals.)

Yet, psychologically, especially viewed through the contemporary theory of personality structure called "transactional analysis," popularized by Eric Berne, the characters are accessible; we can understand their motivations, their guilt, their need for fulfillment, their self- and mutual respect. Asked about the possibility that he had consciously employed Berne's personality theory, Asimov replied: "The tripartite personality arose out of my desire to have extraterrestrials who were very different from ourselves. I just made up the business about the rational, the intuitional [*sic*] and the parental because it fit in with the plot. If it fits in with transactional analysis or with Freud or Hegel or Wittgenstein or whatever, it is all pure coincidence. I never read any of them and probably wouldn't understand them if I did."² This suggests that if the characters do seem believable and do fit Berne's models, we have a stable triangular validation involving art, life, and transactional analysis.

The psychology of the Earthlings (if only because it is so familiar) is less interesting to most readers than that of the aliens. It is well to note here that most widely accepted personality concepts quite satisfactorily account for the motivations of the characters in Parts I and III. For instance, Frederick Hallam is "overcompensating"; Barron Neville "displaces his fears." The antagonists do not have a monopoly on childish motivation: witness Brownowski's reaction to the university president who commends him for his "Itascan" translations. Selene asks the straight line, "Does everyone believe just what he wants to?" Ben Denison replies, "As long as possible. Sometimes longer" (p. 249). Denison reveals a central insight of this novel about the strength which is developed by adversity: "At the age of twenty-five I was still such a child that I had to amuse myself by insulting a fool for no

other reason than that he was a fool. Since his folly was not his fault, I was the greater fool to do it. My insult drove him to heights he couldn't possibly have scaled otherwise—" (p. 250). The theory of transactional analysis can add to our understanding of the Earthlings, surely, but first let us see how it illuminates the middle section of the novel.

The similarities between transactional analysis of the structure of the human ego and the concepts expressed in Part Two of *The Gods Themselves* are plentiful and easy to cite. A very few examples will suggest the pervasiveness of the similarities. Most obvious, of course, is the three-part structure of the alien Hard Ones compared to that of the human ego. Dua the Emotional (corresponding to the "Child" in transactional analysis) very properly is always first, the initial "a" in each chapter of the book. She is the center of the personality, even though eventually Odeen the Rational (the "Adult" in transactional analysis) will take over the guidance of the triad, finally guiding a perfect melt which permanently creates the Hard One Estwald. Tritt the Parental (the "Parent" in transactional analysis), like the other members of his triad, is unconventional in ways that make him a perfect complement to Dua and Odeen. In fact, the characters are often revealed best by contrasting their characteristics to norms for their types. For example, Dua does not have much to do with other silly Emotionals who like to whisper and giggle. Her babyhood friend Doral later grows so dense "that the triad looked as if it had two Parentals" (p. 119). As babies, Doral had evoked Dua's sense of shame at being a Left-Em and at rock-rubbing. While most mids become interested in their own triad's babies, "fluttering about them in Parental imitation which Dua had found repulsive" (p. 121), Dua occasionally wishes she were a Rational.

Eric Berne calls the Child "in many ways the most valuable part of the personality." Sometimes an "Adapted Child" (adapting to Parental influence), as when she withdraws, Dua is more often the "Natural Child" of spontaneous expression: rebellious and creative. Berne tells us: "In the Child reside intuition, creativity and spontaneous drive and enjoyment."³ Dua, like all Emotionals, is the center of the triad, necessary for proper melting.

Odeen is a super-Rational, bright for a Soft One and so superior as the genius of the Hard One Estwald that "even Losten seems lost in admiration" (p. 115). Odeen very well fits Berne's basic description of the Adult: "It processes data and computes the probabilities which are essential for dealing effectively with the outside world. It also experiences its own kinds of setbacks and gratifications. . . . Another task of the Adult is to regulate the activities of the Parent and the Child, and to mediate objectively between them."⁴ One of Odeen's major gratifications is teaching, so Dua's Left-Emmishness makes her a highly satisfying triad and melt partner. Odeen is "selfishly pleased with his own flow" and thinks it "graceful and

impressive" even though his teacher Losten reminds him that "an Emotional or Parental feels the same about his own flow-pattern" and asks, "If each of you think differently and act differently, ought you not to be pleased differently?" (p. 99). Odeen must mediate between Tritt's plea for union and Dua's elusiveness.

Tritt's main pleasure is making and tending babies. Of the three, Tritt's section of each chapter is always the shortest and is missing altogether from chapter six. He is plucky but dull-witted, almost amiable to the point of being boring. Nothing new can come from him because he only knows the instinctive wisdom needed for the survival of the species. His one intriguing quality is the deviant initiative he shows in going down into the hard caverns to steal the foodball which so fills Dua that she is tricked into melting and forming the final baby mid.

Berne describes the two main functions of the Parent as actual childrearing, that is, "promoting the survival of the human race," and responding automatically without thinking, thus conserving time and energy for the Adult, who can "devote itself to more important issues, leaving routine matters to the Parent."⁵ In *The Gods Themselves*, we are assured that "Tritt was a mental giant compared to most Parentals" (p. 156). He not only tends the babies; he also makes the cavern cozy, freeing Odeen to study and think. But Tritt's special pleasure is watching the children grow. He tries to share this with Odeen when their first-born, little-left baby gets old enough to begin changing shape of his own volition:

(What a great day! "Come, Odeen, quickly! Annis is all oval and hard. All by himself, too. Dua, look!") And they had rushed in. Annis was the only child then. They had had to wait so long for the second. So they rushed in and he was just plastered in the corner. He was curling at himself and flowing over his resting place like wet clay. Odeen had left because he was busy. But said, "Oh, he'll do it again, Tritt." They had watched for hours and he didn't.) (p. 113)

Considering Odeen's pride in his own shape, he misses a moment of potential parental joy because he is learning differential equations, highly ironic as a metaphor suggestive of expansion.

As a unified whole, the novel may be seen as an apologia for irrationality and intuition as necessary to the rational and deliberate accomplishment of human (or at least intelligent) purposes. To use transactional analysis as a metaphor, even though none of the characters in the first section are described as parents—in fact, Mike Bronowski and Peter Lamont declare specifically that they have no children (p. 60)—Part One is overwhelmingly Parental, concerned with the survival of the species. Senator Burt, who is the elderly head of the Committee on Technology and the Environment and is described as taking his job very seriously, advises the young scientist Peter Lamont: "No then, young man, don't ask me to stop the Pumping.

The economy and comfort of the entire planet depend on it. Tell me, instead, how to keep the Pumping from exploding the Sun" (p. 56). And even the idealistic and wise Old Joshua Chen reinforces Burt's judgment of the value of the Pump: "What it means is that mankind no longer has to work for a living. . . . Mankind can turn its collective brains to the more important problem of developing its true potential" (p. 62). The Pump itself is seen as fulfilling a nurturing Parental function.

Measuring the space devoted to her point of view, the "a" sections of each chapter, reveals clearly that Dua the Emotional, the Child or Intuitionist, dominates Part Two. This is the part that most engages the readers' feelings. Dua feels not only for herself and her people; she also feels deeply for the injustice of destroying the other universe, our universe, and even Losten admits: "She knows more about those communications [to the humans] than Estwald himself. She is a frightening phenomenon, an Emotional who can reason and who is out of control" (p. 158). Only at the very end of Part Two does Dua come under the control of the whole Estwald in the unification of the triad, and the last sentence of that section describes the triad still dominated by an emotion, sadness.

Part Three is not simply about "the only close-knit group of ten thousand human brains that are, in principle, and by emotion, science-oriented [that is, Rationals or Adults]" (p. 185). It is also concerned with the efforts of the frustrated scientist Ben Denison, using the help of the Intuitionist Selene, to reconcile the needs of those concerned with the survival and welfare of the species (Parents) with the emotional needs (or those of the Child) of the Lunarites represented by Barron Neville.

Here, second order structural analysis is useful. That is, the Child in each of us begins developing its own tripartite structure at birth; the Child in the mature individual contains an immature Parent, Adult and Child. The Child in the Child (C_1) is the uncorrupted Natural Child, spontaneous and sometimes rebellious. The archaic Parent in the Child (P_1) can manifest itself as the Adapted Child. For example, suppose Janie's mother tells her and her sister Joanie not to touch the stove. This is for their protection, of course. As Jane grows up she learns she *can* safely touch the stove under certain conditions, taking precautions not to get burned. Joan, however, never learns to cook because her Adapted Child fears getting burned. Likewise, Barron Neville's fears of the surface of the moon are rooted in real dangers, but whereas the majority of the Lunarites learn to cope with the surface when they need to, Dr. Neville is unable to overcome his early Parental injunctions. Claude Steiner writes, "The Parent in the Child (P_1) seems to be a fixated ego state not amenable to change or worth changing."⁶ Barron Neville will not compromise even to accept the honor of joint authorship of the paper describing the cosmeg Pump.

Selene is ego-dominated by the Adult in the Child (A_1) or the Little Pro-

fessor, Intuition, “thought to have an extremely accurate grasp and understanding of the major variables that enter into interpersonal relationships.” Steiner remarks: “This grasp is manifested in the capacity to detect the ‘real’ (covert) meaning of transactions. The Little Professor is able to understand that which the second-order Adult (A_2) misses. However, in matters other than psychological transactions, the Professor operates with limited information.”⁷ Dua, a Left-Em, demonstrates the limitations of her Little Professor when she “logically” concludes that she and Odeen and Tritt are machines manufactured for the amusement of the Hard Ones, the only living species on their planet. Like Dua, Selene provides insights the rational scientists lack.

Berne defines intuition thus: “subconscious knowledge without words, based on subconscious observations without words, and under the right circumstances it is more reliable and accurate than conscious knowledge based on conscious observation.”⁸ But Berne goes further than Steiner and separates two kinds of intuition. The first is based on sensitivity to early emotional relationships, but “the second is the individual’s way of experiencing and handling new situations [and] . . . relates to the attitude of the Ego and its reaction to reality.”⁹ In other words, even with limited data, the Little Professor may, in trying to reach for solutions to problems faced by the Adult (A_2), be more creative and unprejudiced. The Little Professor may not know “what can’t possibly be done” and therefore may find a way to do something the Adult “knows is impossible.” Denison is “not quite a physicist” and Selene knows practically nothing about mathematics; together they work out the theory of an infinite number of possible universes and solve the problem of the Pump. Berne concludes:

If the Child is left free of influences from the Adult and Parent ego states, intuition is at its best. The moment the Adult comes in with conscious reasoning, or the Parent with its prejudices and preconceived ideas, intuition is impaired as the Child retreats before these superior forces. Intuition also fails if the Child is corrupted by an offer of rewards or a threat of punishment. In other words, this is a fragile faculty which can be easily disturbed or distorted by external pressures, which is one reason it is not forthcoming on demand.¹⁰

In summary, intuition is both valuable and quirky. Catch 23: obviously we should cultivate a valuable part of our personalities but conscious cultivation is sure to stifle it. My correspondence with Isaac Asimov regarding this analysis demonstrates just how quirky intuition may be. As a peripheral issue, one which seemed unrelated to transactional analysis interpretation, I asked the author why he chose to give Denison the initials BAD. The confusion of the governor of the moon over the middle name echoes the Itascan-Etruscan mixup, but still the irony of the acronym is startling since Denison is clearly the protagonist. Asimov’s response: “The acronym BAD

for Denison never occurred to me until I received your letter. I'm afraid I pluck my names out of the air."¹¹ Not until this point did it become apparent to me that these initials are part of the message between Bronowski and Dua. Bronowski sends: "P-U-M-P B-A-D," and Dua replies, "Y-E-S P-U-M-P B-A-D B-A-D B-A-D" (p. 66). Of course, this makes sense in context as simply meaning *bad*, but repeated three times, it may also be an intuitive attempt to reach her counterpart in our universe.

Similarly, Asimov mentions incidentally that: "Odeen, Dua, and Tritt are very like the Russian words for 'one' 'two' and 'three' respectively. That was on purpose" But Odeen also sounds suggestive of Odin, the father of the Old Norse Gods. It is a common phenomenon reported by authors that details just "feel" right and writers often say they are amazed at what readers "see." Asimov confirms: "I found [your essay] absorbing, reading it almost as though it were about a book written by someone else for there is so little conscious symbolism or carefully-thought-out significance in anything I write that I am always uncomfortably amazed at my unconscious."¹²

In discussing this novel, my science fiction classes always debate the assignment of pronouns to the characters of the middle section and the sex-role stereotypes of Parts One and Three. There is generally a consensus that our language limits our imagination. Asimov summarizes the pronoun problem from a word craftman's standpoint:

As for the pronouns used in the Triad: Unfortunately English doesn't have three gender-pronouns unless we count "it" and I just could not use "it" for a living thing. I could have made up a third pronoun or avoided the use of pronouns, but in either case, it would have made the writing flow badly and from the literary standpoint I couldn't allow that. This meant I had to use "he" and "she" and I decided to use one of them for Dua, and the other for both Odeen and Tritt, in order to indicate that Dua was the central character and the most important. I might have used "he" for Dua and "she" for the other two, but I couldn't for I thought of Dua as female.¹³

The staunchest of male chauvinists are scandalized at the attachment of the male pronoun to the dull-witted member of the triad who rears the children. On the other hand, the most liberated feminists object to the conventionality of making the Rational male and the Emotional female. A middle group feels that Asimov "could only go so far" in upsetting stereotypes without losing rapport with the majority of his readers. Whether this is true or not remains a moot point considering the popularity of such books as Ursula Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* and John Varley's *The Ophiuchi Hotline*.

In any case, though Asimov depicts a continued loosening of sexual mores in the future society on the moon, he projects very little occupational

sex role deprogramming for our foreseeable future. All of the human scientists are male, as are the university president, the senator, and the lunar administrators. Selene is not just ignorant of science; she is a tour guide. Asimov could have made her a professional, doctor, lawyer, politician—perhaps mayor of her village on the moon. From the considerations of plot construction, this last alternative would have made it just as plausible for her to meet Denison. Upon reading a draft of this paper Asimov commented:

As for the matter of feminism. Alas, the problem is in my own psychology as people who read my autobiography . . . will see. I began writing and selling science fiction *before* I had had as much as one date with a girl. As a result my early s.f. had no women characters (or if they did, they were pulpish stereotypes) simply because I literally knew nothing about women. —I have learned since, I assure you, but literarily, I have been imprinted, and, however I try, it will be difficult for me to treat women in a rational way. I'm terribly sorry.¹⁴

Another defense for Asimov may be that change in the area of occupational prejudice comes very slowly. Figures from the Department of Health and Human Services indicate that a backlash has occurred since affirmative action legislation has been introduced. Measuring incomes in relative percentages, women are worse off today in the professions than they were in 1970. In salaried and hourly wage positions, women are also making little progress in narrowing the gap between their compensation and that of men with similar education and experience.

On the subject of backlash, many social scientists worry about the loss of the female role and what effects feminist views will have on the future of our family units, specifically on child-rearing. Until significant percentages of women left the home to earn money outside, few observers expressed concern or even commented on the loss of the father as a parent in the home (after the industrial revolution and subsequent urbanization of Western civilization). By the time it was noticed, role identification was well established. Only women were asked if they could combine marriage and a career. In addition, some observers worry about the loss of some unnamable thing called “femininity.” Perhaps the term is meant to refer to this quality of being outside the “ratrace” or the concerns of the “real world.”

But herein lies the merit of bringing together the threads of this novel with transactional analysis theory and comparing both to real life. If transactional theorists and Asimov are correct, there is real value in the freshness and creative insight that non-trained minds can provide to specialists. But this does not necessarily lead to the inevitable conclusion that some of us (that is, women or any other predetermined scapegoat) ought to be kept in uneducated ignorance as martyrs “for the good of us all.” Rather, the world has become so wonderfully complicated that each of us can (and

should) develop the fullest mastery over any subject matter and skills that our native gifts will permit, and we can still come as “innocents” to other disciplines.

And Parenting need not be “lost” because women also develop their Adult capabilities. In the healthy individual, all three—Parent, Adult, and Child—are vital and self-satisfying. We are prodded by Asimov into examining our real world, and we find that our culture discourages many males from developing their fully mature, nurturing Parents. Men too should strive toward wholeness of the egos. Our children need male Parents as much as our society needs the Adult talents of our females. Or, as the noble leader Estwald shows us, the best “Hard One” is the result of a perfect melting of all three parts, each respectful of the needs of the other parts of itself. Perhaps this union may bring humans the sadness it brings Estwald. Living a full life does bring responsibilities.

In spite of—perhaps because of—his self-admitted ignorance of the soft sciences, Asimov has helped us break through at least some of our preconceived notions of what is possible. And this may be the best hope for the future of us all.

Notes

1. Isaac Asimov, *The Gods Themselves* (Greenwich: Fawcett, 1972), p. 100. Subsequent citations are from this edition; page numbers are cited in the text.
2. Letter received from Isaac Asimov, 30 Nov. 1978.
3. Eric Berne, *Games People Play* (New York: Grove Press, 1964), p. 27.
4. Berne, p. 27.
5. Berne, p. 27.
6. *Scripts People Live: Transactional Analysis of Life Scripts* (New York: Grove Press, 1974), pp. 47–48.
7. Steiner, p. 48.
8. Eric Berne, *A Layman's Guide to Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis*, 3rd ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), p. 357.
9. Berne, *Layman's Guide*, p. 357.
10. Berne, *Layman's Guide*, p. 358.
11. Letter received from Isaac Asimov, 2 Jan. 1979.
12. Letter received from Isaac Asimov, 2 Jan. 1979.
13. Letter received from Isaac Asimov, 2 Jan. 1979.
14. Letter received from Isaac Asimov, 2 Jan. 1979.

Science Fiction in the Classroom: Can Its Essence Be Preserved?

TED KRULIK

■ In constructing a program to teach science fiction to high school juniors and seniors, I had a dual purpose in mind. First, I intended to present it as a literature that deals with the real problems of real people set against an unusual, or science fiction background. Second, based on my feelings toward the literature, it was essential that students get as wide a perspective of science fiction, outside of any Earthbound, schoolroom atmosphere, as possible.

When I was young, I absorbed George Pal's film version of *The Time Machine* and read the books of Isaac Asimov and Robert Heinlein before science fiction was spoken of openly, before teachers grabbed it as a sort of literary goldmine, before people took science fiction writers to be serious thinkers and philosophers, and before it was taught as an English course in high schools and colleges. I loved it with a feeling that went beyond the artificiality of a blackboard, wooden seats, and a dangerously benign teacher counting off the minutes of a silently ticking watch. That natural love is important to me.

Transmitting that love of science fiction is also important. But how do you do that in a high school, elective English course to students cooing at each other from across the room, asking for the bathroom pass, finishing their geometry homework, and gazing impatiently out the window wondering how many minutes before the bell will ring? The students are brilliant, dull, exciting, apathetic, enthusiastic, impassive, aware, ignorant, delightful, discouraging. They are everything, in fact, that we are in our varying moods and temperaments. Science fiction is able to cope with such people.

Extrapolation, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0005 \$01.00/0

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It cannot always cater to them, but it will cope. After all, it has always had a small following, so it is natural that only a small minority of the class would have any familiarity with the subject matter in the first place.

Since science fiction is primarily a literature, the class must deal with it on that level: reading, discussing, understanding, exchanging ideas, and sharing beliefs. But to take these students out of the classroom and *into* the world of science fiction, short of transporting them to Titan, depends on techniques other than “developmental” discussion-type lessons. I created various activities, which I refer to as “enrichment lessons” and which are basically in addition to lessons on specific readings. These enrichment lessons involve the students directly with the inner workings of science fiction through the use of problem-solving, debates, committee research and presentations, and self-involving writing assignments.

Many of these students entered the class believing it was another one of *those* English classes given a “fancy” title; others thought that we would talk about monsters and little green men. The truth lies within the vast middle ground, and I hoped that some of my students would step into this “no man’s land” and pick up the challenge.

Course Outline in Science Fiction:

- Goals:
1. Discovery of how one predicts the future based on the assumption that a present trend will continue.
 2. Awareness of the role of science and technology in shaping our society—present and future.
 3. Appreciation of science fiction as a form of literature.

Books: *Themes in Science Fiction*, Leo P. Kelley
Caves of Steel, Isaac Asimov
Venus Plus X, Theodore Sturgeon

Projects:

- I. Two Major Projects and One Book Report:
 - A. One Physical or Creative Project
 1. Comparing and contrasting science fiction movies and television productions with similar themes of written works.
 2. Interviews or other personal research (letters to authors, attending a science fiction convention).
 3. Constructing a “physical” project: a city of the future, diorama, or original illustrations for a published, professional story.
 - B. One Research Project
 1. Relating at least two stories of the same or similar themes to a factual article about an aspect of science or science fiction.
 2. Analyzing at least two stories, or a novel and one story by

the same author. Use at least one factual source about the author to verify your analysis. Examine similarities in plot, character, theme, setting, and imagery.

3. A bibliography of books and articles used *must* be included.

C. One Book Report on outside reading (novel or short story collection by a single author)

Compositions: Two compositions will be written in class each marking period.

Homework: Reading assignments will include questions based on the reading, vocabulary words, and/or a quiz on the reading in class.

Tests: Short tests will be given periodically. One major exam will be given.

Demography. I initiated this program in 1975 at Grover Cleveland High School in Ridgewood, Queens, New York. The students I taught could well have been considered average to bright. The program has been directed by Mr. Charles Roemer, a member of SFRA. The neighborhood surrounding the school, from which many of the students came, is composed of families of Italian, German, and Irish descent. Much of the Old World culture can be viewed in the well-kept, charming homes and the easy flow of German and Italian from people in the street. It is a sad commentary that high school students' reading scores have fallen drastically in recent years, but within this enclave of Old World values, the continued importance of learning and reading in the home has enabled this school to maintain a high level of educational standards, one which is modeled in the science fiction curriculum.

The elective program allows for a wide scope of reading abilities, and although many of these students can read on their grade level (eleventh or twelfth) there are often others who read with only fifth to ninth grade ability. Even in our elective courses, this variation must be taken into account, and it may put us at a disadvantage in comparison to the type of student who enters the college science fiction class.

As in most New York City high schools, this class meets for approximately fifty minutes (one period) a day, five days a week. Contractual requirements prohibit more than thirty-four students in a class, and in the elective program, classes may be as small as twenty-five students. Students must be juniors or seniors (aged 15 to 17) in order to qualify for the science fiction class. They are further screened so that reading ability would be average or better; those who had taken remedial reading were eligible if their last reading grade showed great improvement.

Most of these students were motivated by the subject matter they imag-

ined would be in the course, but only a few were knowledgeable of the variety of ideas and literature that form an integral part of the genre.

Class Requirements. Before the term began, the teachers got together at a departmental conference to discuss elective English courses, and certain minimum requirements were agreed upon in order to make the elective program respectable. The teaching of spelling and vocabulary was left up to individual teachers, but a minimum of 75 new vocabulary words for the five-month term was determined. It was also decided that during the term there would be three projects: a library research project and a book report, six in-class compositions, and one major exam. These basic requirements were meant to act as general guidelines for constructing the elective courses and were not meant to be adhered to slavishly. The Course Outline in Science Fiction, described above, was formed from these guidelines. On the second day of class, this outline was distributed to the students for discussion.

Writing Assignments. It is common practice to seek new ways to motivate the writing of English compositions and to allow students to write them in class. One such idea, for writing an original story, was lifted from Deborah Elkins' *Reading Improvement in the Junior High School* (1963). As suggested, I took significant phrases from a published science fiction story and listed them in random order on the blackboard. We discussed these phrases, and then the students created their own story retaining the phrases discussed. After they finished and read some of their compositions aloud, we read the original story together.

There are many ways to encourage good writing, and it can be worthwhile to apply the students' common class reading to this creative process. As we finished reading Asimov's *Caves of Steel*, for example, we discussed its treatment of government, transportation, weather and pollution control, sports, and economy. Using *Time* magazine as a model, students were given "news" assignments in these several fields, based on the futuristic themes. Not only was this a good writing exercise, but it also encouraged the students to use details from the book in a creative way.

Literature: What to Teach. Since my intention in teaching this program was to present science fiction as dealing with human problems in an unusual setting and to give as wide a perspective of the genre as was possible in such a limited time, I had to select short stories and novels that would apply to both objectives.

A book that met our needs is an excellent anthology, *Themes in Science Fiction* (1972), edited by Leo P. Kelley. It not only presented a diversity of fine stories but also categorized them according to theme. I began with two stories dealing with the most common science fiction theme of space travel:

“The Cold Equations” by Tom Godwin and “Holdout” by Robert Sheckley. I emphasized that these stories do not deal merely with space travel, but they present and attempt to resolve problems that are very real to us, such as human prejudice or the conflict between the life of an individual as opposed to a greater good.

In teaching the literature, I have developed the concept that it combines two kinds of themes: a science fiction theme (space travel, alien beings and worlds, time travel, parallel worlds) and a social or literary theme that presents a problem that is relevant to us. For many students, this was a revelation.

Lesson Plans

The lesson plans that follow are “enrichment lessons” which accommodate a variety of units, stories, and parts of any given semester. They are organized by activities: writing, group discussion, problem-solving, applications from literature, and committee reports.

Activity: Writing

Material used: Alan Bloch, “Men Are Different,” from *Something Strange* (MacMillan, 1969)

Aim: To create our own science fiction story based on a list of phrases.

Motivation: Phrase for blackboard:

digging around on the dead planets	on my last field trip
men came from a planet called Earth	last man in this system
flung them far across the night skies	pushed the needle into his neck
made of some calcium compound instead of titanium	he wasn't the same inside

Development:

1. What do you think these phrases are about?
2. Using each of these phrases, write your own short story of about 75 words. You may arrange these phrases in any order you wish.
3. Have two or three volunteers read their stories aloud.
4. Read aloud the short story “Men Are Different” while class follows along.
5. Collect compositions.

Summary: In what ways were compositions similar to the actual story? How were they different?

Activities: Writing, Application from Literature (Caves of Steel)

Aim: How can we understand Asimov's future earth in *Caves of Steel* from a particular viewpoint?

Procedures: Write on blackboard:

You are an Outer Worlder on a visit to Earth. You are interested in Earth customs and want to find out the following:

1. Why do you prefer to live in enclosed cities?
2. How do you feel about Spacetown located next to New York City?
3. How can Earth make use of robots in the future?

You may ask these questions of *one* of the following people: Commissioner Enderby, Jessie Baley, Dr. Gerrigel (an Earth roboticist), a staunch Medievalist, a political leader close to the White House.

Development:

1. Assign one of the above characters to each row of students. Have students answer each of the three questions as that character would.
2. Collect the papers and exchange them with other rows. The second readers will sign the bottom of the sheet.
3. Using the following questions, the second reader (the Outer Worlder) must evaluate the paper:
 - a. Does the person answer the question?
 - b. What *specific* details from Baley's world does this person use in his answer?

Summary: What important details do we learn of this future world?

Activities: Writing, Committee Reports

Aim: What factors must a government consider in making policies in a future society?

Procedures: Write on blackboard:

1. Each row represents the top members of government in the year 2080.
2. Choose one of the following governmental actions and list three reasons to justify it.
 - a. Cloning of the leader into five duplicates.
 - b. Refusing to permit Martians to own property or marry Earth people.
 - c. Sending prisoners serving life terms to asteroid colonies.
 - d. Allowing robots to serve in political office.
 - e. Using the moon to test nuclear weapons.

Development:

1. Allow groups to get together to discuss, organize, and write a rationale for one of the above actions.
2. Have students in each group present and defend their policies.
3. Allow other members of class to question and discuss these policies.

Summary:

1. What kind of world can we expect 100 years from now?
2. Which of the many probabilities are distinctly possible?

Activity: Problem-solving

Aim: How can changing the past affect our present?

Motivation:

1. Teacher tells class:

You are members of a group of people who suddenly find yourselves in Earth's past. In order to avoid the possibility of a nuclear war in our time, you must try to change something in Earth's past.

Development:

1. Assign students to five groups: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Epsilon, Omega.
2. Each group must decide:
 - a. What period of Earth's history to visit.
 - b. What single fact must be changed.
 - c. How each member can work cooperatively to change that fact.
 - d. What our present will be like as a logical result of that change.
3. Each group has fifteen minutes to plan the time trip and solve these problems. Then members must present their results to the class.

Summary: What factors did we have to consider in trying to change something in the past?

Activity: Problem-solving

Aim: How would we solve problems of survival in an artificial society?

Materials: Previously prepared tape of instructions for a "lost society" (see attached script), tape recorder

Procedures:

1. Write the following outline on blackboard:

To the Survivors of Disease Omega:

Problem 1: Choosing a leader?

Problem 2: Organizing?

Problem 3: Money? Credit?

Problem 4: Invaded by an Adult?

Problem 5: Police carrying weapons?

The class will be evaluated by how well they carry on discussions without outside guidance. Listen carefully to the tape, then talk over ideas and decisions.

Development:

1. Teacher explains to class: the tape will describe your situation, and you will be assigned problems you must resolve by discussion. The teacher will exist only as a coordinator to explain and clarify.
2. Play instruction tape on "lost society" problems.
3. Students must work together to resolve the problems.

Summary: Who contributed to solutions? How were problems “talked out” and resolved?

Script for Instruction Tape of Lost Society:

Teacher's voice; slow, deliberate speech. A strange sickness, Disease Omega, has destroyed all the adults on Earth over the age of twenty-one. You are a group of young people who have survived, and you have no idea if anyone else is alive in the world. All buildings are intact and food supplies are uncontaminated. You have enough food in your area to last for approximately three months.

Problem 1: Who will be the leader of your group? Do you need a leader? How will you decide? Decide on a solution as a group, write your answer on a sheet of paper and place it on the desk. You have four minutes.

Problem 2: How are you going to organize your new society? Although you have enough food for three months in empty stores and shops, how will you plan for the future? Will you need shelter? Clothes? Tools? How will you assign jobs to each person in the room? Decide on this issue, write your answer, and place it on desk. You have eight minutes.

Problem 3: Should you exchange goods and services freely or should you create some sort of monetary system? Will everyone begin with an equal amount of money? Should some people have more money than others? Your leader should listen to your discussion, then *he* must decide. Present your solution. You have five minutes.

Problem 4: An adult has discovered your group. Since he is the only surviving adult, he believes he should be your leader and will rule by force if necessary. He wants to act as a benign dictator to protect your property. The leader must assign two people to act as a committee to reach some compromise with him. You have five minutes to come to an agreement.

Problem 5: The leader assigns five people in your group to act as police officers to enforce rules and maintain order. Should this police force be allowed to have weapons and use them against others in your group? Decide on this important question, write it on a piece of paper, and place it on the desk. You have four minutes.

There are few things more enjoyable than the free flow of ideas, emotions, and fantasies that enthusiastic fans of science fiction are able to share through informal book club meetings, conventions, and the science fiction classroom. However, to the uninitiated, all that talk can be very noninvolving, and it can actually alienate people with its seeming cliquishness. They would be right.

We must show others the reasons for our enthusiasm, and we cannot do

that by handing them Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* and say, "Here. Read it." That might create resentment. We cannot force-feed science fiction. We must translate the ideas that we have read and shared into concrete uses, into workings that the uninitiated may utilize. That was the intention of the "enrichment lessons."

If, as Thomas Edison has said, success is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration, then it is our job as teachers to see that our students participate in at least 45% of that perspiration. We hope they will enjoy by doing.

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Dualities in David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*

JOY POHL

■ In *A Voyage to Arcturus* (1963) David Lindsay has created a metaphysical quest-romance, a spiritual journey in search of some insight into the ultimate nature of being, through a world in which events have a symbolic rather than realistic significance. In Tormance, his "residential suburb" of the star Arcturus, Lindsay constructs a world replete with spiritual dangers, whose physical strangeness renders more compelling the interior conflicts he portrays. C. S. Lewis has called the book "shattering, intolerable, irresistible"; Eric Rabkin, "soul-wrenching and mind-distorting,"¹ both attesting to its power to mirror an inner reality, to evoke the life of the spirit. What Lindsay has achieved is, in the words of C. S. Lewis, "a lived dialectic,"² and he has achieved this through a systematic examination of dualities within a moralized landscape. It is this which in large measure gives *A Voyage to Arcturus* its haunting qualities.

Appropriately, the central figure is himself a dual character. Maskull, the protagonist throughout most of *A Voyage to Arcturus*, is mask and skull—the everyday, rational, exterior aspect of the self. He is a Promethean figure come to Tormance (a telescoping of "torment" and "romance" prefiguring the pleasure/pain dualism on which the plot revolves) "to steal Muspel-fire, to give a deeper life to men."³ Nightspore, Maskull's doppelgänger whose name, connoting both darkness and propagation, life and death, ironically prefigures his ultimate role. He is the "new man" who emerges when Maskull, the everyday self, dies. Nightspore is Maskull's essential self, the pneuma or spirit brought forth when the mask is stripped off and the restraining skull split open, when the rational exterior is ex-

Extrapolation, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0006 \$01.00/0

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posed as but another illusion preventing the comprehension of essential reality.

Paralleling the dual nature of the hero is the double sun of the planet Tormance, a double sun which affects the protagonist Muskull in spiritually contradictory ways. Branchspell, whose name suggests its capacity to foliate and embroider reality and hence to hold man under various illusory enchantments, is the sun of the everyday world. It is the sun under which Muskull travels on his spiritual odyssey, its withering, electric-white light throwing the moralized landscapes of Tormance into greater relief, rendering by its intensity what Maskull might otherwise perceive as illusory "dreamland," "vividly real" (p. 52). Branchspell's light is the light of man's world.

Alppain, whose name indicates the spiritual heights to which Maskull rises and the pain to be endured thereof, is the sun toward which Maskull moves. It lights the world of the spirit, its dawn representing not "mystery"—an acknowledgment of the limitations of reason—but "wildness," a total release beyond the constraints of reason (p. 274). The power of Alppain's light is such that even within its sunset Maskull, the rational man, experiences "a feeling of disintegration—just as if two chemically distinct forces were simultaneously acting upon the cells of his body" and wonders, in the effect of its afterglow, if he can face Alppain itself and live (p. 158). These "violent sensations," however, are the product of "the struggling of wills" within Maskull, the pull of the world of external reality, of the physical world, and the pull of the world of the spirit. In the presence of Alppain itself, the world of the spirit "reigns supreme" (p. 269). The daylight of Branchspell "becomes as night to this other daylight" and Maskull turns from its darkness to light (p. 274). In so doing, he experiences one final illusion, the illusion that he is nothing, and interpreting this loss of self as a final explanation of life, he dies just as his forebodings augured. Through his death, Nightspore, pure spirit unrestrained by reason and the demands of the physical universe, is released.

Because Arcturus produces two kinds of light, the light of the physical world and the light of the spirit, Tormance has two sets of primary colors, a third duality whose ramifications Lindsay explores. As with his dual protagonist and dual sun, this duality also delineates the world of the spirit and the world of physical reality. Branchspell produces blue, yellow, and red—blue "delicate and mysterious, yellow clear and unsubtle, and red sanguine and passionate" (p. 53). Later Maskull learns that Branchspell's blue is existence, its yellow is relation, and its red is feeling (p. 238). Alppain, on the other hand, produces *ulfire*, "wild and painful," *jale*, "dreamlike, feverish, and voluptuous," as well as blue (p. 53). Here *ulfire* represents existence, blue stands in the middle and represents relation, and *jale* is feeling (p. 238). Thus as the yellow sun of Branchspell shows the "clear and unsub-

tle" relation of objects in the real world, the blue sun of Alppain indicates the "delicate and mysterious" nature of relationships in the spiritual world. By creating two new primary colors, Lindsay more than expands his spectrum. In positing a dual set of primary colors and juxtaposing them as antithetical triads, he vivifies the distinction between the real and the symbolic, between the physical and the spiritual.

A fourth duality which Lindsay explores is the masculine/feminine dichotomy. By systematically varying this dualism through a series of fantastic Tormancian cultures, he seeks to grasp its ontological implications. Lindsay's first handling of this theme of male/female dualism comes with the artist Panawe of Poolingdred. Lindsay here postulates a culture in which each individual's sex is determined by the winner of a struggle between the male and female contained within the same body. Hence the conflict or tension caused by the presence of two sexes is resolved at or near birth. That it occurred later with Panawe and forms one of his earliest recollections produces within him only a greater reverence for life.

In other Tormancian cultures, the male/female dichotomy is resolved through partnerships or pairings in which the women are as openly assertive as the men or equally aggressive seekers after truth. An exception is the land of Sant, a religious community whose adherents, followers of Hator, rigorously exclude females on penalty of death. Women are regarded as despised objects whose propensity for softness and capacity for love render them unfit for the austerities and asceticism of Sant's guiding principle: the renunciation of all pleasure. However, Spadevil, the heretical follower of Sant who attempts to replace hatred of pleasure with duty as a prime directive, allows as his second adherent a female, Tydomin, who shares his martyrdom. She is warned, though, that so long as she remembers that she is a woman, she will be denied the kingdom of heaven, i.e., "divine apathy of soul" (p. 138). Here, then, the tension caused by the male/female dualism is an onus whose sole resolution is denial by those who seek knowledge of ultimate reality.

In his final treatment of this dichotomy, Lindsay postulates a culture in which the masculine and feminine principles are wholly antithetical and come together only at the greatest risk of peril for the male. Haunte, a hunter of Sarclash, is a pure male for whom "all laws are female" (p. 230). Sullenbode, the semi-amorphous embodiment of the female principle, possesses neither soul, nor personality, nor even features unless transformed by love. Love, however, between a pure male and a pure female is impossible, Haunte states, pointing out that "when Maskull loves a woman, it is Maskull's female ancestors who are loving her" (p. 237). Deprived of his protective masculine stones, Haunte, driven by desire, seeks out Sullenbode and is destroyed by her. Maskull's kiss, however, transforms her into a living soul, one who "is perfectly willing to disappear and become nothing

for the sake of the beloved" (p. 246), an act in which Sullenbode indulges so that Maskull might continue his search for Muspel. Thus Lindsay concludes his investigation of this dualism with a highly maudlin, certainly conventionalized treatment of the male as a questing figure and the female as civilizing earth-mother.

Exhausting the possibilities of the original two sexes, Lindsay creates a third, whose sexual behavior exemplifies the metaphysical quest of his protagonist. Regarding a man as one half of life, and a woman as the other half, Leehallfae, the Phaen, represents a whole whose total drive is directed toward a union with Faceny, the maker of all things. Thus as man is juxtaposed to woman, the Phaen is juxtaposed to spirit. The Phaen's home is Matterplay, a land where "no two shapes were alike" and "life forms were being coined so fast by Nature that there was not physical room for all" (p. 192). Faceny represents, for the Phaen, the life-force behind this plethora, the one from which the many sprang. Thus Leehallfae is literally a lover of the spiritual and his single-minded and passionate search for Faceny is emblematic of Maskull's search through a dozen false worlds for a glimpse of essential reality.

Throughout his pilgrimage on Tormance, Maskull embraces new lifestyles and philosophies, experiencing physiological transformations which provide new modes of perception and "new perspective on the chain of life."⁴ These experiences form an implicit exposition of the many versus the one duality, of the multiplicity which denies Maskull the essential unity he seeks. Moreover, these adventures within heavily moralized landscapes are themselves paired off and juxtaposed in the form of dualities.

In his first Tormancian culture, Poolingdred, Maskull encounters an innocent world whose inhabitants feed off *gnawl* water and find even the thought of eating fruit terrible. Located in the middle of his forehead, Maskull finds a *breve* (a fleshy protuberance) which enables him to read thoughts, in his chest a heart tentacle for stroking, and on either side of his neck, *poigns* (knoblike organs) which enable him "to understand and sympathize with all living creatures" (p. 54). Admirably equipped then to empathize in a world in which all physical needs are provided, Maskull experiences contentment. He finds nothing beyond love in this environment and needs no understanding beyond mysticism.

Juxtaposed to this selfless and giving world is the world of Ifdawn Mar-est. Here the will rules and Maskull's *breve* becomes a *sorb*, a third eye which has the capacity to absorb others (" . . . with the sorb he saw nothing as self-existent—everything appeared as an object of importance or non-importance to his own needs" [p. 83]). The heart tentacle becomes a third hand for grasping. Even the land reflects the impulsive and arbitrary nature of its inhabitants, constantly and unpredictably erupting or dropping off into the abyss. Here Maskull learns that there is more to life than

the somewhat sentimentalized humanity of Poolingdred, that indeed passage through such an environment equipped as a resident of Poolingdred is tantamount to suicide. Maskull is inevitably led then to compare the two societies, one whose central thrust is power versus one whose central thrust is empathy.

On the spare and harsh slopes of Disscourn, Maskull meets Spadevil, a holy man who converts his *sorb* into probes, twin membranes which alter Maskull's perceptions such that where "previously all external things had existed for him; now he existed for them" (p. 134). Pleasure and pain and power have no more meaning, only duty. Following the ridges, Maskull and Spadevil come to Sant, a high, desolate plateau where even the fruit is "hard, bitter, and astringent" (p. 142). Here one of Maskull's probes is destroyed, and he renounces Spadevil's stern dictum, duty, for Hator's repudiation of pleasure, finding duty a cloak under which is shared the pleasure of other people. In both cases he seeks an ultimate experience through asceticism.

Juxtaposed to the experience in Sant is Maskull's experience on Swaylone's Island. Here an approximation of the essential nature of being is sought through aesthetics. The mountain lake Irontick, an instrument endowed by Lindsay with mythological significance, becomes the means by which Maskull attempts to create the shape of Surtur, of god, through music. The results of such audacity are strains so wild and turbulent, so powerful and disturbing that not only is all surrounding life hideously and violently destroyed but also Irontick itself. Thus, for Maskull, asceticism and aesthetics, the one a denial of the senses, the other a cultivation of the senses, are placed in opposition and comparison of the realities each produces is invited.

In the land of Matterplay, Maskull encounters a world where nature "forks and sports" relentlessly, manifesting life seemingly out of air. He picks up a fruit "intending to eat the contained pulp; but inside it was a fully formed young tree, just on the point of bursting its shell. Maskull threw it away upstream. It floated back toward him; by the time he was even with it, its downward motion had stopped and it was swimming against the current. He fished it out and discovered that it had sprouted six rudimentary legs" (p. 192-93). Following this rampant, almost obscene exhibition of the life-force, Maskull experiences the austerity and rigid formalism of the underground world of Threal. In this grey-white world of stern and gothic landscapes, existence is disciplined into dogma and authoritatively affirmed as a manifestation of a trinity. Significantly, the Phaens of Matterplay dissolve into nothingness upon reaching Threal. Here Lindsay seems to be juxtaposing a culture whose dominant trait is a stern austerity with a

more primitive culture characterized by voluptuous profusion, examining the spiritual ramifications of each.

However, the explorations of these dualities, organized as adventures within moralized landscapes, are finally each revealed as illusion, revelations not of the one which Maskull seeks but of the many. Even a final experience in which Maskull is vouched ideal love is revealed as illusion, albeit one which maintains its beauty even when its illusory nature is realized. This dichotomy between the one and the many, the real and the illusory, is ultimately explained via a cosmic dualism. On the cosmic level, the dichotomy is between Surtur, the god of Muspel, for whom Krag is the embodied form, and Crystalman, variously known as Shaping and Faceny, for whom Gangnet is the embodiment. Muspel, the hidden eternal light, pure spirit, Lindsay had earlier called "the primeval world of fire; existing before heaven and earth, and which will eventually destroy them."⁵ Crystalman feeds off this Muspel-stream, his shadow form acting as a prism, shivering pure spirit into millions and millions of life forms, each possessing via the transformation an ineffable and grotesque sweetness. Some particles of Muspel emerge unaltered "by reason of their extreme minuteness" (p. 285). Krag is thus "a spirit compounded of those vestiges of Muspel which Shaping [Crystalman] did not know how to transform" (p. 177). Trying to undo Crystalman's work, Krag brings redemptive pain into the world; and thus while Crystalman masquerades as a god in the guise of pleasure, Krag, who is also Surtur, is frequently mistaken for the devil.

Maskull completes the first stage of his journey back to spirit by renouncing his self-life, his false and private world of "dreams and appetites and distorted perceptions" and embracing the whole, great world of Crystalman (pp. 166–67). At the end of his odyssey, he is told by Krag, "You have run the gamut. What else is there left to live for?" (p. 262). Indeed he has lived all the illusions, embraced all the lifestyles which the strange world of Tormance provides. Tormance then becomes a metaphor for those systems, both philosophical and theological, which man imposes on the overt world and which encapsulate his spiritual being. With Maskull's death, the dormant Nightspore is aroused. Nightspore represents thus the enlargement of personality (i.e., Maskull's personality) necessary to assimilate the vital world of the spirit which Muspel symbolizes. Nightspore is then literally the reborn Maskull, and the "gamut" which Maskull runs creates the inner amplitude which allows this spiritual transformation. In the final moments of the story, Nightspore discovers "Muspel consisted of himself and the stone tower on which he was sitting . . ." (p. 289). Having run the gamut, his duality is resolved, and he is capable of perceiving reality without illusion.

Notes

1. C. S. Lewis, *Of Other Worlds*, ed. Walter Hooper (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1966), p. 71; Eric S. Rabkin, *The Fantastic in Literature* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1976), p. 45.
2. Lewis, p. 12.
3. David Lindsay, *A Voyage to Arcturus* (New York: Ballantine, 1963), p. 152. All other citations from this edition.
4. Rabkin, p. 47.
5. David Lindsay, "Notebooks," unpublished manuscript quoted by J. B. Pick, "The Work of David Lindsay," *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 1 (1964), 175.

The Expedition to the Planet of Paranoia

ROBERT PLANK

■ Ray Bradbury's most famous book is not a book; *The Martian Chronicles* (1950) are chronicles in outward appearance only. Rather they are individual stories strung on a chronological line, glued together here and there with smudges of connective tissue. They were clearly written independently, and many of them were originally published separately. The book purports to relate events that took place between January 1999 and October 2026, but many of them could have taken place—as far as they could have taken place at all—at different times and in a different sequence. This is particularly true of the first three expeditions from Earth to Mars. All three of them are wiped out, each in an unconventional manner, and each of them quite differently. Each expedition anticipates a certain type of Mars inhabitant, but there is little similarity between them.

None of the survivors, Martian or Terran, learn anything from their experience. None of these expeditions leaves a trace of itself, except that when the fourth expedition arrives fourteen months after the third, its members find a town full of Martians who have been dead ten days from chicken pox (the author's device, perhaps, to make sure they will not repeat their tricks?). It is concluded that the Martians have been infected unintentionally by members of the third expedition—"and as quickly as that it was forgotten."¹ All that Earthmen can know, or care, is that the men of the third expedition landed on Mars and were never heard from again. Although some geographical features are named for the more eminent among them (p. 102), these expeditions might as well never have taken place. Or, of course, they could have occurred in a different order. It is justified, there-

Extrapolation, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0007 \$01.00/0

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fore, to talk about “April 2000: The Third Expedition” as if it were an independent work,² with not more than an occasional glance at the rest of the book.

“The Third Expedition” is a short (sixteen pages in the Bantam edition) and compact story. It observes the three classical unities of place (in and around the landed spaceship), of time (from one morning to the next), and of action. Plucking many chords of emotion, it moves deftly from utter bewilderment to revelation of conflict and swiftly to catastrophe. It is a masterpiece of its type. Later, we shall consider what that type is. The story divides itself naturally into three phases: (1) the idyll—from the landing to nightfall. The pace is leisurely, and this phase takes up the bulk of the tale, about thirteen pages. (2) the murders during the night. (3) the funeral in the morning. The last two are compressed into barely three pages.

Phase One. The spaceship is arriving on Mars. It carries a crew of seventeen, but one person has died en route. We are introduced to three of the survivors: John Black, captain; Samuel Hinkston, archaeologist; Lustig, navigator (perhaps Jews will not have first names in 2000 A.D.? No, it later turns out that it is David). The other men are neither named nor otherwise individualized. Black is eighty years old, but looks like forty—science in the second half of our century has rejuvenated him. Hinkston is forty-five; Lustig fifty. The spaceship has landed on a lawn in the middle of a town that down to the last small detail (a sheet of music entitled “Beautiful Ohio” sits on a piano) looks exactly like Green Bluff, Illinois (where Captain Black was raised), of long ago. They are later informed that the town is Green Bluff, Illinois, that it was founded in 1868, and that the year is 1926 (when Black was six years old).

The minds of the three men, understandably reeling, race through all sorts of theories to comprehend the incomprehensible. Have they, through an unexpected quirk of space travel, landed on Earth instead of Mars and thereby gone back in time? Have members of the first or second expedition survived and built—in an incredibly short time—a replica of an American town? Were space travel and the colonization of Mars secretly initiated before World War I? Has a super-clever and super-powerful psychiatrist then combatted nostalgia among the colonists by “rearranging the civilization” so that it increasingly resembles Earth, until “by some vast crowd hypnosis” he has convinced everyone that it really *is* Earth?

Naturally, none of these hypotheses seems in the least plausible. The men are left in a state of stupefied bewilderment until a shattering experience provides the straw of an explanation—each encounters some aspect from his past. Lustig sees his grandparents. Hinkston spies his old house and runs to it. Black encounters his brother Edward, who conducts him to their parents. The other men, who were left behind in the ship with orders to man the guns, have meanwhile forgotten their duty, abandoned the ship, and

mingled with a crowd of Martians who have festively assembled on the lawn. "Then each member of the crew, with a mother on one arm, a father or sister on the other, was spirited off down the street into little cottages or big mansions" (p. 42). And so an "explanation" of the awesome mystery is offered—through the grace of God, these deceased relatives have been given a second life, in a town on Mars that exactly duplicates their environment on Earth. By implication, the space trip has been providentially arranged to grant the sixteen Earthmen a reunion with their loved ones. The men are still confused, but they readily submit to their elders' admonitions not to question the Lord's infinite wisdom and mercy. The festivities come to an end; night falls. Groggy with happiness, the men lie down to sleep.

At this point it is perhaps appropriate to interrupt the narrative for some preliminary remarks on Phase One, be it only to note several features of the story that do not quite fit into its general sweep. No discrepancies appear at first reading, but on closer scrutiny they cannot be ignored. Though they may seem minor, they turn out to have great significance. I do not mean to say that the story as such is incredible. Of course it is. What I want to point out is that even if we accept the author's premises and treat the work as though it were a credible tale, there are still some things in the natural course of events that would have gone differently. It is for this reason that one must wonder why Bradbury placed his emphases in the curious way that he did.

When Lustig meets his grandparents, who have been dead for thirty years (in other words, they died when he was twenty) he "sounded as if at any moment he might go quite insane with happiness." He "sobbed . . . turned . . . kissed . . . hugged . . . held" (p. 40). That the men are overjoyed is natural. But is it natural for that joy to be so all-pervasive? Would anyone, suddenly coming face to face with the dead returned to life, feel nothing else? No admixture of horror, no trace of awe? No fleeting moment of resurgent animosity, no quick pang of guilt? Would a person touch the body that he saw buried years ago, without the least hesitation? Yet, in the story as told, there is not the slightest element of ambivalence. The negative feelings are totally absent. In the events that swiftly follow, however, these pent-up feelings break out with the elemental force of murderous fury.

Though the space travelers are grown, even old, men, they do not meet dead children or wives. Their reunion is with parents, grandparents, siblings—persons who died when the spacemen were young—representing ascending rather than descending relationships. Ed Black, the only sibling whose age is given, was seven years John's senior. When he died at twenty-six, John was nineteen.

They do not even think of others who may have died, or who were left behind on Earth, except for Captain Black, who fleetingly thinks of "Mari-

lyn" (not otherwise identified). After a brief hesitation, Ed tells him that she is out of town, but will be back in the morning. The dead have not aged. They are all exactly as they were at the moment of their deaths. The same motif occurs in an even weirder form in another of the stories, "April 2026: The Long Years."

There is a similar tendency to extend time backward in the description of the town. All that nostalgia would associate with a small American town of 1926 is here: an iron deer on the lawn, popular songs of the period, Victorian architecture, a robin singing in an apple tree, a grandfather clock, a brass band, front porches, and a turkey dinner. There is a "victrola," but no radio, no telephone, no automobile. It is an old-fashioned town remembered from childhood, more quintessentially so than a town ever truly was. Furthermore, we are given to understand that all the astronauts hail from places like Green Bluff, Illinois. Of course, no one knows what the distribution of the population of the United States will be in 2000. These men, however, must have been born in our own time, and we know that now some 80 percent of the population comes from cities or suburbs.

Another motif, mental influence, is only hinted at here and will be revealed in all its devastating import in Phase Two. Seeing the town, Black finds it so similar to Green Bluff that it frightens him. Then he is informed that it *is* Green Bluff. Yet, Hinkston, the archaeologist, makes the professional judgment that no artifact there is older than 1927. Two pages later, a stranger tells them that the year they have come to is 1926. Do the men discover these things because they are sharp enough to recognize the truth, or do they become true because the men think they are true? And it is Hinkston who spins out the fantastic theory about it all being the work of a master psychiatrist who influenced minds sufficiently to create an entire culture. It is the measure of Bradbury's skill that all these motifs are muted, unobtrusive. If the reader notices them at all, he does so subliminally. It also raises a question as to whether the author's skill may have operated more unconsciously than consciously.

Phase Two. Consummate skill characterizes Bradbury's transition from Phase One to Phase Two. Day and night, life and death are not in sharper contrast than these two, but one phrase bridges the abyss between them. Captain Black shares a bed with his brother Ed, the same brass bed they had shared in life, in the same room with the college pennants and such. They lie down, "side by side, as in the days how many decades ago?" They talk a little, then fall silent.

The room was square and quiet except for their breathing.
"Good night, Ed."

A pause. "Good night, John." (p. 45)

It is that phrase, "a pause," that makes the transition. The tumbling from

one joyful surprise to the next is over; the time has come to think. The shift is abrupt and complete. Phase Two has begun.

To prepare for the tremendous acceleration of his narrative, Bradbury skillfully narrows the focus. Of the sixteen men, only three are singled out for individual consideration. Then two of the three, Hinkston and Lustig drop away. The last part of Phase One is exclusively concerned with Black and his dead relatives (a residue, perhaps, of the hierarchic-patriarchic orientation so predominant in the science fiction of somewhat earlier days—if you can have the captain, why bother with lesser men?).

Phase Two consists almost entirely of Black's internal monologue. A quite new realization suddenly hits him: what if all he has lived in during this day has been a phantom world called into being by the Martians in order to destroy the invaders? That would mean that after taking all they needed to know from his mind, the Martians had conjured up the image of Green Bluff in 1926 and altered themselves to appear as the dead relatives. With their sixteen enemies safely bedded down, the Martians will spring a trap. In the night they will change back into their real selves and kill their guests.

At first Black naturally shrinks from these thoughts, but as he thinks through them, the theory becomes distressingly convincing. All the pieces fall into place, and the puzzling events assume a new, menacing meaning. He must act at once to rescue himself, for there is not a moment to lose. Unarmed, he cannot hope to subdue his pursuers, so he tries to sneak out. But what seemed to be his brother sleeping peacefully by his side has now become a Martian—wide awake, challenging him: "Captain John Black broke and ran across the room. He screamed. He screamed twice. He never reached the door" (p. 47). The long, leisurely spell of blissful illusion has been broken in one devastating moment. Like lightning, terrible and brief, truth has struck; it has brightly illuminated the scene, making everything clear in a flash, only to be extinguished by the stabs of death. But in what sense can we speak here of truth?

Any interpretation of an imaginative work like "The Third Expedition" is hazardous because it is bound to be subjective. Still, it is hard to see how anybody could read it any other way than to accept Black's last theory as the correct one; the outcome proves it. The various explanations that the men tentatively put together before they met their beloved dead are, of course, to be discarded. But even the theory that Mars is the abode of departed souls, which they dazedly accepted from their relatives, does not stand up. It was only make-believe in the purest sense of the word; the Martians made the Earthmen believe. It cannot explain why Black and his fifteen companions are murdered. Black's theory does.

To say that the theory is "correct" means that it is correct within the framework of the story. It is the premise of the story that the reunion with

the dead really happened, and if we accept this, we must also accept the explanation. In other words, if we willingly accept that the astronauts landing on Mars had the experiences described in the story, then we must also accept Black's final theory. Bradbury's art has compelled us to silence the voices of critical judgment within ourselves. However, Black's theory is in fact built on several large assumptions: (1) that the Martians are able, instantaneously and without any resources but their telepathic power, to probe Black's memories, drain his mind, and know everything he has ever known; (2) that the Martians have the power to compel their victims to perceive as real an entire world around them which does not in fact exist, and to blank out most genuine reality (though they still perceive each other, they fail to perceive the bleak Martian soil where they see green lawns, etc.); (3) that though they appear as loving relatives, the Martians are, in truth, malevolent, bent on killing. These are the assumptions that form the typical world picture of the paranoiac.

Phase Three. The story could have ended with John Black never reaching the door, but instead there is a brief coda. The reader's first impression is that the conclusion is simple and fitting. The Martians have murdered the sixteen strangers, and now they bury them with appropriate rites, except that the rites are not appropriate. The only purpose of the whole phantasmagoria was to lure the Earthmen to their deaths. Having achieved this, the Martians are by themselves. There is no discernible reason for them to maintain the macabre masquerade. Yet, to some extent they do. They weep; they pretend to mourn. For what? No one is left alive whom they could want to deceive.

This "effort aimed at a void" has worried science fiction critic Jörg Hienger, who in his book *Literarische Zukunftspheantastik* devotes several pages to Phase Three. If everything on Mars that resembles Earth, he asks, is but illusion—images telepathically extracted from the minds of the astronauts and hypnotically projected back into them—who has the illusion after the men are dead? He finds the question unanswerable. Given this fact and the even weightier observation that the entire ceremony serves no purpose for the Martians—and they, after all, are the ones who have arranged it—he concludes that Bradbury here postulates an end of rationality per se, thus achieving a powerful effect of the uncanny dissolving into the comical.³

Hienger's analysis has the redoubtable advantage of that rigorous logic that is the pride of German philosophy, but he applies the criterion of consistency to external events when it would be more fittingly applied to the mental processes of the author (more of that later). Bradbury may simply have felt, as his readers appear to feel, that the burial is a proper and soothing ending, with its comic relief welcome after a night of horror. Phase One offered the fulfillment in fantasy of deep longings, Phase Two of deep fears.

We have come to identify with the hero, to whom these were vouchsafed; now we would want for him what we would want for ourselves should tragic death overtake us—a decent burial. How many people are there who have not drawn satisfaction from imagining their own funeral, with all those who in life offended them among the mourners—“when it’s too late, you’ll be sorry.” This is an infinitely more banal interpretation than Hienger’s, but that is no reason to reject it. The reader’s first impression may not have been so far off after all.

From here there are two roads to an understanding of what “The Third Expedition” is all about. We can (1) analyze the mental processes in the characters as though these were actual persons, that is, as though Bradbury had written a case history, or a tale of people who could possibly exist and the situations to which they are compelled to react could possibly arise. Or, we can (2) consider the events as projections of the author’s mind. We will take route 1 first.

Bradbury deals with three types of deviant mental functioning: illusions, defined as misinterpretations of actual perceptions (trivial optical illusions are the best-known examples); hallucinations, defined as perceptions subjectively experienced without appropriate objective stimulus (such as seeing somebody who is not there); and delusions, defined as false judgments without rational basis (the belief of a psychotic that he is Jesus Christ is a popular example). The hallucinating person may be aware to various degrees that his senses deceive him. The hallucination raises a question, though no answer may be forthcoming. Delusions provide answers, though there may have been no obvious question. The men, faced with the hallucinations that provide the foundation of Phase One, look frantically for an answer. In Phase Two, they find one.

The lines between these three types of malfunctioning are fluid, and there are mixed forms. There is also an infinite variety in degree of firmness and impact, from the hardly noticeable to the overpowering. In fact, illusions, hallucinations, and delusions can only be called deviations or malfunctions in the sense that an ideally operating mental apparatus would be free of them. But nobody’s is. They occur fleetingly in normal life. They may be provoked in more substantial form by various kinds of illness, by drugs, or by any stress. Only in their more malignant forms do they become indicative of physical or mental illness.

Phase One is saturated with hallucinations. A web so complete that it covers the entire scene and blots out almost all normal perception does not exist in reality, so it is unavoidable that the men look for an agent beyond human experience to have caused the phenomenon. Two questions arise. Why do the men shift from their original attitude of thinking of the cause as a benevolent agent (Hinkston proclaims at an early stage that “certainly a town like this could not occur without divine intervention”) to the as-

sumption of a radically malevolent agent? And why is the “good” agent seen as supernatural (“divine intervention”) while the evil one (“incredibly brilliant” Martians) is not?

In deciding that his experiences are the work of a superhuman power, Black follows, though unaware, a hoary tradition. Primitive men attributed all extraordinary events to the action of superhuman beings—spirits, demons, gods. The external appearance of these imagined beings was an unequivocal revelation of their nature; the inimical ones among them were of ghastly ugliness. We have only to look at idols that men did not adore, but rather tried to propitiate to find proof. These idols entered Christianity and the tradition of Western civilization condensed in the form of the Devil. He is still surpassingly ugly. His suspect exterior has rubbed off on literature and the arts. The villain in many popular nineteenth-century novels and plays is invariably recognizable for what he is. The young girl he wants to seduce, exploit, and ruin is incarnate innocence. Modern audiences wonder how she can be so naïve that she is not immediately warned by his black moustache and shifty eyes. But we have not always done much better. The beings that have replaced the Devil are still monsters. J.R.R. Tolkien, who consciously harks back to the Middle Ages, holds a middle line: the good are not necessarily the beautiful, but those on the side of Sauron are, as the saying has it, ugly as Hell.

Growing sophistication has wrought a fundamental change in another respect. Men, now believing that they have a soul that matters more than the body, are no longer annihilated by brute force. The frontal assault is detoured through their minds. The Devil, who in the medieval version wrung Dr. Faustus’ neck as though he were killing a chicken, now works by seduction. He is not only the Prince of Darkness but also the Father of Lies. His principal “lie” is his ability to deceive his victims by setting all they desire before their eyes—by making them hallucinate. Legends are full of such instances.

It is a wide jump in time, but not much of a leap in substance from here to “The Third Expedition.” What has happened is that the poor Devil has been secularized. In our enlightened age, we find it easier to believe in malignant octopuses on Mars than in him. God has also been secularized (in Arthur C. Clarke’s *2001*, for instance, His role has been reassigned to the slabs and their masters), but not as completely. Belief in Him is still widespread and respectable. So, it does not jar that Black believes in God, but not in the Devil; that when he needs to postulate a benign influence he resorts to the idea of divine intervention, and when he needs to postulate an evil one, he turns to the Martians. But why does he have to switch from good to evil at all? Here it is instructive to consider Bradbury’s immediate forerunners.

To postulate alien intelligences endowed with the hallucinogenic power

that earlier ages reserved for the Devil and his cohorts is commonplace in science fiction; so much so that Hienger goes as far as to think that any alert reader versed in science fiction will have anticipated the solution long before Black proclaims it (which would be a pity, since suspense would be gone). In *Seekers of Tomorrow*, Sam Moskowitz cites two more direct precursors, both strikingly similar to Bradbury's tale: Campbell's *Brain Stealers of Mars* (1936) and especially Stanley G. Weinbaum's "A Martian Odyssey" (1934). Weinbaum's desert octopus (or whatever it is—he refers to it as "the Dream-Beast" or simply "the black horror") has undisputably the same hallucinogenic powers that make Captain Black's adversaries so formidable and uses them to similar sinister ends. It is more enlightening, though, to review the differences in Bradbury's and Weinbaum's treatment of the same motif.

Weinbaum uses it in one of many equally incredible adventures. He does not seem to know what jewel he holds in his hands, giving it away so lightly. The event remains without consequence. The loyal Martian "ostrich" protects the hero from succumbing to the lure, as in effect this intended victim remains indestructible through all his harrowing experiences. With Bradbury, the hallucinogenic power is squarely the core of the plot, and it is victorious. Resistance is impossible. Far from being inconsequential, the stratagem is decisive. The hallucination is less complete in Weinbaum's tale—the baiting apparition stands in an otherwise unaffected Martian landscape—while in Bradbury's the hallucination is all-embracing. Weinbaum has the alien power more or less reveal itself in defeat, but with Bradbury it remains, in victory, beyond perception. Its lack of shape and the absence of hints as to its nature enhance the uncanny atmosphere in "The Third Expedition."

There is a more fundamental difference: the role of the hallucinated person in the life of the victim. Weinbaum's character, Jarvis, thinks of Fancy Long, a New York entertainer on the as yet uninvented television, who is evidently a flirt. He may have had an affair with her, but all he will say is, "I know her pretty well—just friends, get me?" Do we get him? That was published in 1934. In any event, she clearly represents normal, conventional, adult heterosexual attraction. Things are totally different on Bradbury's Mars. Overt sexuality is absent and is kept out by the incest barrier: since all the beloved dead are blood relatives, there are no friends or "just friends." Rather, the relationship is anchored in the victim's childhood, long before adult love relationships could emerge. Moreover, the relatives are all dead, while Fancy Long is very much alive.

The comparison with Weinbaum's story makes the core of Phase One even clearer than the oddities we noted earlier. Phase One is a regression to childhood. The ambivalence of childhood was absent, having been repressed in passage to adolescence. Such ambivalence, however much of it

there may have been in actual childhood, has no place in remembered childhood. Time has come to a standstill—as it always does in the unconscious. When we dream of a person we have not seen since childhood, we see him as he was then, not as we know he is now. The mental influencing, too, fits more naturally into the outlook of a child, since so much of his experience is of being manipulated by beings more powerful and of more penetrating intelligence than he is.

We are now in a position to see why the shift from the benign to the malign was unavoidable. It was the reaction to the fling beyond human limits that is embodied in Phase One. The dynamics of human development do not permit going backwards. But in Phase One the men *have* gone back, have indulged in regression. The overwhelming bliss they feel stems from their being allowed to wallow without restraint in regression. E. P. Bernabeu, author of one of the few psychological studies on science fiction stresses this point in a passage devoted to “The Third Expedition”: “The reliving of his ‘happiest moments’ is evidently in the author’s plot a form of autistic gratification for which the condign punishment of the ‘explorers’ is their destruction.”⁴ This somewhat theoretical formulation is supplemented by observation on actual behavior. People love to “go back to childhood,” certainly, but it has to be a prettified childhood. Disneyland and its numberless imitations are huge successes. They reconstruct childhood fantasies. When it comes to a more real reliving of childhood, people hesitate. They shy away from psychoanalysis, but also from more mundane endeavors. The newspapers reported in June, 1977, that the inventor of Kitty Litter had developed Jones, Michigan, into a replica, as faithful as possible, of a typical town of some years ago (Green Bluff, Illinois, circa 1926?). However, the expected tourists did not come. Everything had to be auctioned off. He had invested \$1,500,000 and retrieved \$190,000.

The punishment for Black and his crew had to be more severe. They had “drunk the milk of paradise.” Their “condign punishment” must be death. Therefore, the shift from divine intervention to the infernal machinations of Martians logically follows. It sets the tone for Phase Two. Moreover, it unifies the two very different phases. We can now take a closer look at outstanding problems that run through both phases: the subject of mental influencing and the question of the identity of the “relatives.”

That somebody mistakes a person he encounters for a close relative, or sees a relative who is not there, is of course not an everyday occurrence, but it is not particularly rare. It is invariably a relative of deep emotional significance for the viewer. The experience is always surprising and often has a great impact. Many examples from both fiction and nonfiction could be given, but a few will suffice. The interest in extraordinary experiences around the moment of death has brought a spate of testimonials. Several

years ago, *McCall's* related the story of a woman who had been given up by her doctors:

As I lay in my bed I opened my eyes—and there, standing around my bed, were both sets of my grandparents, whom I had loved very much and who had died years before. I saw them as vividly as I am looking at you now . . . they looked just as I knew them when I was a girl. . . . I wanted to go with them . . . I felt such peace and love from their presence . . . and I have never again been afraid of death.⁵

Winston Smith, in George Orwell's *1984* (1948), under a stress that approaches or even surpasses that of imminent death, thinks he recognizes his mother in a fellow prisoner. The idea is not as unreasonable as it may seem because his mother had disappeared many years ago, and he has no way of knowing whether she is still alive or what she might be like now. On the other hand, he has no reason to think that she would be in the same prison as he at the same time or that she would look like that other woman.

The use of this motif in literature sometimes approaches the metaphorical. Heinrich Lersch, a German pacifist poet who wrote shortly after World War I, relates in a poem how he saw a dead soldier entangled in the barbed wire in front of his trench and how from day to day he became more convinced that it was his brother (of course, he was not). Similar episodes are found in autobiographical writings of former mental patients. For example, Fritz Peters relates in *The World Next Door* (1949) how he thought, for no manifest reason, that an elderly fellow patient was his father. An encounter that does not involve clearcut mistaken identity but is relevant to our study because of the abrupt shift of feeling and roles is found in Arthur Schnitzler's *Flight into Darkness*.⁶ The protagonist develops paranoia. As his brother, who is trying to lead him back to human companionship, embraces him, the sick man feels attacked by a hostile force and stabs him through the heart.

The idea of being influenced or indeed dominated by powerful enemies who exert a mysterious influence on the mind has, of course, long been recognized as a characteristic symptom of paranoia and related conditions. Especially since Viktor Tausk's pioneering study *On the Origin of the "Influencing Machine" in Schizophrenia* (1919), the mechanism of this delusion and its role in the development of the disease have been better understood. Psychiatric practice considers it, rightly, a symptom of clear and ominous meaning.

This is not the place to discuss the lamentable phenomenon, with its overtones of credulity combined with surrender of autonomy, that nowadays more people who are not themselves paranoid will accept this special delusion than ever before. We must also forego examining whether the

latest technological “progress” has in fact made such an assumption more credible than it was in earlier times. The increased willingness to believe in mental influencing is no doubt part of the general loss of certainty resulting from the fact that so much that used to be impossible has become possible, and so it is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that everything is possible. It is also partly due to the increased empathy with the mentally ill, praiseworthy where it means greater tolerance, questionable where it tends toward apotheosis.

It is not inappropriate here, perhaps, to invoke the noble shade of the knight of the sad countenance, who has for centuries served as the paradigm of the man who lives by his illusions, hallucinations, and delusions: Don Quixote. His nobility is predicated on his world of the imagination being nobler than the shabby reality around him, and on his willingness to give everything except his honor to prove that his fantasies have a deeper reality than that of the commonplace real, and that he could live up to these standards. Can the same be said of Black and his companions?

We have now traveled along route 1 for a considerable stretch. We have come quite close to our goal, but it has proved a longwinded road. How about the second route? We will now consider the content of the story as a projection of contents in the author’s mind. We can do so for a simple and basic reason: the characters in the story do not exist except in the author’s mind. This is true of all fiction, though to different degrees; least of all in historical fiction, moreso in realistic fiction, and to the highest degree in tales like “The Third Expedition.” The characters’ minds have no independent existence, because the characters themselves are only creatures of the author. They see, feel, think, and act the way they do because the author makes them see, feel, think, and act in that way, not because it is their nature.

This does not mean, of course, that an author necessarily shares his characters’ perceptions and emotions. No writer worth his salt is limited to portraying himself. For instance, he may describe a man committing a crime, without ever having done so himself. Nevertheless, the thought of the crime must be in the writer; his mind must encompass the potential. He may fight it within himself, and the struggle may be the very reason why he describes it. To realize this is of particular importance for understanding delusions in literature. If John Black were living in a normal world, the idea of his brother changing into a Martian and killing him would clearly be a delusion, but he lives in an abnormal world. The truth of his idea is confirmed by events, so technically it is not a delusion. But the point is irrelevant. The author knows that the world into which Black has been flung is itself but a figment. He knows that Black’s theory *is* delusion.

This can perhaps be made clearer if we look at the phenomenon from a morphological viewpoint. Whatever the character’s perceptions, emotions,

and reasoning in relation to reality—be it genuine reality or the “reality” of the story—they are illusions, hallucinations, and delusions in *form*. And just as a move in a game derives its significance only from the rules of the game, so here the form is what matters, because the reality has been rigged by the author. He has set the rules of the game. Because an author has stacked the cards against his characters, his work is resonant with irony. Eric Rabkin misses—or ignores—the point when in *The Fantastic in Literature* he speaks of “the sweetly lyrical romanticism of Ray Bradbury in *The Martian Chronicles*.” The sweetness is only skin-deep. The flesh underneath writhes with horror.

The author’s role may be obscured rather than elucidated by taking it for granted that “The Third Expedition” is science fiction, as is often done, merely because Bradbury is a science fiction writer. It is true, of course, that he is. But while it is convenient to pigeonhole an author in a specific genre, it is equally obvious that this is an oversimplification. Some of the finest science fiction stories are the work of celebrated “mainstream” writers (R. Kipling, E. M. Forster, E. B. White, and A. France come to mind), and science fiction writers have written nonscience fiction. We cannot say, “It’s called science fiction, so it is science fiction.” We must measure “The Third Expedition” against the criteria of a rational definition.

L. Sprague De Camp, in his *Science Fiction Handbook* (1953), offers this: “fiction based on scientific or pseudo-scientific assumptions (space travel, robots, telepathy, earthly immortality, etc.) or laid in a patently unreal although not supernatural setting (the future, another world, and so forth). . . .” Even though De Camp cast his net wide, works like “The Third Expedition” would be caught. But that was a generation ago. Since then the genre has grown, branched out, matured. Sharper differentiation has become a necessity. There is consensus nowadays that science fiction should be distinguished from such adjacent types as fantasy, weird fiction, and the Gothic story. Even utopian fiction, long in eclipse, has recovered sufficiently to claim much of the territory that by default had gone to science fiction. The classical definition that H. Bruce Franklin gave in *Future Perfect* (1966) represents the prevailing modern thinking:

Science fiction seeks to describe reality in terms of a credible hypothetical invention—past, present, or, most usually, future—extrapolated from that reality; fantasy seeks to describe present reality in terms of an impossible alternative to that reality. . . . Science fiction views what is by projecting what not inconceivably could be; fantasy views what is by projecting what could not be.⁸

“The Third Expedition” makes “pseudo-scientific assumptions,” uses a “patently unreal setting,” “projects what could not be.” It is science fiction by criteria of times past, not by current criteria. This is important because it sheds light on the author’s intentions, or at least on what intentions he does

not have. He does not care to explore scientific developments or future human societies. He does not contribute to any of the educational or uplifting effects ascribed to science fiction: better understanding of the world we live in through better understanding of science, enthusiasm for the marvels that the future holds in store for the human race, etc. He carefully leaves such opportunities unexploited. For example, we hear next to nothing about the actual space trip, nothing about the real Mars, and nothing about the spacemen's equipment (except that they have "guns" and "atomic weapons"). Moreover, the density of oxygen in the Martian atmosphere is one-thousandth of what it is in ours. Although this was learned only through recent space probes and earlier estimates were much higher—as much as one-hundredth of ours—still, it was evident that men would not be able to breathe on Mars without special apparatus. Bradbury must have known this, yet, he chose to ignore it. He is not interested in the air the men breathe, the soil under their feet, or the ship they came in. He is interested in what goes on inside them.

The key is in his method. His technique of projecting his characters' inner life, of making it visible to his readers, is to describe events that happen in the characters' minds as though they were happening in the outside world. Obversely, what he presents as occurring on the outside—in the "reality" of his tale—is actually what goes on in the minds of his characters, and nothing else. "Out of sight, out of mind" has been reversed into "out of mind, out of sight." This method has not been much studied and does not seem to have a name yet, perhaps because it seems to be an innovation of the post-realistic era, although it is actually quite old. We find it in ancient fairy tales, in works of the Romantics, and in such modern writers as Hermann Hesse (who experimented with it brilliantly in *Demian* and *Steppenwolf*) and Franz Kafka. We are not told, for instance, that Gregor Samsa in *Metamorphosis* thinks he is a cockroach; we are told that he is changed into a cockroach (or whatever species of "vermin" best fits Kafka's description). The claim that this is the specific method of these writers, and that the Bradbury of "The Third Expedition" is one of them, is admittedly bold. It is based on nothing more solid than subjective impression, but it proves its worth by providing the foundation for a coherent interpretation. I know of no other approach that can.

What does the writer really do? What makes him do it? What gift does he have? These questions are of great interest to psychologists, but for a long time they were leery of tackling them. Without the concept of the unconscious, the questions could not even be approached. Freud had too much respect for the Muses to be hasty about studying them. When the collapse of the seemingly stable European civilization in World War I compelled psychology to look at problems beyond individual scope, Paul Federn, a "first generation" psychoanalyst, coined this formulation in a book pub-

lished in 1919: "What we can observe in early childhood as contents of fantasies and objects of anxiety works as unconscious forces hidden in the adult, to come to light misshapen in the delusion of the ill or wellformed in the work of the artist."⁹ Much exploration has been done since then, but Federn's terse pronouncement has stood up. It fits "The Third Expedition" amazingly well.

Pertinent observations could, of course, be made before. When Goethe was unhappy in love and Charlotte married another man, he did not shoot himself. He wrote the story of Werther, who did. Charles Morice, a French art critic, wrote an article in 1885 reviewing the work of Odilon Redon who had produced astounding graphics, the counterpart in art of what works like *The Martian Chronicles* represent in literature (the best science fiction art is not necessarily found in illustrations of science fiction stories). Morice speaks of the double meaning of the word "dream." (Obviously it means one thing when we think of what we dreamt last night and when Martin Luther King, Jr., says, "I have a dream.") Morice says: "The meaning we must give the word "dream" is neither that of colloquial speech and prose (involuntary visions in sleep), nor the rare and poetic one (voluntary visions while awake). It is this and it is that, it is waking and sleeping. It is in truth the dream of a dream, the voluntary ordering of involuntary visions."¹⁰ It is this ordering of the disordered that makes the art we are dealing with what it is.

Notes

1. Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles* (New York: Bantam, 1976), p. 51. All page numbers will refer to this paperback edition.
2. It was actually published in *Planet Stories* (Fall 1948) under the title "Mars is Heaven," two years before the book appeared.
3. Jörg Hiener, *Literarische Zukunftsphantastik: Eine Studie über Science Fiction* (Göttingen: Wandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1972), pp. 224–28.
4. E. P. Bernabeu, "Science Fiction: A New Mythos," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 26 (1957), 529.
5. Mary Ann O'Roark, "I Have Never Again Been Afraid of Death," *McCall's*, Nov. 1976, p. 96.
6. Arthur Schnitzler, *Flight into Darkness*, trans. William A. Drake (New York: AMS Press, 1972). This is a reprint of the 1931 edition.
7. Quoted in Bernabeu, p. 528.
8. Franklin M. Bruce, *Future Perfect: American Science Fiction of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), p. 3.
9. Paul Federn, *Zur Psychologie der Revolution: die vaterlose Gesellschaft* (Vienna: Anzengruber-Verlag, 1919), p. 17.
10. Charles Morice, "La Semaine," *Petite Tribune Républicaine*, 2 April 1885; quoted in Odilon Redon, *Dessins, Eaux-fortes, Lithographies* (Paris: Le Bateau Lavoir, 1969), n. pag.

Utopian Eden of *Lost Horizon*

JOHN W. CRAWFORD

■ Many authors, from ancient times to modern, have used the Eden motif, or at least parts of it, in their works. The setting is sometimes used alone, sometimes with the narrative. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is an outstanding example of this. Others range from the ancient Greek Pandora story to Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* and William Golding's contemporary novel *The Inheritors*. One of the most fascinating twentieth-century examples is the 1933 best-selling novel *Lost Horizon*, by James Hilton.

According to Robert C. Elliott in *The Shape of Utopia*, "Most writers of fictional utopias have had far more interest in the socio-political aspects of their work than in the fiction, which they have considered largely instrumental."¹ Hilton's novel, however, illustrates the opposite of this. He does not set out to create a serious plan for utopia, but the utopia emerges as an integral part of his fiction. He hopes to convey a mood, a "message of the peril of war to all that we mean by the word 'civilization.'"²

World War I, followed by world-wide depression, caused a melancholy mood in the West. The tremendous spirit of optimism inherited from the Victorian era suffered its greatest jolt from these two closely related events. As one writer comments in retrospect, "Just as the whole world is accepting it, Western civilization begins to totter. The World War was more than a gesture toward suicide; and the present economic debacle is no accidental or transient crisis; it is the culminative collapse of competitive capitalism. . . . The old sureties in religion and morals and goals of life are crumbling."³

This is, of course, not a new sound in the Western world social order.

Extrapolation, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0008 \$01.00/0

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John Donne's "All Coherence Gone" sums up quite well the attitude of the seventeenth-century thinker in the wake of apparent social disorder, and Matthew Arnold's poetic comment that late Victorians are "living between two worlds / one dead, the other powerless to be born" suggests the dilemma of the changing order of the nineteenth. And as in all such crises, there is a frantic search for security. Often that security is found in another order, usually a primitive one immune to the decay of the present scene, in fact, another Eden. For the early twentieth century, this Eden is the East.

Just as eighteenth-century England became enamored of Orientalism, so does the twentieth-century Englishman begin seeing man's hope resting in the isolated, primitive setting of marble palaces, running streams, flowing fountains, and afternoon teas in shady bowers—a virtual Edenic Shangri-La.

Irving Babbitt, in an essay published in *The Bookman* in late 1931, assesses the social scene in a striking fashion: "In order to escape from the baleful excess of Americanism (the cult of power and machinery and material comfort), Europe is inclined to turn towards the East."⁴ The romantic of the 1930s looking for an escape from the burgeoning materialistic and technological world found a safe, secure home in the Orient, a place of marble palaces, azure seas, quiet, and calm. One participant in the Paris symposium on world affairs held in the early 1930s summed it up splendidly: "The Orient is calm, peace, beauty, colour, mystery, charm, sunlight, joy, ease of life and reverie; in fine the exact opposite of our hateful and grotesque civilization."⁵

Kipling had been doing his share in romanticizing the East. In the India he lived in and wrote about for years, he always seemed to find a way of coloring the seamier sides of life to make them more glamorous than they really were. The sort of thing he writes in "Mandalay" illustrates the mood of his style:

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', and I know she tinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the temple-bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay."

Although this verse was written in the late 1890s, the fascination for the Orient continued, and in the 1930s Kipling became fashionable in Hollywood and in British film studios. In 1935 *Clive of India* was filmed in addition to *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, and in 1936, the year of Kipling's death, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. Philip French offers as the reason for such popularity in America the fact that "there was a desire to escape from the horrifying uncertainties of the American present to a world of fixed values remote from the Depression era."⁶

Both Kipling's work and that of H. Rider Haggard, a very close friend,

very effectively display the characteristics of Rousseau's primitivism. In Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1886) and in *She* (1887), for example, the heroes continually raise their eyes to the hills and beyond. *She* was eventually followed by *Ayesha, or the Return of She* (1905), continuing the theme. And, it is in this tradition that Hilton writes *Lost Horizon*.

Hilton uses a journey as the vehicle for his story. The journey is that of "Glory" Conway, suave diplomat, adventurer, and patriot, who, with others, is kidnapped to Shangri-La, a lamasery in unexplored Tibet, which bears many striking resemblances to the utopia of Eden. The story is not relayed by Conway, however, but by Rutherford, a friend who has experienced his own journey searching for Conway but has been unsuccessful in bringing him back to England.

The vanguard of Shangri-La is a cone-shaped, snowcapped mountain, standing higher than all the rest. Its perfection is in direct contrast to the wild, rugged, uncontrolled terrain which surrounds the valley for thousands of miles in every direction. Conway thinks of the mountain as a lighthouse (p. 74). The valley is very isolated and is reached either by aid of the valley people, or by accident, by those just on the point of death. If Eden was guarded by its immortal angel, Shangri-La is guarded almost as effectively by the ageless rocky crags, snow, and strong wind of the Tibetan plateau.

The valley is "an enclosed paradise of amazing fertility" (p. 97). An abundance of vegetation and water are to be found, along with almost unlimited time for rest and freedom to pursue whatever task is meaningful to the individual. The very highest attainments in all fields are possible. Besides meeting the basic needs, the most exquisite things are to be found here—from collections of art, to music, to knowledge, to religion. The whole illustrates a balance and rarity so fragile that it could be easily destroyed at any time by those who do not understand or appreciate its worth. "Beauty," says Conway, "lies at the mercy of those who do not know how to value it. It is a fragile thing that can only live where fragile things are loved" (p. 193). And over all is Karakal, the mountain of the Blue Moon, whose massive force could some day fill the valley and destroy everything, adding to the outside threat of perverted humanity.

The dominant belief among the people is that of moderation or balance in all things, avoiding every kind of excess or stress. "Including, if you will pardon the paradox, excess of virtue itself," comments Chang, Conway's guide in Shangri-La. The lamas are, characteristically, moderate even in pursuit of their individual tasks, as there are no time pressures. If each of the lamas has a purpose in life, so does the lamasery as a whole: in effect, to be a sanctuary for all the treasures of civilization, so that when war has destroyed all, man can "seek its lost and legendary treasures. And they will

all be here, hidden in the valley of the Blue Moon, preserved as by a miracle for a new Renaissance . . ." (p. 181).

The High Lama is the highest wisdom, next to God, in the valley. Although he is considered a legend by the valley people, and capable of miracles, the Lama himself knows very well his weaknesses and his mortality. It is interesting that the same kind of misunderstanding is also applied to Conway, who is considered both a hero and a coward at various times and knows himself to be neither. Conway is so in sympathy with the concepts of the valley, that for him "the name Blue Moon took on a symbolic meaning, as if the future, so delicately plausible were of a kind that might happen once in a blue moon only" (p. 151).

But if Eden had its serpent, its outside evil influence, Shangri-La also has its element of discontent. It comes in the form of Mallinson, the deputy counsel. While the others see beauty in the valley and want to stay, Mallinson sees only filth and evil. He sees the lamas as "wizened old men crouching like spiders for anyone who comes near" (p. 192). His distrust causes Conway to "fall," that is, to leave Shangri-La. This is not because of ambition on Conway's part, but because he feels that he must protect Mallinson from the rigors of the mountain and guide him back to the outside world where he can be happy. Of the ones who leave Shangri-La, only Conway survives, and only he with great physical difficulty. As soon as he is able, he does everything he can to regain his lost paradise, his Eden. It is theoretically possible for man to reenter Shangri-La, although the journey is extremely difficult and few survive. Conway is willing to give up everything, even his life, in order to attempt the recovery.

Hilton's purpose in *Lost Horizon* is very similar to that of H. G. Wells in much of his future-oriented writing. Wells had lived through World War I as had Hilton, and both had seen the devastation not only to England, but to mankind all over the European world. The useless bloodshed and horror and the unchangeableness of man's thirst for war led Wells and Hilton both to make predictions regarding the possibility of another great war.⁷ Although Wells's *Men Like Gods* and Hilton's *Lost Horizon* take different approaches to the same problem, they both seek a similar Eden of bliss. In Wells's story we find the Samurai have become self-reliant, noble supermen-leaders through education, the "food" of the gods. In Hilton's story, the lamas have achieved mastery through dedication to moderation, a recurring eighteenth-century Rasselasian idea, a scientific approach in its attention to following the laws of nature. Both writers believed that man could look at the future scientifically. Wells expresses this effectively in *The Discovery of the Future*:

All applied mathematics resolves into computation to foretell things which otherwise can only be determined by trial. Even in so unscientific a science as eco-

nomics there have been forecasts. And if I am right in saying that science aims at prophecy, and if the specialist in each science is in fact doing his best now to prophecy within the limits of his field, what is there to stand in the way of our building up this body of forecast into an ordered picture of the future that will be just as certain, just as strictly science, and perhaps just as detailed as the picture that has been built up within the last hundred years of the geological past?⁸

There are obvious differences between Eden and Shangri-La. The settings, although very similar, are of a separate place and time. Eden is certainly more primitive in its appeal, while Shangri-La takes into account the sophistication and complexities of the modern world and its people. In effect, it has built, in Wells's words, the forecast of the future into an ordered picture which man wants to hold tenaciously to.

Even though all this is true, both Edenic utopias go back to the basic needs of men. In their separate ways they provide both the basic stuff of life, and the satisfaction of the highest longings. Both utopias are literally unattainable; they are dreams that "dissolve like all too lovely things, at the first touch of reality . . ." (p. 196). But in their wake, they leave a feeling of hope, so that man is never entirely destitute. He is free to strive, and this alone helps to give meaning to life.

Notes

1. *The Shape of Utopia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 111.
2. James Hilton, "Preface," *Lost Horizon* (New York: William Morrow, 1933), p. viii. All other citations are to this volume.
3. Edwin R. Embree, "Facing East," *The Atlantic Monthly*, 154 (July-December, 1934), 350.
4. "Romanticism and the East," *The Bookman*, 74 (December, 1931), 350.
5. "Romanticism and the East," p. 351.
6. "Kipling and the Movies," *The Age of Kipling*, ed. John Gross (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 165.
7. Howard Ozman, "H.G. Wells and *Men Like Gods*," in *Utopias and Education* (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Co., 1969), p. 99.
8. Cited in Ozman, p. 98.

Italian Science Fiction for the 1980s

GEORGE L. WILLIAMS

■ Palazzo dei Congressi (Convention Hall), Stresa, Italy. The bustle, clamor, and enthusiasm of over 800 science fiction writers, publishers, editors, illustrators, and fans echo and re-echo throughout the Palazzo. From the first to the fourth of May, 1980, they attended the 5th Eurocon, European Science Fiction Convention (C.E.F.S.), on the majestic shores of Lago Maggiore.

Welcomed by the co-presidents of C.E.S.F., John Brunner of Great Britain and Eremej Parnov of the Soviet Union, those in attendance were treated to a series of talks, lectures, and seminars, which were simultaneously translated into three languages, as well as to theater performances, films, and documentaries. Representatives came from twenty countries.¹ Italy served as the host country, and in fact the majority of delegates were Italians; they dominated the gathering.

Italians won five out of the a possible fourteen prizes awarded under the title "Premio Europa 1980" ("European Award 1980") for outstanding science fiction works that appeared in 1979. Franco Storchi was honored as best illustrator; publisher Editrice Nord's *Fantacollana* was voted the best specialized professional publication; Roberto Bonadimani's cartoon "Rosa di Stelle" and Luigi Cozzi's film "Scontri Stellari" were also award winners. A special "Premio Italiano 1980," granted only to Italians, was presented; there were first, second, and third prize winners in eight categories (e.g., novel, short story, illustrators, cartoons, essays, films, etc.). Voted upon by participating Italian science fiction members, *L'insidia dei*

Extrapolation, Vol. 22, No. 2

0014-5483/81/0222-0009 \$01.00/0

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Kryan by Virginio Marafante was cited as the best Italian *fantascienza* (science fiction) novel for the year.

At the convention, many Italians such as Franco Fossati, Sebastiano Fusco, Karel Thole, Giacinto Spagnoletti, and Inisero Cremaschi spoke. Fossati addressed the members on "Some Thoughts about SF Comics" ("Alcune considerazioni sui fumetti di fantascienza") and Fusco spoke on "Myth and SF" ("Il Mito e la fantascienza"). Karel Thole's topic was more personal, "My SF Outlook" ("Come vedo la SF"); literary critic Spagnoletti dealt with "The Anticipatory Novel from 1700 to the Present" ("Il romanzo d'anticipazione dal '700 ai nostri giorni"), and writer-editor Cremaschi focused on "Italian SF in 1980" ("1980 il punto sulla fantascienza italiano").

Many other Italian speakers, such as science fiction writers Gilda Musa, Luigi Menghini, Daniela Piegai, and Riccardo Scagnoli, responded to questions from the audience. In answer to one of them, Piegai and Scagnoli delineated some of the principal differences between fantasy literature and science fiction literature as well as some of the substantial divergencies between Italian and Anglo-Saxon science fiction.

The location of the 5th European Science Fiction Convention in Italy seemed particularly appropriate this year because of the tremendous increase in Italian *fantascienza* interest—more advocates and fans; greater critical approval; an extended number of readers; augmentation in books and magazines, films and cartoons. Although Italian science fiction is not well known outside Italy, it is nonetheless thriving and deep in the midst of an innovative period. It has come a long way since the early essays of Sergio Solmi, whose two-volume science fiction anthology entitled *Le meraviglie del possibile, 1959–1961* (*The Marvels of the Possible*) highlighted an early Italian interest in the genre. In 1962 Lino Aldani edited a science fiction magazine called *Futuro* which was soon discontinued. Apparently Italian readers were more interested in the science fiction of the British and American writers—Asimov, Bradbury, Heinlein—than in their own.

In 1972 the publisher Dall'Oglio began a *fantascienza* series called "Andromeda," edited by Inisero Cremaschi, which included Anglo-Saxon authors as well as such Italian writers as Gilda Musa, Anna Rinonapoli, and Gustavo Gasparini. "Andromeda" then included a collection of short stories by various authors—Gasparini, Pandolfi, Pederiali, Sandrelli, Turone, Rinonapoli, Musa, and others—entitled *Zoo-fantascienza* (*Science Fiction Zoo*).

In a concise history of Italian science fiction, Cremaschi described *Zoo-fantascienza* as "an anthology that for the first time compared American writers with Italian writers. The intent was to raise the special literature of the vast logic-fantasy river developed by us. The comparison with the Americans did not lower, but rather exalted, the Italian writers. . . . The

animals—imagined, invented, and dreamed of by the authors—become the ecstatic protagonists of a future Eden that is perhaps far fetched but not unthinkable.”² After the success of *Zoo-fantascienza*, there was an abundance of Italian science fiction works for the general public. The 1970s saw the furthest expansion of *fantascienza* centering more on Italian themes and settings, such as Gilda Musa’s *Dossier extraterrestri* (*Extraterrestrial Dossiers*) based upon actual prehistoric graffiti found in Val Camonica in northern Italy. Greater emphasis was also placed on Italian talent. De Vecchi, a Milanese publisher, has recently organized a new science fiction series entitled “Presenze del futuro” (“Presences of the Future”), focusing exclusively on Italian authors. In this series a new prize-winning book by Gilda Musa, *Esperimento donna* (*Experiment Woman*), contains a brief novel with seven short stories.

In addition to writing science fiction, Gilda Musa is a well known poetess. She has studied and translated both English and German poetry. Her new novella *Esperimento donna* deals with beings on another planet who must confront Earthlings who bring corruption to their paradise. Enzo Maizza, literary critic, writes: “Showing the failure of those who want to humanize the ‘different’, Musa discloses the conflict between the reality which is in us and the fantastic which is outside of us.”³ Another reviewer, in *Il Giornale Nuovo* of Milan, notes that with this novel “Gilda Musa has given us an excellent example of neo-fantasy [*il neo-fantastico*]. It is a new genre, born of the progressive refinement within science fiction, which accepts the importance of the plot and the use of the unreal, but with themes and presentations up to now confined exclusively to literature. . . . In conclusion it is a novel of ideas, symbolic and provocative, but also a novel of adventure, rhythm, and the unexpected. . . .”⁴

Neo-fantastico is one of the novelties in the recent development of Italian science fiction. Critical comments on neo-fantasy by such authors as Gillo Dorfles, Giacinto Spagnoletti, Giuliano Gramigna, and Roberto Sanesi, can be found in *La Collina* (*The Hill*), edited by Cremaschi for Nord. *Corriere D’Informazione*, a Milanese newspaper, commenting on *La Collina*, states that *neo-fantastico* “interprets the relationship between real facts in our times and the imagined data in a union of science and poetry. The essential components of neo-fantasy can be in the areas of the marvelous, the unusual, the alien, but also of the hidden social and individual changes of our time.”⁵ *La Collina* serves primarily as an anthology of literary criticism of science fiction, an area of study long overlooked by Italian writers. Topics in this first volume (other volumes for *La Collina* are planned) deal with verisimilitude and credibility in science fiction, the American roots of apocalypse, and the utopias of the English science fiction writer John Brunner. Analyses and interpretations of Italian *fantascienza* are meant not only for science fiction readers but also for a cultural and academic

audience. Cremaschi has been inspired in part by the article "The World beyond the Hill" by the American authors, Alexei and Cory Panshin.

Editrice Nord, the publisher of *La Collina*, is one of the most prolific publishers of science fiction; it has greatly increased the number of *fantascienza* novels printed in Italy. Its new series, "Cosmo Argento" ("Silver Cosmos"), includes the second novel by Luigi Menghini, called *Il regno della nube* (*The Kingdom of the Cloud*), and the second novel by Daniela Piegai, *Ballata per Lima* (*Ballad for Lima*). Nord has also printed the works of two new writers: *L'insidia dei Kryan* (*The Treachery of the Kryans*) by Virginio Marafante, centered on a spectacular and unusual stellar phenomenon; *L'ultima frontiera* (*The Last Frontier*) by Riccardo Scagnoli, dealing with a cosmic encounter between two species of human origin. *L'insidia dei Kryan* won first prize, and *Il regno della nube* won second prize in the category for novels, Premio Italia 1980, at Stresa.

Meanwhile, the publisher Società Editrice Internazionale (SEI) of Turin has expanded the number of science fiction novels in its new series for young adults. This series is called "I nuovi adulti." Worthy of note is the recent novel by Clara Rubbi, *Glaciazione 2079* (*Glaciation 2079*), which centers on the possibility of a natural apocalypse due to a new Ice Age. Clara Rubbi develops her novel around the danger created by the thawing of a glacier. Another novel, *Marinella Super* by Gilda Musa, published in 1978 in the same young adult series, has been selected by the Italian school system as an appropriate literary work to be read in the junior high school. This novel is already in its third printing and has won the prestigious Luni-giana Prize. It won over sixty other entries, many of which were science fiction, and according to one source, this award "stands as an affirmation of the new role of science fiction in Italian literature."⁶

Especially appealing to science fiction fans of all ages has been the 1980 publication of the *Grande Enciclopedia della Fantascienza* (*The Great Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*), prepared by L'Editoriale del Drago (The Drago Publishing Company) of Milan. This enormous project has been hailed as the most complete collection of theory and news in the field. Edited by Francesco Paolo Conte, the ten-volume Encyclopedia contains the works of outstanding illustrators, such as the Italians Franco Storch and Karel Thole, and world renowned writers such as Isaac Asimov, Ray Bradbury, Poul Anderson, Philip José Farmer, Lester del Rey, Harry Harrison, John Brunner. Italian writers Cremaschi, Musa, Ferruccio Alessandri, and Mariangela Sala are also included. The *Grande Enciclopedia della Fantascienza* is defined by Brian W. Aldiss in his preface as "an enterprise never before attempted." Some volumes focus on voyages in space and time; others are on wars in space, alien weaponry, and arms in the Earth's future. Topics include astronauts, aliens, cybernetics, computers, robots, and androids. Volume 9 contains a dictionary on science fiction, fantasy, and

futurible terms. The encyclopedia has been elaborately produced with numerous color photos and illustrations, posters for fans as well as reference articles with elaborate explanations of scientific data. For instance, one chapter on wars and arms contains a general history on the topic with an annotated list of non-fiction books on those subjects as well as a short story entitled “La guerra di Cantor” (“The War of Cantor”) by Christopher Anvil. All articles are well illustrated, and the subject matter is researched in depth by experts.

The *Grande Enciclopedia della Fantascienza* gives evidence of the growing fascination by a large audience that is currently enjoying the extensive proliferation of Italian writers on Italian topics. The refinement of science fiction in *neo-fantastico* works and in relevant themes in numerous anthologies and collections has become more apparent to adult and young adult readers. The literary quality of the science fiction genre has become more respected and accepted, exemplified by its approval in the Italian school system, by its affirmative literary criticisms, by its large number of science fiction prize winners. This recognition has been amply demonstrated by having Italy (mainly the Italian *fantascienza* organizing committee) host the 5th European Science Fiction Convention. Italian science fiction is moving enthusiastically and energetically into the 1980s.

Notes

1. The nations represented were Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, East Germany, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Soviet Union, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States, West Germany, and Yugoslavia.
2. Inisero Cremaschi, *Universo e dintorni* (Milano: Aldo Garzanti Editore, 1978), p. 32.
3. Enzo Maizza, “Abbiamo letto per Voi . . . Il seme terrestre,” *Giornale di Brescia*, 29 June 1980.
4. Renato Besana, “Gli unici buoni sono i cattivi—‘Esperimento donna’ di Gilda Musa,” *Il Giornale Nuovo*, 1 Nov. 1979.
5. Silvano Guidi, “La fantascienza italiana in orbita agli ‘incontri ravvicinati’ di Stresa,” *Corriere d'Informazione*, 5 May 1980.
6. Minnie Alzona, “Incanti e timore di ciò che è sconosciuto,” *Il Gazzettino*, 21 Feb. 1979.

STAR CLUSTER

Gene Wolfe has scored again with *The Claw of the Conciliator* (Timescape Books, Simon & Schuster, \$12.95), the second volume of his tetralogy, *The Book of the New Sun*. Successful as it is, however, it differs in tone from *The Shadow of the Torturer*. That first volume introducing Severian had a special intensity—in large part because Wolfe had to concentrate upon his protagonist in order to make him a convincing individual whose awareness acted as the catalyst giving significance to the novel. For that reason, Wolfe focused upon those events which led to Severian's exile; if one looks at the narrative carefully, one finds that most of the action takes place within a period of several days, while the setting is limited to the City Imperishable. In contrast, the effect of *The Claw of the Conciliator* is more diffuse, for the action is episodic as Severian journeys toward Thrax, The City of Windowless Rooms. Certainly Severian's presence—his first-person narrative and his inexhaustible memory—remains a dominating factor, but the function of this second volume differs from that of the first. For example, even after checking the novel closely, one cannot be certain how much time has passed. In a sense, this second part of *The Book of the New Sun* must prepare for the action which is to follow. Specifically, it must not only increase one's interest in (and concern for) Severian's fate, but it must emphasize the potential of the mysterious gem, "The Claw of the Conciliator," which is a powerful relic of the so-called Master of Power. Whether he is an historical or legendary figure, one cannot yet be certain; but one realizes at once that he is of mythic and religious proportions. Thus, Severian must be lured into the caves where only the sight of the Claw saves him from the attack of apelike creatures perhaps so ancient that their race has become separate from humanity, if it was ever a part. They kneel in awe before the relic. Severian must become aware of the Claw's

curative powers; he must take part in a ritual which brings Thecla back from the dead—or at least seems to—long enough for her memories to become infused into his mind; and he must be imprisoned in the House Absolute, where dwells the Autarch, just as he must be reunited with Dr. Talos, Baldanders, Dorcas, and Jolenta so that he can take part in and provide the reader with the text of “Dr. Talos’s Play: Eschatology and Genesis.” In short, he must decide that even if he must interrupt his journey to Thrax, he will return the Claw to the religious order of the Pelerines, from whom he inadvertently gained it.

Wolfe skillfully broadens the stage which he introduced in *The Shadow of the Torturer*; Severian’s quest for his destiny and his memories of his experiences—involving, as they do, total recall—are not ultimately an end in themselves. They provide the strategy through which Wolfe will record the actions leading to the birth of the New Sun. At this point in the narrative the symbolic potential is tremendous. To say that *The Claw of the Conciliator* prepares for what will come does not in the least detract from its power and artistry as a work complete within itself. One is tempted to compare it to one of the novellas making up *The Fifth Head of Cerberus*; each of those three add to the dimensions and impact of the total, although each is very different from the others. The third portion, *The Sword of the Lictor*, will be ready by the end of 1981, while reliable information has it that *The Shadow of the Torturer* will be available in paper by the time this issue of *Extrapolation* is published.

The Claw of the Conciliator is not Gene Wolfe’s only new title, for Doubleday has issued *Gene Wolfe’s Book of Days* (\$9.95), a collection of eighteen of his short stories, ranging from “Paul’s Treehouse” and “Car Sinister” to “Forlesen” and “The War Beneath the Tree.” With the exception of “Le Befana,” it brings together some of the most significant of his shorter works which have not been available since original publication. As a collection the stories reveal the diversity of Wolfe. The title comes about because Wolfe has assigned each story to a day—often a national holiday—which has special significance to American culture. Therein lies the freshness and added dimension to his wit and irony. For example, “Paul’s Treehouse” is tied to Arbor Day, while “Three Million Square Miles” is tied to Thanksgiving. And, by the way, this volume has an introduction which one should read. It is also a volume which all libraries should acquire for their sf holdings. It may well be the most important collection of short stories by a single author published this year. And, as suggested, it is another cornerstone in emphasizing how important a writer Gene Wolfe has been throughout his surprisingly brief career. His stature becomes apparent by reading a number of his works. Only in that way does one realize the skill and subtlety with which he brings a fresh perspective to established themes and situations.

Ballantine has issued Clifford D. Simak's *Project Pope* (Del Rey Books, \$10.95). It is "an extraordinary novel," as its blurb calls it, but it is not the equal of such of his recent works as *The Visitors*. It is too talky. Yet, ironically, it is that very quality which underscores *Project Pope's* importance in the canon of Simak's fiction. Dr. Jason Tennyson and Jill Roberts come to the Rim planet named End of Nothing, and they are accepted by a bizarre society, a mixture of robots and humans—the latter can project their minds into interstellar space and are known as Searchers—which has been trying for a thousand years to discover/create an all-encompassing religious faith. The basic dramatic conflict flares up when one of the Searchers discovers what she maintains is Heaven. Here is a new treatment of the themes which have obsessed Simak as early as *City* and which received perhaps their fullest statement in *A Choice of Gods*. One recalls the robots in that novel who could think of God only in human form. To underscore the limited perception of humanity—and of the ostensible purpose of the inquiry centering in the institution based at the Vatican on End of Nothing—add the Old Ones, custodians of the planet, and yet another alien life-form called Whisperer. All of the ingredients are there. At one point Tennyson voices the old dilemma: "We grasp for knowledge; panting, we cling desperately to what we snare. We work endlessly to arrive at that final answer, or perhaps many final answers which turn out not to be final answers but lead on to some other fact or factor that may not be final, either. And yet we try, we cannot give up trying, for as an intelligence we are committed to the quest." There, it seems, is the key to Simak's works: the quest for a meaning which will give unity to all forms of intelligent beings throughout the galaxy, however alien they may be in form and nature. *Project Pope* attacks the puzzle once again, and if it is not one of his finest novels, it contains its own surprises and rewards as his characters continue the search.

Harper & Row has just issued *A Robert Silverberg Omnibus* (\$14.95) containing *The Man in the Maze*, *Nightwings*, and *Downward to the Earth*. Although periodically available in paper, these three have long been out of print in hardback and are, therefore, welcome. In addition, Silverberg has provided a new "Introduction" for the *Omnibus*. Incidentally, he is currently at work on a new novel using the planet Majipoor!

Gregg Press continues to do the most extensive and excellent reprint series of hardbacks. Within the last few months they have added five titles by Fritz Leiber: *Gather Darkness*, *The Sinful Ones*, *The Wanderer*, *The Green Millenium*, and *The Book of Fritz Leiber Vol. 1 and Vol. 2* (this is a collection of shorter works). Each, of course, has a new introduction. Leiber has not gained the critical attention which he should have gotten from academic critics; this is regrettable, for his work provides one of the basic building blocks of contemporary science fiction.

In addition, Gregg has brought out Philip José Farmer's *Riverworld and*

Other Stories, a collection of eleven shorter works mostly from the 1970s and originally published by Berkley in 1979. They illustrate Farmer's practice of using both fictional characters and fictional authors in order to give his own perception of the modern, popular literary scene. Three other titles have just been issued: Brian W. Aldiss' *The Saliva Tree*, Frank Herbert's *The Green Brain*, and James H. Schmitz's *The Universe Against Her*. All deserve critical attention, and Gregg Press merits the support of all scholars and libraries wanting to maintain a first-rate sf collection.

The first paperback edition of Robert A. Heinlein's *Expanded Universe* has been issued (Ace Books, \$8.95), containing a number of stories and articles not elsewhere available. In a prefatory note, Heinlein points out that he has provided two scenarios for the year 2000: one for those who like happy endings and "another for people who can take bad news without a quiver—as long as it happens to someone else." Perhaps of greater importance is the paperback edition of H. Beam Piper's *Federation* (Ace Books, \$5.95), which brings together in a single book for the first time five of the novellas which provide the basis for Piper's future history. In addition to a brief prefatory note by Jerry Pournelle, who possesses a number of letters and some of Piper's notes, there is a good introduction by John Carr to Piper's involvement with history, both factual and imagined.

Other paperback reprints include a reissue of the edition of William Morris' *News from Nowhere* edited by James Redmond (Routledge & Kegan Paul). Redmond's introduction makes the edition particularly valuable. Howard Fast's *Time and the Riddle: 31 Zen Stories*, originally published in 1975, has just been issued by Houghton Mifflin. In a brief introduction, Frank Campenni of the Department of English, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee argues that Fast used the materials of fantasy and science fiction as "means to an end"—that is, as a way of delighting you "into wisdom." They are, he says, Zen stories—perhaps the latest euphemism to join speculative fiction.

Among new hard cover editions are *Nebula Winners Fifteen* edited by Frank Herbert (Harper & Row, \$12.95), which contains the award winners, "Sandkings" by George R. R. Martin, "Enemy Mine" by Barry B. Longyear, and "giANTS" by Edward Bryant. Herbert's "Introduction," however, leads to a number of questions because he seems to revive (or did it ever vanish?) the dispute between professional and academic.

Among the noteworthy new novels is one from Britain, Julian Fane's *Revolution Island* (Hamish Hamilton, \$17.95), originally published in 1979. It belongs to the well-known British postcatastrophe motif, but what makes it significant and worthy of close attention is that the catastrophe results from the political triumph of the rightwing in England. It begins as the most violently anti-Labor and anti-Welfare State novel to come out of recent British fiction. What seems a simple diatribe at the outset becomes

equally incensed against the forces of reaction so that there is no solution. One does not wish to spoil the ending, so let the judgment be that the novel is historically important as a measure of the British temper and as a projection of end-of-the-century history.

Elizabeth A. Lynn's *The Northern Girl* (Berkley, \$13.95) brings to a climax *The Chronicles of Tornor* trilogy. The young Sorren finally returns to Castle Tornor, but the importance of this fantasy lies in the vivid detail with which Lynn creates the Land of Arun. Indeed, Lynn is so interested in the details of life in Kendra-on-the-Delta that Sorren's journey seems almost an afterthought; it is certainly too cursorily treated for the importance that it assumes as the climax of the trilogy. So one must infer that it is the texture given the society—as well as the earlier success of *Watchtower* and *The Dancers of Arun*—which best explains the popularity of the novel.

Described as "Volume I in the Saga of the Pliocene Exile," the novel *The Many-Colored Land* by Julian May [Dikty] (Houghton Mifflin, \$12.95) seems to have the potential to start out an intriguing science fiction series. Its basic premise is that a method of time travel has been discovered, but that it is a one-way trip—from the Rhone valley to the Pliocene. At first only a very few undertake this trip; but a future society allows its discontented/maladjusted individuals to choose to go into "Exile," as the trip is called. Eight individuals making up the so-called "Group Green" are trained in survival techniques and allowed to go back. The kicker, however, lies in the "Prologue," for a spaceship apparently carrying refugees crashes into the planet after its passengers have escaped by means of tiny flyers; a Ramapithecus infant finds one of the flyers. The first part of the novel ends after Group Green undertakes its journey.

One must at least mention some of the important titles released by the mass-market paperback companies. With the publication of Michael Moorcock's *The Quest for Tanelorn*, Dell has now published three volumes of *The Chronicles of Castle Brass*. Other Dell imprints include John Brunner's *Timescoop* and Cynthia Felice's *The Sunbound*.

Ballantine/Del Rey has issued Roger Zelazny's *The Changing Land* in its first book publication while reissuing his *My Name Is Legion*. They have also reprinted William Tenn's *Of Men and Monsters* and brought out an original, L. Neil Smith's *The Venus Belt*.

Among Bantam's originals is Dean R. Koontz's *The Flesh in the Furnace*, while it has published the paper edition of Walter Tevis's *Mockingbird*.

From Pocket Books come Jane Gaskell's *Some Summer Lands*, volume 5 in the Atlan Saga; Nancy Springer's *The Sable Moon*; and Robert Stallman's *The Captive*.

Perhaps the mood of the mass market is best indicated by the continued appearance of Stacy, heroine of Playboy Paperback's *Empire Princess*

series by Graham Diamond. A variation on the neoprimitive theme, these novels—the most recent of which is *The Falcon of Eden*—have as their protagonist a lovely young woman who belongs to the wolf people; in short, she parallels Tarzan and William Chester's Kioga, who was raised by the bears on the lost arctic continent of Nato'wa. Should Stacy not please the reader, there is always Princess Sharon of Graham Diamond's *Samar-kand Dawn*. One must pay closer attention to such titles and series as those noted above, for one suspects that fantasy is becoming as popular as science fiction. And, of course, the question is why?

T.D.C.

The Nitrogen Fix, by Hal Clement. Illustrated by Janet Aulisio. Ace Books, 1980. \$6.95.

Since his first published short story in the June 1942 *Astounding*, Hal Clement has earned a solid reputation as a creator of the hard science fiction that shares the extrapolative stage with the less scientifically systematic fantasy. Clement's tenth booklength fiction, *The Nitrogen Fix*, embodies impressively the central concerns in his branch of the genre. The cover blurb claims predictably that this is his best since the classic *Mission of Gravity* (1954), and it may well be. It is certainly a major continuation of his skillful work that paints (the illustrations do not detract from the text, but it is the text that is reviewed here) unusual and detailed environments in our varied universe and peoples those environments with life-forms that stretch the imagination about what is possible in life. Clement is both accurate and provocative as an imitator of nature's possibilities, and he is sublime as an artist because the nature he imitates is vital, changing, and grand. Some writers, even science fiction and fantasy writers, explore exclusively the depths of human personality, perhaps following Pope's dictum that the proper study of mankind is man, but Hal Clement places mankind in the context of the wide universe.

His novels and short stories that are set on a future earth often feature alien visitors from distant and strange worlds so that even though the planetary environment may seem like home to the reader, the message of a changing and varied universe is conveyed in the action. The setting in this novel moves around Milton, Massachusetts where Clement teaches at Milton Academy; but the Earth's environment has undergone catastrophic change and alien Observers have been drawn to the new Earth. Probably as a result of genetic engineering intended to support agriculture, human ingenuity has reduced free oxygen in the atmosphere to only a trace. The new nitrogen environment dominates the interest of the reader. What are the life-forms, both artificial and natural, that can thrive after the change? How can man survive? What are mankind's values in a future society to which

scientific ingenuity has dealt such an ironic reversal of fortune? The novel is filled with a sense of the fragility and contingency of environment, and Clement's curiosity plays around brilliantly with the physical possibilities if we should create an imbalance in the present equilibrium of 78 percent nitrogen in our atmosphere. But the humans in Clement's novel are also remarkably resourceful, both physically and socially. Alien on their own planet and in their own society, the central family of nomads in the novel reminds the reader somewhat of the Huck Finn condition of an earlier period of American self-reliance.

As is so often the case in a Clement fiction, however, the alien characters are the more interesting. With no need or possibility for self-reliance, the Observers are a hive species in which each separate unit can share total communication and memory with all other units once contact between any two units has been made. This is just a hint of fertile epistemological notions that run through the novel. Further, gender is not distinguishable in the alien units; and reproduction is by parthenogenesis. Clement toys with other biological and physiological details in these latest aliens of his, but by no means is the alien life so theoretical that it is uninteresting to the reader. The human nomads call the alien life "Bones," which is equivalent to the ironic appellation "Curly" for a bald man, and the Observers share in all ways with the humans as the story unfolds. What seems to fascinate Clement most are questions of knowing, communicating, and problem solving. The prime motivation for the Observers, as it seems to be for Clement himself, is curiosity. The conflicts over epistemology drive this book; and if that sounds dull, the reader should see for himself how Clement can embody questions of knowledge as well as questions of human value in a fascinating environment with aliens both extraterrestrial and human. *The Nitrogen Fix* is a fine example of its kind.

Donald M. Hassler

BOOKS

A Variety of Studies Emphasize Fantasy

Although the quality of the books released during the fall and winter remains generally sound, no one volume dominates recent publications. Specialized studies and works emphasizing fantasy are the most numerous; what continues to be lacking, however, is a truly comprehensive historical/analytical study of the field as a whole, both in terms of the number of authors dealt with in various periods and, despite Brian Attebery's at times provocative survey, a detailed analysis of numerous works from the various periods.

The Fantasy Tradition in American Literature: From Irving to Le Guin, by Brian Attebery. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1980. Pp. viii, 212. \$17.50.

Attebery limits the effectiveness of his survey in several ways. First, he awakens that turn-of-the-century critical debate by asserting that there is "a fundamental bias against fantasy in the folklore of this country" which cuts off American fantasists "from the stock of magical images and events that abound in European tales and legends." Despite the implication that the tradition of fantasy *should be* imitative, he then pursues the attempts of American fantasists to create an "American fairyland." Of his first figure, Irving, he declares that only in "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Devil and Tom Walker" did Irving "find enough legendary authority to support an original American fantasy," with the result that "he comes across more as a collector than a creator." Attebery makes no mention of Charles Brockden Brown and the Southwestern Humor/"tale tale" tradition in two pages,

although noting that "the Paul Bunyan cycle" did "generate a sort of tentative fantasy." Hawthorne and Melville are given passing attention, but the treatment of Twain is so brief and cursory as to be totally unsatisfactory, as is that of such an individual as Frank Stockton. Attebery thus concludes that by the end of the nineteenth century no author had produced "a full-length work of satisfying and unmistakably American fantasy." That failure was solved in 1900 with the publication of *The Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum. He then argues that this "first unquestionably American fantasy" produced the epitome of the genre. He is not altogether convincing because of the material he slights or omits, particularly as one moves on into the twentieth century. Bradbury, Burroughs, Cabell, Le Guin, and Lovecraft receive attention, but Attebery insists that somehow all of these writers fall short. Perhaps the best way to evaluate Attebery's work is to say that in his haste to impose some archetypal structure (supposedly derived from folklore) on the American writers, he fails to examine closely enough what was produced, what did establish an American tradition. One reacts against some of his insights because of the manner in which he dismisses a writer, as in the case of Cabell. Or again, perhaps the fault lies in his criticism of American writers for their "unbelief that mars so much American fantasy"—unbelief that has led them to create new dimensions of fantasy rather than being satisfied with "the magical beliefs and events" that dominate the pattern Attebery would impose.

Astounding Science Fiction July 1939, John W. Campbell, Jr., ed. Carbondale and Edwardsville, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981. Pp. ix, 180.

This is a facsimile reproduction of the issue which supposedly "marked the spectacular opening salvo of the Golden Age of Science Fiction." Its cover story was A. E. van Vogt's novelette, "Black Destroyer"—his initial work—and includes Isaac Asimov's "Trends," his first story in *Astounding*. Stanley Schmidt, the present editor of *Analog*, has contributed a brief introduction, while both van Vogt and Asimov have written short re-

flections upon their respective works. Finally, Ross Rocklynne has done a four-page essay entitled "On John Campbell, Jr., and Science Fiction." None of these appended items is detailed enough. One may also argue whether or not *this* is the issue that inaugurated the "Golden Age." The book has value in preserving an important issue, but it must be regarded as a curiosity rather than an absolute necessity to a collection, especially when the issue is available on microfilm.

Fantastic Lives: Autobiographical Essays by Notable Science Fiction Writers, Martin H. Greenberg, ed. Carbondale and Edwardsville, Ill.:

Southern Illinois University Press, 1981. Pp. xi, 215. \$15.00.

Another in the Alternatives series, this volume is one of the most successful, primarily because of the writers selected and because each was given freedom to write individually. Thus, unlike so many of the collections of interviews and the works in which the writer had to give a sketch of his career, each of these contributors was allowed to focus as impulse directed. Harlan Ellison, for example, centers his contribution upon the story "I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream," while Philip José Farmer discusses his career up to the acceptance of his classic story, "The Lovers." R.A. Lafferty, Barry N. Malzberg, and Norman Spinrad give greater insight into themselves and the field of science fiction than in any other single essay published for the academic audience. One might say the same for A. E. van Vogt's "My Life Was My Best Science Fiction Story." The highlights of the volume, however—simply because the two women have been far too neglected by critics and scholars—are the essays by Katherine MacLean and Margaret St. Clair, both of whom were among the first women to make it in a male-dominated field. They have been heard from too infrequently so that their reflections upon the significance of science fiction are particularly important. Each essay is followed by a listing of the novels and story collections by each contributor. Green-

berg has given a thumbnail sketch of each of the writers in his preface. All in all, this seems the most notable volume thus far in the Alternatives series.

Three Tomorrows: American, British, and Soviet Science Fiction, by John Griffiths. Totowa, N. J.: Barnes & Noble Books, 1980. Pp. 217.

In his introduction, Griffiths acknowledges that he has resurrected a manuscript completed a decade ago, in which he intended to cut off his materials with man's first landing on the moon. The most important feature of this book is that it voices an English point of view toward the field, although Griffiths has not updated his material as thoroughly as he should. In so brief a space, he must necessarily give only slight treatment to individual writers and stories. As a result he cannot make as detailed and comprehensive a contrast among American, British, and Russian writers as one could wish for. That his material is unfortunately dated may be seen in his last two chapters, "Retreat from Reality" and "Tomorrow Has Been Cancelled."

Frank Herbert, by David M. Miller. Mercer Island, Wash.: Starmon House, 1980. Pp. 70. \$3.95.

Despite the brevity of this monograph, it is the most comprehensive scholarly analysis of Frank Herbert's works yet published. Keeping

biographical information to a minimum, Miller concentrates his attention upon the novels. His unifying premise is that two themes pervade Herbert's fiction: "1.) If man does not achieve a balance within himself and with his environment, existence is merely a version of chaos. 2.) If man freezes an achieved balance, decadence sets in and life yields to entropy." The patterns by which he develops these themes vary widely, but always his characters face the problem of organizing chaos or disturbing stasis. The short stories are too briefly touched on; however, the added strength of the book lies in its annotated bibliography of primary materials, including a listing of first publication of the individual stories, and an annotated secondary bibliography. It should be ordered directly from Starmont House, P.O. Box 851, Mercer Island, Wash. 98040.

Jules Verne: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography, Edward J. Gallagher, Judith A. Misticelli, and John A. Van Eerde, eds. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980. Pp. xxi, 387. \$30.00.

This is the largest single volume in the "Masters of Science Fiction and Fantasy" series edited by L. W. Currey. Besides listing all editions, both English and French, of 106 works by Verne, dating between 1850 and 1970, it includes his plays, poems, songs, and nonfiction. The most valuable parts of the volume, however, are the annotated bibliography of "Critical Studies in Eng-

lish" (Part D, 450 items) and the annotated bibliography of "Critical Studies in French" (Part E, 874 items). This bibliography must supersede all previous works because of its completeness and the uniformly high quality of its annotations. It is an essential item for all libraries, at least, which have any scholarly collection of science fiction materials. It should also serve as a model for further bibliographical work in the field.

Science Fiction: Studies in Film, by Frederik Pohl and Frederik Pohl IV. New York: Ace Books, 1981. Pp. 346. \$6.95.

The value of this collaborative work by the Pohls is that they set out to write a book "that did full justice to both the film and the science fiction aspects of the sf film." Not only have they drawn upon their personal knowledge (Frederik IV has a film degree from Syracuse) and reviews in various periodicals, but also they have drawn from taped interviews with individuals or of panel discussions held at various conferences. The result is a highly readable account of the development of the sf film, beginning with Georges Méliès' *A Trip to the Moon* (1902). Unfortunately, the book has no index, and there is one somewhat disconcerting problem with its format: filmographies and quotations from individuals ranging from Méliès to Susan Sonntag and "FP" are inserted (though set off) directly into the text. But

one can get used to this idiosyncrasy. Intended for the mass market, the book is made up of seven chapters covering the history of the form through 1979, a final chapter of particular interest, entitled "Toward a More Nearly Perfect Science Fiction Film," and an appendix "Effex in Esseff," the latter devoted to special effects.

J. R. R. Tolkien, by Deborah Webster Rogers and Ivor A. Rogers. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980. Pp. 164. \$8.95.

The only complaint that one might advance toward this study is

that it is too brief, but that is the fault of the series and not of Deborah and Ivor Rogers, who have brought breadth and sensitivity to their analysis of Tolkien's place in modern fantasy. Beginning with a brief biographical sketch, they turn first to his literary backgrounds and then chronologically to his works. The heart of their evaluation occurs in the chapters, "Mythic History" and "The Dawn of the Age of Man." The result is that the Rogers have produced what will remain the basic introduction to J. R. R. Tolkien.

T.D.C.

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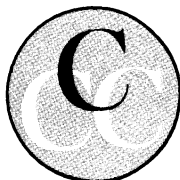
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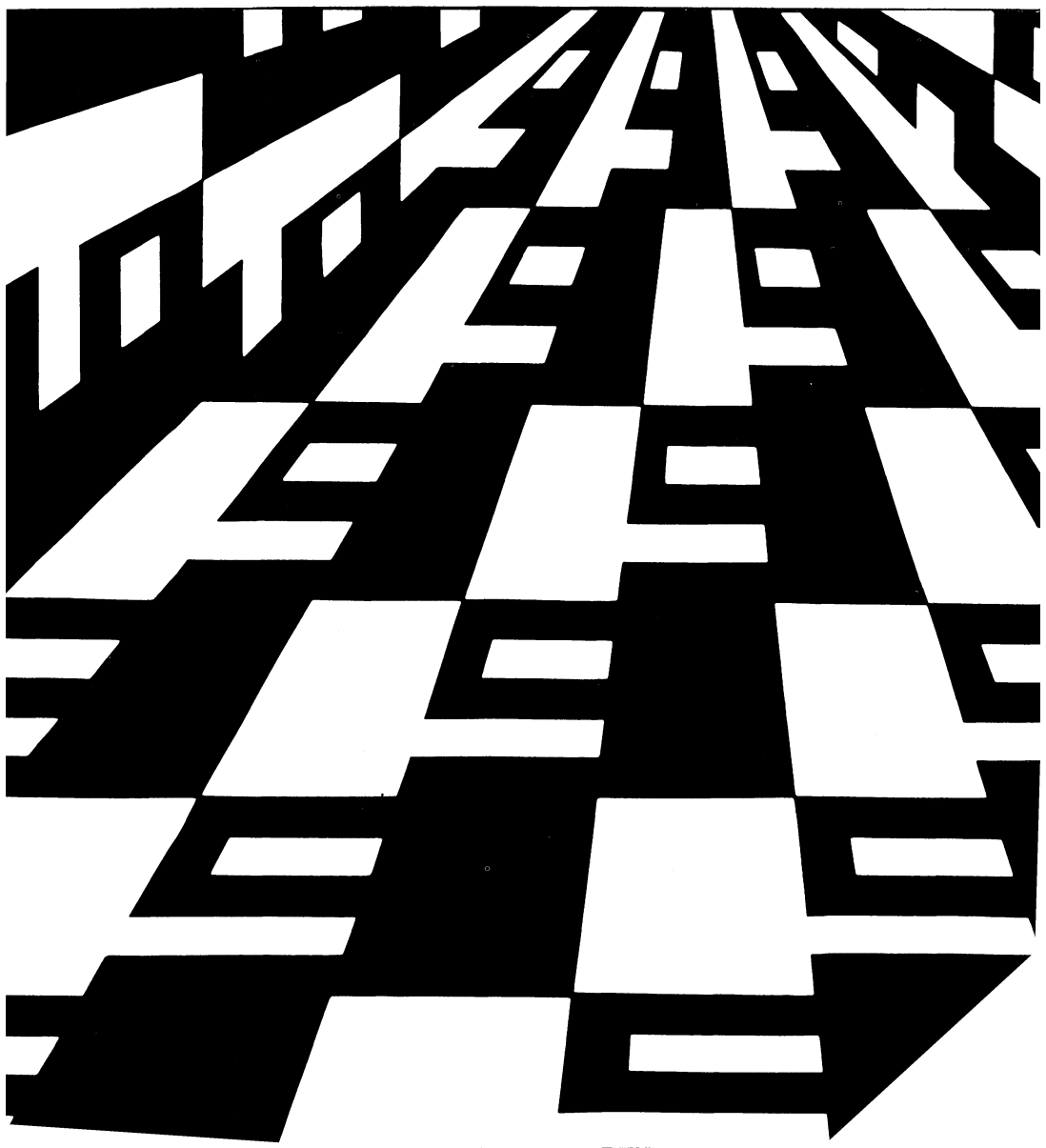
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SUMMER 1981

Vol. 22, No. 2

EXTRAPOLATION



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