

The background of the book cover is a photograph of a tropical scene. Two tall palm trees are visible against a clear, light blue sky. In the lower portion of the image, the dark, textured roof of a house is visible. The overall color palette is dominated by the blue of the sky and the dark tones of the roof and palm trunks.

Laurence A. Rickels

**CRITIQUE OF
FANTASY**

VOLUME 2

**The Contest
between B-Genres**

CRITIQUE OF FANTASY, VOL. II

BEFORE YOU START TO READ THIS BOOK, TAKE THIS MOMENT to think about making a donation to punctum books, an independent non-profit press,

@ <https://punctumbooks.com/support/>

If you're reading the e-book, you can click on the image below to go directly to our donations site. Any amount, no matter the size, is appreciated and will help us to keep our ship of fools afloat. Contributions from dedicated readers will also help us to keep our commons open and to cultivate new work that can't find a welcoming port elsewhere. Our adventure is not possible without your support.
Vive la open access.



Fig. 1. Hieronymus Bosch, Ship of Fools (1490–1500)

Laurence A. Rickels

**CRITIQUE OF
FANTASY**

VOLUME 2

**The Contest
between B-Genres**

Brainstorm Books
Santa Barbara, California



CRITIQUE OF FANTASY, VOL. 2: THE CONTEST BETWEEN B-GENRES.
Copyright © 2020 Laurence A. Rickels. This work carries a Creative Commons BY-NC-SA 4.0 International license, which means that you are free to copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format, and you may also remix, transform, and build upon the material, as long as you clearly attribute the work to the authors and editors (but not in a way that suggests the authors or punctum books endorses you and your work), you do not use this work for commercial gain in any form whatsoever, and that for any remixing and transformation, you distribute your rebuild under the same license. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

First published in 2020 by Brainstorm Books
An imprint of punctum books, Earth, Milky Way
<https://www.punctumbooks.com>

ISBN-13: 978-1-953035-18-9 (print)
ISBN-13: 978-1-953035-19-6 (ePDF)

DOI: 10.21983/P3.0278.1.00

LCCN: 2020939532

Library of Congress Cataloging Data is available from the Library of Congress

Book design: Vincent W.J. van Gerven Oei
Cover image: "Palm Springs, CA," July 8, 2016. Photograph by mooninsean.
Frontispiece: "Séance Fiction," 2020. Photograph by Nancy Barton.

Contents

Preface	15
---------	----

(In which the author sees the TV show *Westworld* go forward with androids that are surrogates on the Internet reaching back through the history of the contest between B-genres)

Chapter 1	
Links with the Missing	19

The Soup

(The first American superhero fantasy arises in alternation with science fiction stuck in the revolving door of the E.R. Burroughs crypt)

Test Rooms

(Mike Kelley, Harry Harlow, Martha Graham, and Isamu Noguchi)

MOE-THER

(John Bowlby on the case of Charles Darwin)

Play Mobility

(Beginning with the transitional object, according to D.W. Winnicott, creativity from the vantage of the reader or receiver relies on and resides in the play in the object relation)

The Trace Against Time

(Henri Clouzot's *The Mystery of Picasso* captures the artist's wish to retain the whole process of painting, discarded version by discarded version, as the other work of art. Carried forward within the retention span that Pablo Picasso wished upon is his inner girl)

Chapter 2

A New Mythic Fairy Tale

59

Deserters

(Gotthard Günther on the stories that are the stations of "Overcoming Space and Time," as announced by the title of his edited collection. In the beginning there is Clifford D. Simak's "Desertion." Neoteny between Stephen J. Gould and Konrad Lorenz)

Desert Ghosts

(Isaac Asimov's "Nightfall" is the story in Günther's collection that blasts the metaphysical aspect of the heavens. Paul Mayersberg's adaptation projects the American west as the limit concept of the film medium and new frontier of haunting. Old ghosts and new ghosts in *The Dead Don't Die*)

Overcoming Subject, Will, Time, and Reality

(Günther's countdown to an overcoming continues: John Campbell's "Who Goes There?," Stanley Weinbaum's "The Lotus Eaters," H. Beam Piper's "Time and Time Again," and A.E. van Vogt's "Resurrection")

Dianetics of Enlightenment

(Following out Günther's further reflections on van Vogt's work, we traverse the clearing text of demolition of metaphysical traditions, which was syndicated in a therapy the author helped pioneer, which modifies the crypt for storage of symptoms that cannot be busted)

Vogt by Hollywood

(On the trail of the legend that *Alien* robbed van Vogt. The stations in Dan O'Bannon's staggered acknowledgment of van Vogt: *Dark Star*, *Planet of the Vampires*, and *Lifeforce*)

Tentacular Demonology

(Our precarious relationship to tentacular thought according to Vilém Flusser)

Through the Looking Glass

(The final selection in Günther's collection *Overcoming Space and Time* is Lewis Padgett's "Mimsy Were the Borogroves." According to Padgett's story according to Günther, when metaphysics no longer compels an impasse it can be breached at last by a new technology)

R.I.P. in Time

(Time travel in two stories by Padgett is already the cinematic introject looping through their film adaptations: *The Twonky* and *Timescape*)

Fairy Chess

(The novel *The Fairy Chessmen* concludes the Lewis Padgett standard edition of Lewis Carroll as the fantast not of folksy psychosis but of science and logic)

Chapter 3

Fantasy Strikes Back

119

Other World and Other Time

(In *Out of the Silent Planet* and *The Dark Tower*, C.S. Lewis sets out to improve upon H.G. Wells, retrofitting the flight to the moon and the adventure of time travel for compatibility with medievalism – until brought to a full stop by concessions to psychoanalysis)

NICE

(The criminal organization in Lewis's *That Hideous Strength* models Ian Fleming's introduction of SPECTRE. But the underworld of World War Two that Fleming admitted as spectral player in Cold War conflicts was for Lewis the postwar reprisal of the nihilism, heightened in the setting of the Pax Americana by its equation with science fiction, which shall be overcome by Christian fantasy)

Suicide Planet

(In *Melancholia*, Lars Von Trier takes back Sergei Tarkovsky's emendation of the conclusion of Stanisław Lem's *Solaris*. The Wagnerian crescendo that ends the world takes no prisoners: there are no other lifeforms in the universe)

Impossible Planet

(Lewis's *Peralandra* orbits the withdrawal of Venus from science fiction in letters and film. SF films set on Venus fly in the face of fantasy. The encrypted wish factory of the Krells in *Forbidden Planet*, which set a new special effects standard, is cognate with the impossible planet)

Making the Least Last

(Olaf Stapledon's *Last and First Men* and *Star Maker* inspired Lewis's trilogy. In the first novel, Stapledon includes Venus as a stopover in the evolution of intelligent life culminating in natural flight and ending in Jonestown)

Venus Libitina

(The goddess of beauty was destined to perform in sitcom representations of love and marriage. In this therapeutic netherworld, the goddess can wear a beard as transgender supplement. Weaving and tying the knot extend her influence to the milieu of friendly masochism)

and indefinitely postponed marriage, which bind Wonder Woman under the goddess's protection to her superpowers)

Zelbst Reflection between Genres

(From Philip José Farmer's *Venus on a Half Shell* to P.K. Dick's *The World That Jones Made* the attributes of the goddess go into our reception of the planet bearing her name)

Chapter 4

The Law of B-Genres

157

The Wizard of Was

(*Zardoz*, *Tron*, *THX 1138*, and the future prospect of aphanisis between fantasy and science fiction, between Jacques Lacan and Ernest Jones)

Mekky

("The Waveries" in P.K. Dick's estimation and *What Mad Universe* in Günther's view nominate Fredric Brown the premier allegorist of the line wavering between science fiction and fantasy. In Brown's novel the mechanical brain says that fiction is reality waiting to happen. *Last Action Hero*)

I Am Robot

(The logic that Asimov's robots follow is so multiple that Günther cannot reconcile the stories with the epistemology of conceivable robot making and agency. In the movie *I, Robot*, psychopathic idealism is the reverberation of the evacuation of adolescence from the robotic streamlining of the future)

Crash Course

(J.G. Ballard identifies Cyril Kornbluth and Robert Shekley as his American precursors while denying that

P.K. Dick was any influence at all. The drive-by eros, the primal father, and the almost endless traffic between Ballard's *Crash* and Kafka's "The Judgment")

Hunter Games

(Sheckley advanced a subgenre of future games of violence dispensing and dispensing with the need for warfare. Sheckley re-entered the game when he novelized the film adaptation of his story, which led to the trilogy of game worlds)

Left-Handed Tribute

(Ursula Le Guin is the emissary of science fiction on planet fantasy: *The Lathe of Heaven*, novel and film, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, and *City of Illusions*)

Bibliography	213
Index	223



Preface

In the “Introduction; or, How Star Wars Became Our Oldest Cultural Memory” of the first volume of *Critique of Fantasy*, the gambit of a contest between science fiction and fantasy was already sketched out. J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis aimed to separate the fantasy from the techno-science foregrounded in works by H.G. Wells, for example, and raise the fantasy or fairy-story to the power of an alternate adult literary genre. My study of the contest between the B-genres for ownership of the evolution of the social relation of art out of the condemned site of daydreaming required in the first place a reading apparatus, which the first volume derived from psychoanalytic theories of daydreaming’s relationship to conscious thought, the unconscious, and artistic production as well as from their prehistory, the philosophies of dreams, ghosts, willing and wishing.

Long ago, I followed Freud into Daniel Paul Schreber’s delusional system, which stages (in the trail of the Enlightenment assignment of the afterlife to outer space) the “science fantasy” of colonization of the other outer space, psychosis, for the survival of the species. By reading science fiction at the border to fantasy, I return to my long-term endopsychic excavation of the principal points of impact at once evacuating and restarting the connection with reality: mourning and the psychotic break.

The opening chapter of this volume picks up where we left off between a crypt and a datemark. We go once more around the block in mourning from the B-theory of evolution to the A-list of modernism, keeping our eyes on the price owed the dead. In

the chapters that follow immersion in speculative nonfiction gives way to reading closely across a breadth of fictional examples selected from the context of the contest. The novels comprising Lewis's "Space Trilogy" and the short works of American science fiction that Gotthard Günther selected and elucidated for the 1952 German readership offer a readymade *Gestell* for steering through the contest eligibility requirements. Günther sees American science fiction propound a new mythic fairy tale that disbands the throwback metaphysics incarnated by the old fairy-story, the mainstay of the fantasy genre. In turn, Lewis identifies throughout his trilogy science fiction as the nihilistic force that Christian fantasy marches against as to war.

In addition to the vertical contrast, the volume traverses the horizontal expanse of association and influence around these and related works, those composed in fealty to the contest requirements as well as the hybrids that ply more overlaps than gaps between the facing genres. For this preface I'd like to take a look at the TV version of Michael Crichton's *Westworld* because it hovers over all the above, the vertical and horizontal controls. The apparatus carried forward by the contest between B-genres has been pared down for the small screen. Science fiction works behind the scenes, perfecting the machinery and programming of the entertainment. However, science fiction no longer contributes psychotic aberration and delusion, but rather human error inspired by grief. In the foreground is the Wild West alone, which means the resort no longer reaches back through a concise history of the West illuminating a new-world and science-fiction perspective but provides instead fantasy and fantasizing entertainment for the here and now of TV viewers, a modality that extends digitally through the Web.

Heroic or anti-heroic sojourns in the android underworlds retrench old-world metaphysics within a surfeit of copying references lifted from the open quarry of countless unnamed sources, which afford the fantasy enigmatic detail and texture. Before the exhaustion of the scriptwriters begins to tell, however, there is, in the first episode, a preoccupation on the part of the fiction-scientists with details taglined "reveries." That they are assessed on the show as "memories" is prep work for the heroic sagas. They are peripheral details in the comportment of the androids, which

were not originally programmed but subsequently selected from the detritus that wasn't deleted, and then added as "updates," synonymous in the show with "mistakes." Indeed, the "reveries" are only "memories" to the extent that they are indeed "mistakes." Their basic programming permits the androids to perform outside time. Only the play left in their scripted programming for a measure of improvisation simulates being in time (which is already Siri's lot). It is as "mistakes," then, and "updates" that the "reveries" herald the science fantasy of evolution and its retrofit with heroic journeys through new underworlds.

Just the same, the TV fantasy show inhabits the frontier zone that the shoot-out between B-genres left behind upon the arrival of the digital relation. The problem the show addresses is that of the digital record. Nothing is ever really deleted. And even if there is too much to know for surveillance to operate as more than a belief system, the question remains: Where does it all go? That's why the uncanny valley of the park androids (really: surrogates) fits the epistemology of the Internet and its peripheral legends of dark underworlds shaped and shattered from within by the testing of military techno-psychologies. Just as the show relies on the contest that is history for texture and detail, so the Internet requires the crypt of the total wars of the twentieth century, their confluence of fantasy and science fiction, occult and technical mediation, to head us off at the impasse of post-Nazi nihilism.

Links with the Missing

The Soup

Although he knows something about theories of the origin of language, J.R.R. Tolkien eschews the folklorist's parallel search for the origin of ancient stories, which ends up skewering together versions upon a so-called original. In "On Fairy-Stories," Tolkien opts instead for the metaphor of "the soup" to signal "the story as it is served up by its author or teller."¹ German or Germanic resources like fairy tales and medieval epics belong to the ingredients going into the soup of true fantasy. Tolkien also cites a more recent precursor, George MacDonald.² MacDonald belongs, however, like Thomas Carlyle before him, to a Scottish–German introject going into the illusory UK tradition of medievalism, which the fantasy genre seems to require as the corollary to its timeless past. We entered this wrap earlier when we witnessed J.S. Mill sign a suicide note in the name of "Novalis." His father, the Scottish philosopher James Mill, tutored John Stuart with the able assist of utilitarianism's father Jeremy Bentham. Marshall McLuhan concludes the loopy introject: "The conspiracy [...] to ignore history, which in practice meant the middle ages, had not been generally found out when Mr. Chesterton began to write [...]. He shows that certain timeless principles were then under-

1 J.R.R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," in *Tree and Leaf / Smith of Wootton Major / The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth* (London: Unwin Books, 1975), 26.

2 *Ibid.*, 23.

stood [...]. Though they were not the right place, they were the right turning, and subsequent history has in a deep sense been an ignoble retreat from their difficult and untried ideas.”³

The fantasy figuration that decorates this UK sense of history does not belong to the core of its medievalist tradition. Instead, it was a late arrival buoyed up in the course of catching up with German Romanticism’s scoop (following out the breach, a kind of plagiarism in advance, that the Ossian scam opened in German letters, notably in *The Sorrows of Young Werther*). The tradition that makes a point of continuously reaching back to the middle ages didn’t carry Shakespeare without a break. There was time out for the censorship of Shakespeare’s punning. Mourning became translation when the German Romantics carried the oeuvre forward and the bard even bounced back in the UK. The fairy realms in *The Tempest* and *Midsummer Night’s Dream* returned via “Germany” in works like George MacDonald’s *Phantastes* (1858), the acknowledged early inspiration for C.S. Lewis’s investment in fantasy.

Tolkien refuted that *The Lord of the Rings* was on a topical-allegorical setting of response to National Socialism. But then he pointed to the loss generation of World War One as the encysted catalyst turning out his Rings cycle on a post-traumatic schedule.⁴ The joust that is overtaken by the automatic or demonic course of technologization with its attendant exhaustion of human material circumscribes a dystopian/utopian standoff or combo that goes into fantasy proper (the industrial underworlds in *The Lord of the Rings*) and characterizes, almost paradoxically, fantasies projected into outer space (for example Frank Herbert’s novel *Dune*).⁵

3 Marshall McLuhan, “G.K. Chesterton: A Practical Mystic,” in *Marshall McLuhan Unbound* (Berkeley: Gingko Press, 2005), 9.

4 In “On Fairy-Stories,” Tolkien gives the rundown of his belated interest in fairytales: “A real taste for fairy-stories was awakened by philology on the threshold of manhood, and quickened to full life by war” (45).

5 World War One props in Herbert’s novel (*Dune* [New York: Ace Books, 1990]), which passes “the true test of prescience,” which is “to see the past in the future” (350), include gas mask (180), pogrom (252), “remembered shellfire” (202), as well as the general layout of a

The soup of introjects blending untenable borrowings between the UK and Germany in the fantasy genre corresponds in the other genre to a mix of incommensurables between the US and Germany. Günther selected three novel-length works by American authors for his series introducing true science fiction in German translation. Two authors were trained scientists (Isaac Asimov and John W. Campbell Jr.); all three commenced their science fiction authorship before the World-War-Two era (Asimov just barely – in 1937 – and the other two in the 1920s). For the metaphysical vista that Günther was eager to tune in (in the receiving area of American cybernetics), the works selected moved outside the solar system and outside the history of the twentieth century. And yet the distant future was one big continuity shot with a recognizable American milieu of engineering. The old Faustian West, which was Germany, also produced modern science fiction in the 1920s fitting the basic profile of the American works that he selected. I don't want to spend too much time troubling the quarters of the clear demarcation going into Günther's understanding of science fiction, but some qualification is necessary when drawing (or crossing) the line between fantasy and science fiction that also passes into and through individual works.

Before Tolkien established the modern fantasy genre, there was an American version going strong that mixed heroic fantasy (complete with sword-and-sorcery *mise-en-scènes*) with future forecasts of applied science (including space travel). And yet Germany going into World War Two flexed a parallel preemptive mix of genres in popular media. In Lang's *Woman in the Moon*, for example, the boy who was stowaway on the launched rocket took along his collection of comic books. The first illustrated cover is titled "Mondvampire" ("Moon-Vampires"). The look of the high-rise future in *Metropolis* turns up the contrast with the medieval abode of mad scientist Rotwang that's the tip of the infernal underworld.

no-man's land carved up by the mobile trenching of a worm (=dragon). The hot spot of homosexuality is also, in the history of mobilization, a feature of the Great War. See also David Lynch's 1984 film adaptation.

Günther uses the German expression *Hochkultur*, which translates literally as “high culture,” but in fact underscores the other meaning of *Kultur*, namely, civilization.⁶ Even though there is in German no literal counterpart to “high culture,” no “low culture,” the parameters of Günther’s encounter with new beginnings in the new world could also mean that he left behind in Germany his academic blinders vis-à-vis low (or B) culture. And yet much later, in his 1975 memoir “Selbstdarstellung im Spiegel Amerikas” (“Self-presentation in the Mirror of America”), Günther claimed that he was immediately struck upon first contact with American science fiction that it had nothing at all in common with the books by Kurd Lasswitz, Hans Dominik, or Jules Verne, as though he had all along been an avid reader of European science fiction (and Dominik is as B as it gets).⁷

The exception, according to Günther, is that the American authors of science fiction give freer rein to vistas of immeasurable distance and time. This may reflect the fantasy component in American popular culture that antedates and pervades early American science fiction.

Freud considered in fantasy sagas and in your dreams critters and insects to be the diminished return of the primal siblings whose bond supported the hero, who only appeared to proceed solo: “We often find [...] that the hero who has to carry out some difficult task [...] can carry out his task only by the help of a crowd of small animals, such as bees or ants. These would be the brothers in the primal horde, just as in the same way in dream symbolism insects or vermin signify brothers and sisters.”⁸ American superheroes carry totems, too, like bats and spiders,

6 In the title of Freud’s study of discontent, “civilization” translates *Kultur*.

7 Gotthard Günther, “Selbstdarstellung im Spiegel Amerikas,” in *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen II*, ed. L.J. Pongratz (Hamburg: Meiner, 1975), 17.

8 Sigmund Freud, “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego,” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XVIII (1920–1922): Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Group Psychology and Other Works*, ed. and trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1964), 136.

while a hero raised to interspecies powers introduced their genre. Was there, in the beginning, a sequence of order or genre separating American superhero fantasy from American science fiction? That this is hard to answer fits the introductory offer of Tarzan.

In Ian Fleming's *Dr. No* (1957), the titular villain relates to his critters not as internal bits of the good object, but as fertilizer, the swap of excrement for gold. The anal character, which Doctor No wears openly as his armor's blazon and camouflage, is also, following in the recessive tread of paranoid developments, the fault measured on the sphincter scale shaking the doctor's securely fortified but externalized place. In the end, he never gets out of his military intestinal complex but ends buried alive in the fertilizer.⁹

While James Bond, at this station of his development in the novels, is a self-cleaning machine spanning a metabolism not unrelated to that of the doctor, he remains attached throughout his anal ordeal on the fortress island to Honey Chile, who already in name is associated with an early, orally benign rapport with the animal lives of the maternal object. His attachment to her prefigures Bond's later assumption, in the course of the *SPECTRE* novels, of the adult profile of the mourner.

While holed up alone with the early loss of all her caretakers, Honey grew up with the animals on the dilapidated estate that nature had taken back. At the same time, Honey learned to read and write, with the books that survived, the legacy of her lost but preserved loved ones. Honey could thus take it from the top of the mourning with an encyclopedia. "I started with A when I was about eight. I've got as far as the middle of T."¹⁰ T is for Tarzan, as Bond concludes on the night of his first encounter with Honey: "His mind was full of the day and of this extraordinary Girl Tarzan who had come into his life. It was as if some beautiful animal had attached itself to him."¹¹

Even the most popular authors in history end up joining the ranks of the unread. While his authorship was booming, Edgar Rice Burroughs incorporated himself in 1923: ERB, Inc. The

9 Ian Fleming, *Dr. No* (New York: Signet Books, 1958), 174.

10 *Ibid.*, 96.

11 *Ibid.*, 102.

corporation is still based in Tarzana, California, the town that his estate became for write-off purposes. In the late 1990s, the corporation headquarters still sifted through layers of detail, like the colors charted for the animated Tarzan's skin hues under diverse conditions. Early on, the multi media trajectory of the corporation consisted, for example, of an ape to English/English to ape dictionary that Burroughs compiled as a free gift for those joining his Tarzan Clans of America.

In the beginning, Ed was the fifth son; the fourth, Arthur, had lived only twelve days. When Ed was six, a younger brother, Charles Stuart, died at five months. The image of the lifeless infant in his mother's arms can be seen again when Tarzan's ape mother Kala won't let go of her dead baby – until she finds in baby Tarzan the replacement she lifts up while dropping the loss into the crib or crypt.

Ed was the shiftless, short-attention-span child, a perennial loser. But it was the loss of siblings that was being pushed back while he was kept under protection. He was regularly sent away because an epidemic was going the rounds. It's clear that there was over-concern that his early passing not be the third that bad fortune brings. As he wrote in his unfinished autobiography of 1929: "Unquestionably my destiny is closely interwoven with pestilences, which may or may not account for my having become a writer."¹²

The ancestry of his mother would be Burroughs's pride and disavowal, which together spell shame. Through his mother he identified with (and idealized) distant relations from Virginia while the more immediate family circle, on both sides, was Union all the way. But the Union that his veteran father embodied had to be mediated for Burroughs by the loss of a civil or sibling war. His mother, whose maiden name was German, was more directly

12 Cited in John Taliaferro, *Tarzan Forever: The Life of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Creator of Tarzan* (New York: Scribner, 1999), 30. This is my sole source book for biographical information, including the words of Burroughs outside the novels, which I cite from Taliaferro. Subsequent page references to citations in the biography are given in the text.

related to her Pennsylvania Dutch father. Ed preferred to cut the race to Virginia, where a UK strain could be lost and found.

He wrote a first novel that lifts off into fantasy from the map of his fraternity in Utah that he kept re-joining, working with his brothers as another ranch hand and panhandler when he wasn't working for his father in Chicago. The title, "Minidoka," also the name of the eponymous hero, was the name of one of the towns on this map. He never showed the draft around, even in the family circle. He filed it away in one box with his souvenirs of school, army, and the West, where it remained undiscovered until after his death. It had been time to pack up the mementos. The fraternity was returning to Chicago after all ventures, including a store in Minidoka, had failed. Looking back on this adventure map of the fraternity, which had supplied a first foundation for his ability to sustain a narrative at novel length, Burroughs characterized its size as that of a territory "into which could have been dumped the former German Empire and all of Greece" (42).

In the outline for his 1929 autobiography he attached one sentence to the period from 1905 to 1911: "I am a Flop" (55). From stenography to pencil sharpeners, from Alcola (a cure for alcoholism) to correspondence courses, Burroughs sought his niche in the new markets of gadget love. He began to suffer nightmares, in which, as he confided to the Boston Society of Psychic Research, he "would see figures standing beside" the "bed, usually shrouded" (61). Waiting around for a breakthrough he had consumed countless stories in the cheap magazines in which, on the back pages, he advertised the latest device he was trying to sell. Shifting perspective, he recognized that a serialized narrative in one of the leading pulp magazines was one more invention he should pitch for sale.

In July 1911, he commenced writing *A Princess of Mars*, his first success story. His innovation was to add to the science-fiction setting a love story or, as he knew from his supervision of the stenography department at Sears, Roebuck in 1907, heterosexuality, the new ingredient in the metabolic mix of institutions and work places.¹³ But he skipped the technical media that defined the new

13 Friedrich Kittler identified the straightening out of the archive, for example in "The Mechanized Philosopher," included in my edited

setting. Instead, the paranormal power of astral projection is how protagonist Carter suddenly finds himself on Mars.

A stranger on a strange planet, one that differs from home by a new relationship to gravity (and the grave), Carter can leap buildings in a single bound (like Superman a couple decades later). In transition to a newly adapted coordination on these terms, he first finds, through “a series of evolutions,” that he must first “learn to walk all over again.”¹⁴ The first “structure” that the newfound toddler stumbles upon is a massively fortified incubator for the eggs of future generations on Mars. The primal questions – Where do babies come from? Where do the dead go? – appear to orbit Burroughs’s conquest of Mars.

Protagonist Carter, who enters a kind of psy-fi limbo at the loss of the Civil War, was a “Southern gentleman of the highest type” (v). He entrusts to “Burroughs,” another Virginian who is also the author of the foreword, his corpus for safe keeping and scheduling. The manuscript must remain “unread” for eleven years. The single massive door to Carter’s well-ventilated tomb opens only from the inside (vii). Carter opens his narrative with the declaration that he is undead but also fears death. It’s because he’s so afraid of death (even though he has died twice to date and yet survives) that he is convinced that he is mortal (ii). He has always been a man of about thirty, about the age of Burroughs (or of his first lost sibling if he could have kept real time) at the time of this breakthrough. The crypt that can be opened only from the inside is not subsequently explored within the narrative of his adventures on Mars. We don’t really even return to it at the end, when, by some reversal of astral projection, he finds himself back on Earth, never to know whether his last-minute intervention to restore the air flow saved his adopted people from suffocation.

In the first sequel, *The Gods of Mars*, Carter meets “Burroughs” again (as recorded in the foreword) after twelve years have passed and hands over his notes for the next install-

collection *Looking after Nietzsche* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 195–207.

14 Edgar Rice Burroughs, *A Princess of Mars* (New York: Del Rey, 1979), 21. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

ment (which “Burroughs” this time writes or ghost-writes): “I have come now because my affection for you prompted me to see you once more before you pass over for ever into that other life that I shall never know, and which though I have died thrice and shall die again to-night, as you know death, I am as unable to fathom as are you.”¹⁵ Though he has learned the secret of traversing “the trackless void” at will, he has determined that, upon returning to Mars, he will never again “leave the dying world” that is his life.¹⁶ Once again, he enters the vault.

Into the revolving door of this crypt, Burroughs inserted the new fiction (and series) dedicated to Tarzan, the prodigal heir to a Scottish estate and title. *Tarzan of the Apes*, which first appeared as magazine fare in 1912 and then in book form two years later, spans the time of publication of Freud’s *Totem and Taboo*. For around two years, a professor at the University of California searched for the roots of Tarzan. In reply to the academic’s diplomatic letters of inquiry, Burroughs wrote:

I have tried to search my memory for some clue to the suggestions that gave me the idea, and as close as I can come to it I believe that it may have originated in my interest in Mythology and the story of Romulus and Remus. I also recall having read many years ago the story of the sailor who was shipwrecked on the Coast of Africa and who was adopted by and consorted with great apes to such an extent that when he was rescued a she-ape followed him into the surf and threw a baby after him.¹⁷

Although the cabin of Tarzan’s birth houses the skeletons of his dead parents (and of his ape mother’s dead baby), it isn’t a crypt but a storehouse of knowledge, a school library and classroom. It’s where Tarzan, beginning in adolescence, comes into his inheritance. The cabin of reason supplies his epistemophilia. Before avenging his ape-mother Kala’s murder, he pauses to study the culprit. Based on the primer from the cabin, he rec-

15 Edgar Rice Burroughs, *The Gods of Mars* (New York: De Rey, 1985), vi.

16 Ibid.

17 Taliaferro, *Tarzan Forever*, 85.

ognizes him as “Negro” but even more so as “Archer.”¹⁸ “Tarzan was an interested spectator. His desire to kill burned fiercely in his wild breast, but the desire to learn was even greater.”¹⁹ When he observes that the African can make fire (which he only knows as lightning or “Ara” in ape-speak), he can’t follow why the man cooks the meat. “Possibly Ara was a friend with whom the Archer was sharing his food.”²⁰

The vault that sends the undead hero Carter to outer space for romance with alien princesses is replaced by a mishap in UK colonial traffic that sends well bred breeders into the primal past, dying like a good missing link so there can be the new interspecies hero. The heterosexual story with Jane, a nice American girl who comes to Africa in the train of her and her father’s incomplete mourning, enrolls Tarzan in a course of education and adaptation that he renounces at the end of the first novel.

Jane and her party find shelter in the cabin. Their first task is to inter the skeletal remains found inside. Tarzan again receives instruction via the cabin, this time in burial and proper mourning. But stay away from Jane – this way civilization lies. The lay of this land is given in Nietzschean shorthand: money, giving only in exchange, and the promise. Jane represents to herself – and represses – her love for Tarzan as primeval. Promises, promises allow her twice in swift succession – the tempo of repression – to block consummation of her love. And yet what she calls primeval is maternal. Her mother died a year ago. Her father addresses his missing wife as ghostly partner. The unsettling effects of the loss, rather than his senility or life-long eccentricity, determine his oblivious treatment of Jane. Father is off to Africa in search of treasure for which he has obtained a loan by the security of promising his daughter’s hand in marriage. She was going along to protect her father. But then she finds herself projecting in her mother’s missing place Tarzan’s bosom body.

Johnny Weissmuller’s incarnation of the superhero, beginning in 1932, enters Tarzan in the contest between American and

18 Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan of the Apes* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), 77.

19 *Ibid.*, 78.

20 *Ibid.*, 96.

German interpretations of and identifications with the superhuman. Weissmuller embodies the aesthetic athleticism that Riefenstahl would instrumentalize. While in *Olympia* (1938) she cynically intercuts the athletes in action with assorted animals in motion, Tarzan–Weissmuller shares ontology with the beasts of the jungle. The elephant is his neighbor and a chimp his adopted child or partner. Here one might recall that Jane Goodall let it be well known that “Tarzan” on screen was the inspiration for her life’s work. The competitor in promoting animal rights is *Bambi* (1942), not, however, in the sense of living with animals but rather in the direction of vegetarianism’s negation of animal death.

Jane “jokingly” refers to the high-fidelity performance she can expect from marriage in Africa as the only white-skinned ape woman for miles. To enjoy her deliverance from incest and its corollary, substitution central, she playfully tugs at White Man’s Burden, which doesn’t exactly fit the interspecies setting. She coyly asks uncomprehending Tarzan–Weissmuller when they awake together where he has been: was he at the club all night? The maternal group of pals, buddies, guys, or other women has no push or pull for her to fight or fend off – even as she is always drawing a line for laughs in the “and” of matrimony. That’s why the ape bond that is associated with Tarzan’s position in the jungle takes the form, in the film franchise starring Weissmuller, of the adoptive chimp whose very name joins in Jane’s aping of fears that cannot hold her but which she cannot let go. “Cheetah” is therefore the one epithet she will never fling into Tarzan’s face (above the breast).

Tarzan–Weissmuller doesn’t say much. But he doesn’t need to. These projections are all about Jane. The first film opens with reunion with her father at his encampment in Africa. Right before she enters, we see the old man looking too longingly at Jane’s photograph. She in turn plays coy with the possibilities of his love, which suggests that this isn’t the first time she’s been overstimulated by his needs. Then she starts freshening up and getting changed in front of her discomfited father without any show of modesty of her own. She talks about how fascinating Africa is, while he says that he hates Africa, which she can’t accept. When he takes her out to witness the natives gathering

for market, father and daughter are up against the studio walls. Screen-thin projections of found footage of African tribesmen are on the walls closing in. Jane takes her departure from the close quarters of Oedipal incest with father and finds her way back to the double-breasted body of noble or pre-Oedipal valuation. Starting over, then, Jane separates out the double-backed parental body and inaugurates their integration.

Test Rooms

James Cameron's *Titanic* (1997) goes down with recognizable masterpieces of modernist art. But the losses are cut with the film taken in as a whole, as the life that flashes before the eyes of one aged survivor, and in the meantime flashes back for the viewer too. All you need is love and memory. We know that kids went to see the movie at least as many times as it took to identify each time for the duration of the "memory" with yet another character. The loss and resurrection of modernist art is all aboard this interactive safe place for kids to try out new ways of playing and playing back and for others to observe and speculate on the kids at play.

Mike Kelley's own crossing of otherwise split-off traditions and disciplines in "Test Room Containing Multiple Stimuli Known to Elicit Curiosity and Manipulating Responses" involved the sorts of juxtaposition one might well assume to be "unthinkable," but then of course could not not be thought. In the hold of the ocean-liner-like exhibition space, one found reconstructed to our scale relics from Harry Harlow's experiments with baby monkeys, including the bare essential "surrogate" mother figures and the foreign items that, out of the context of the surrogate connection, could instill fright in the little test subjects but, back in context, became instead objects for their exploration. Harlow's experiments, which are in several senses science fiction, collide in Kelley's installation with the modernist tip of the fantasy genre. Off to starboard, we watch Kelley's video horizon of modernism in motion. The choreography refers to Martha Graham, the test objects hold the place of Isamu Noguchi's set sculptures, and dancers in ape costume supply what was otherwise implicated

and excluded in all these lab experiments of modernism – the missing link. We are thinking.

Kelley was known to challenge the high that modernism gets out of art. If the high comes down to sublimation, then Theodor W. Adorno would still hang onto that as the big difference between modernist art and the stations of the so-called culture industry. The ability to abstract from the real size of phenomena and perceive aesthetically not naturally requires sublimation skills that have absconded from mass media culture. Freud found a wealth of sublimations missing in Schreber's new delusional world through which the psychotic circumvented the crisis of uncanniness that arises when only life size matters. But as Freud argued already in his essay on Leonardo da Vinci, sublimation in art is always locked into a speed race against repression, which, in time, cannot but leave repression the winner.²¹ In the history of the modernist arts, the contestants dance and sculpture stagger the race.

Life is long (in repression) and art is short. Before the finish line is reached, repression and sublimation are on one race-track, now falling behind, now taking the lead. The alternation between currents was, according to Paul Taylor, also at the art of Graham and Noguchi's collaborations:

Martha was in one of her vulgar or sex-crazed moods. Everything was phallic and "cloital," or whatever the female equivalent is. That was the beginning of a whole series of dances that were on a blatant side; *Phaedra* was the very next year. I loved that one because it starts with this big Noguchi vagina opening. On the other hand, Martha was very prim and puritanical – she was both.²²

Unlike your usual set designs, Noguchi's sculptures on stage could be seen from both sides, a first that gave Graham and her dancers inspiration and stimulation. Paul Taylor remembers:

21 See my discussion and documentation of these positions in *The Psycho Records* (New York: Wallflower Press, 2016), 25–26.

22 Robert Tracy, *Goddess: Martha Graham's Dancers Remember* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1997), 241.

Noguchi was creating sculptures for Martha. They were furniture that looked like sexual organs. They were three-dimensional. Martha was never content with where they were, so she always had us push them around the stage, flop them over, turn them upside down. Noguchi would never have a back and front to any of his design objects. They were always to be seen from every angle. He probably knew that Martha was going to turn them around – the wrong way, sometimes. He was prepared. It was a great idea, if for no other reason than for the dancer's sake. [...] If you are working with a set piece that looks just as beautiful in back as it does in front, you perform better. You really do.²³

The Noguchi props or sculptures were toys or stimuli to excite exploration. Martha Graham choreographed with the moves she observed her dancers make in this safe place of play or improvisation. Taylor: “Martha would leave me in the room and say, ‘Do something.’ Martha was overseeing the general plan of the dance. She was like an editor. You would set something and Martha would glance at it. It was very free.”²⁴ Noguchi: “I was just her assistant with the necessary equipment, like in a hospital.”²⁵

The Harlow project, so honored and famous in the 1960s, has by now been jettisoned among the failed (because methodologically compromised) science experiments. But it is in this sideshow that science cannot hide its deepest unscientific desires. Harlow's test results gave support to the notion that “learning to learn” was the standard for measuring intelligence and creativity on a sliding evolutionary scale. Yes, a certain faith in the medium of memory as our highest calling (which we must share with our monkey stand-ins in the experiments) distinguishes rote learning from learning to learn. On the fast lane set aside for passing humanity by, the machine that can learn to learn qualifies as intelligent life. But for humans and monkeys at least,

23 Ibid., 242.

24 Ibid., 240.

25 Cited in Agnes De Mille, *Martha: The Life and Work of Martha Graham – A Biography* (New York: Random House, 1997), 82.

the memory medium of learning to learn develops in earliest life within the relationship to the other on whom we can rely.

A.T.W. Simeons found an evolutionary explanation for the development of this mind-expanding relationship given in memory of the other in the time our missing-link ancestors hid up in the trees. In the relative safety of the high life they were given the extra time in which they just had to develop the pursuit of “animated leisure.”

Once a certain degree of cortical development had been reached, all vital needs could be fulfilled in a few short bursts of activity. During the rest of the time there was nothing of vital performance to be done. Yet a highly active brain compelled man’s animal ancestors to perform some sort of activity in which this brain could be maximally employed. Here again the higher tree-living mammals made use of the trick of continuing into adult life a trait that had hitherto been a privilege of the very young. They continued to play during their whole lives. [...] Such activities that had little to do with the maintenance of life provided the best possible training for sensory acuity, all forms of advanced nervous control and muscular coordination. [...] In modern man playfulness has gone to extremes. He plays from earliest infancy until he dies. It is only the nature of his toys which changes with the passage of the years. [...] It is the painter, the poet, the musician and the actor who furnish most of the geniuses because it is they who enrich modern man’s leisure. It is they who conform to the evolutionary trend which aspires to ever more time to play.²⁶

Life would have been lonely at the top if it hadn’t been for the leisure time of play, in which we play at playing away from mother, and which at the same time requires the safety zone of ecstatic clinging to her or her “surrogate,” the stand-in related to what D.W. Winnicott described as the “transitional object.” Like the blanket a child never lets go for a phase, the transitional object is

26 A.T.W. Simeons, *Man’s Presumptuous Brain: An Evolutionary Interpretation of Psychosomatic Disease* (New York: Dutton, 1960), 38–40.

any placeholder of the maternal connection that also represents the step of individuation away from the material event of this union.

To situate his research project, Harlow frequently cited British psychoanalyst John Bowlby, best known for his work on early relations with the mother, in particular on the pathogenic consequences of early separation and loss. Bowlby was heir to the English object relations school of psychoanalysis, which benefited from the mobilization of research populations during the World Wars.

It wasn't women and children first; it was the soldiers symptomatizing shell shock during the First World War who were the first exogamous human subjects offered up for intensive study outside the home. Before the availability of captive populations for study under experimental conditions of traumatization, a scientist by and large conducted research on family members mixing testing with parental guidance.

Main tenets of object relations psychoanalysis were confirmed during World War Two in a new variation on the research population made possible by the air war. The bombing of the cities led to the evacuation of children and teens to the countryside. Therapists and analysts accompanied them because it was assumed that the impact of the already endured bombings had induced something like the old shell shock in the same way that soldiers at the front were being afflicted (although the second time around the symptomatology was more psychotic than hysterical). What the attending practitioners discovered instead was that it was the separation of the children from their mothers that caused high anxiety and acting out, which had to be treated but could also now be observed. The biggest symptom the therapists were able to study was the one they had helped create. Separation anxiety, brought on by the separation from the mother, was the new presenting problem of their research population. Even when mother and child were still together, there was much to learn under air war conditions. Children who were fear-struck during bombings had mothers who were anxious about the outcome. If the mother remained calm, so did the child. The bond was bombproof or, if the bombs breached it, the bond was

incomplete, a second thought to the mother's preoccupation with her own safety.

Harlow summarizes the evolutionary link between his monkey business and his main concern, which is to show how affection in human infants is generated not by the satisfactions of feeding, but, a cut above the nursing breast, mainly from close bodily contact: "The analogy with the behavior of human infants requires no elaboration."²⁷ The analogy takes the form of behavior that anyone might observe in a young child in a strange place with his mother or then the difference if she is not there. Harlow also allows that the mother does not take an interest in her own baby until little one learns to respond: "an infant that does not feed back will not be fed."²⁸ The analogy that goes without saying does become the basis, however, for experimental elaboration. "We developed the same response in our infant monkeys when we exposed them to a room that was far larger than the cages to which they were accustomed. In the room we had placed a number of unfamiliar objects such as a small artificial tree, a crumpled piece of paper, a folded gauze diaper, a wooden block and a doorknob."²⁹

MOE-THER

Harlow's research is the larger elaboration of the plainly analogous bond or terror that Mike Kelley reconstructs on a scale with the high-modernism Noguchi set on a stage with Martha Graham's dance pieces and on the common ground of their interest in what's so archetypal or so evolutionary about Jung's psychology. Joseph Campbell, Martha Graham's direct source for Jungian notions, turns up the contrast between Carl Jung's view of life's transmission and the more personalized license of Freudian analysis:

27 Harry F. Harlow, "Love in Infant Monkeys," *Scientific American* 200, no. 6 (June 1959): 72.

28 Harry F. Harlow, *Learning to Love* (San Francisco: Albion Publishing Company, 1971), 9.

29 Harlow, "Love in Infant Monkeys," 72.

The collective unconscious of Jung is the dynamic of the human body, the energies of the memory. Whereas Freud's subconscious is the consequence of individual traumatic experience, Jung's collective unconscious is racial and generic; therefore Freud's subconscious is biographical and Jung's unconscious is biological. In Freudian analysis one tries to find out what happened in an individual life; Jung opens the structure of the psyche to race memory, the common treasure which we all inherit.³⁰

Bowlby, whose analytic investigation of the contact high between mother and baby Harlow took along for his study of the doubly missing link between "mother" and little monkeys, cut to the race when he analyzed the biotext of Charles Darwin, which is by and large the stuck record of chronic illness. On May 20, 1865, Darwin tallied his symptoms for future reference and referrals: "For 25 years extreme spasmodic daily and nightly flatulence: occasional vomiting, on two occasions prolonged during months. Vomiting preceded by shivering (hysterical crying) dying sensations (or half-faint)."³¹ Labels that fit this bundle of symptoms include anxiety neurosis, hyperventilation syndrome, effort syndrome, and Soldier's Heart (9). Bowlby concluded that Darwin suffered from yet another synonym, namely, anxiety disorder with panic attacks.

Bowlby was the first to track back the psychosomatic illness to Darwin's earliest encounters with separation and loss. Within a few years of Charles's birth, his mother developed a serious gastric illness, from which she died several years later when Charles was eight. According to Freud, the end in sight of mourning is reached in two years. It follows that in unmourning the melancholic counts down in increments of two years, periods never reaching the end of the sentencing of the dead.

From early days, Charles was a collector, originally of any item at all of natural history, but later he became more selective,

30 Cited in De Mille, *Martha*, 278.

31 John Bowlby, *Charles Darwin: A New Life* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1991), 6. Subsequent page references (for Bowlby and for Darwin cited in Bowlby) are given in the text.

indeed, evolutionary in his own time. One day he took a chance (and made a change) by joining the expedition to South America all aboard the *Beagle*. But first he had to enlist the support of his uncle, his dead mother's brother, in convincing father to give up his stamping of disapproval. Just two years after the *Beagle's* return, Darwin had already conceived the main features of his theory of evolution: random variation and natural selection. But what he wrote up at this time he put away for safekeeping. He waited fourteen or seven-times-two years before putting the theory forward in *On the Origin of Species*.

Darwin spent his adult life at Down. It was there that for thirty years he suffered chronic ill health featuring largely gastric symptoms. According to the record he kept, so-called palpitations preceded and accompanied the gastric symptom complex. The first bout was when he was twenty-two waiting for the *Beagle's* departure, which was deferred several times over, intensifying the drag of waiting. That was a departure, projected to last two years, but taking ultimately two-times-two years, which seemed to double or contain his mother's departure.

The next severe onset of symptoms coincided with the confinement of his wife Emma, who was also his maternal cousin. Bowlby: "One possibility, which inevitably remains speculative, is that unconsciously he was linking Emma's abdominal changes with the months of abdominal illness that preceded his mother's death" (238). But then their son William was born and soon Darwin was looking at the plus side of having a baby around: "I had not the smallest conception there was so much in a five month baby" (242). He started keeping detailed records of William's development. Darwin's systematic study of his baby son's behavior was response-oriented. Darwin wanted to know, for example, if babies blink before experience can have taught them to avoid danger.

Darwin was particularly interested in patterns of behavior that appear without learning. If his theory of natural selection was correct, the behaviors he was observing in his son would have survival value. To this end he examined the role of emotional expressions, postures, and vocalizations in communicating internal feelings. He also noted resemblances between early human responses and those of other species. Thus his baby son's crying

for food was for the birds; in other words, it must be instinctive behavior. Infancy, he declared, was “the pure and simple source” of our expressions (402). But this was because, as Darwin was forced to leave out of the equation, mother was in our face first.

In the wake of his mother’s passing, one incident makes it into Darwin’s *Autobiography*. In the midst of the general blackout conditions obtaining for this period in his life there is hearsay: “I have heard my father and elder sisters say that I had, as a very young boy, a strong taste for long solitary walks; but what I thought about I know not” (62). With his thoughts elsewhere he once fell from the path along the top of the town’s old fortifications. “Nevertheless, the number of thoughts which passed through my mind during this very short, but sudden and wholly unexpected fall, was astonishing, and seem hardly compatible with what physiologists have, I believe, proved about each thought requiring quite an appreciable amount of time” (ibid.). The fall is associated, all the way down the etymological infrastructure of many languages, with the enactment or acting out of mourning. Bowlby speculated that the boy was unconsciously searching for his mother along a “wall of silence.” Out of concern for their father, his two elder sisters, the surrogates, applied the silent treatment concerning the mother’s death or the dead mother.

If he remembered the fall at all, in the time it took to be able to begin to write another autobiography, he did so only up to the point of switching association tracks to scientific invention and controversy. His fall, like some realization of time-travel science fiction or fantasy, disproved the standard timing of thought. The time it takes to think, invent, and thus take a chance and change, and introduce a complete shift in any of our standard receptions, contradicts a certain misunderstanding of Darwin’s theory of evolution (which Darwin, too, at times cosigned). What fits into the split in the sense of the timing of evolution is the missing link, which not only in Darwin’s case doubles as link with the missing.

In the setting of opposition between catastrophist and uniformitarian takes on origins, a setting backed up at the time by religious investments, the essence of Darwin’s theory of evolution became associated with gradual transmutation rather than sud-

den change. Just the same, Darwin's theory right away inspired science fantasies beginning with Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, in which plant and animal species or even machines take the upper hand through a fast forwarding of evolutionary progress. Evolution introduced the first historical time scheme that could account for the sudden changes brought about, for example, by a new techno-invention that gives one sensorium's vantage point an advantage over the other's range of the senses. In his 1932 text "The Question of a *Weltanschauung*?" the evolutionist Freud claimed that when the first German zeppelin crossed the channel in peacetime, World War One was already in the making, in the air.³² The contradiction or impasse lies in the corpus of Charles Darwin and precedes the slo-mo timing of changes to which the reception of the theory of evolution was adjusted. The element of random variation is the placeholder for the outside chance of sudden change.

It was always in his correspondence with the grieving that Darwin organized his thoughts around this impasse. For example, in the letter of condolence he sent Joseph Dalton Hooker upon the death of his friend's child, Darwin begins with his own dead father for the sake of comparison. Not a day passes without his thinking of him with respect and longing. "But his death at eighty-four caused me nothing of that insufferable grief which the loss of poor dear Annie caused. And this seems to be perfectly natural, for one knew that for years previously that one's father's death is drawing slowly nearer and nearer while the death of one's child is a sudden and dreadful wrench" (380). The contradiction in the timing of the effect of change, then, lies between a natural slow draw and the sudden and dreadful wrench.

After his daughter Annie died of gastric illness, at about the same age little Charles was when his mother died, Darwin was convinced he had passed his and his mother's illness on to his daughter. Darwin would henceforward be obsessed not

32 Sigmund Freud, "The Question of a *Weltanschauung*," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXII (1932–1936): New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis and Other Works*, ed. and trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1964), 178.

only with his own symptoms but with the prospect of those symptoms popping up in any of his children. Darwin voices not the concern for the mortality of the survivor children but an over-involvement with the big picture of hereditary history, which amounts to manic denial. “My fear is hereditary ill-health. Even death is better for them” (298). “We are a wretched family, and ought to be exterminated” (368). “All Darwins ought to be exterminated” (*ibid.*). A murderously fast-paced understanding of and participation in natural selection slips out of Darwin’s melancholic self-recrimination.

In the realm of reproduction, the mortality rate of children was one of Darwin’s inspirations for the notion of “natural selection,” which he named in analogy with the artificial selection of manipulated breeding of animals. Darwin saw the high rate as cutting any major increase in offspring back down to the one size that fits every generation. Later he wished he had used instead of “natural selection” the term “natural preservation” (338). In the realm of replication (on which artificial breeding already borders) change can happen fast, at the speed at which death changes lives. Darwin realized in a letter that, given his ill health, a replicating strain which he had transmitted through reproduction of his family line, he was not up to speed when it came to invention: “‘the race is for the strong’, and [...] I shall probably do little more but must be content to admire the strides others make in science” (242). Darwin conceded, then, that the race of invention had been outrun by the gradual survival of our fit within races and species.

Darwin spent the last decade of his life virtually symptom free. Sometimes it just takes time and then it’s over. But then he really died. And all his surviving children, who had been watching too, became the biographers of life with father. Bowlby was the beneficiary: “In the Darwin family a word-game had become popular in which a word could be stolen from another player and a new word then constructed by adding a letter, thereby changing its meaning. The story goes that on one occasion Darwin saw someone add an M to OTHER so as to construct the new word MOTHER. After looking at it for a long time he objected, ‘MOE-THER; there’s no such word MOE-THER’” (78). The children left behind records that showed, each in turn, slightly different

degrees of variation and selection. Within the Darwin household successful mourning had evolved after the fact and for the time being.

Play Mobility

The first step towards surrogate mothering came when Harlow observed that the baby monkeys became terrified and inconsolable if, for hygienic reasons, the blanket on the floor of the cage was removed. Monkey survival rate was higher if raised by surrogates. The only glitch was that what rarely happened to their monkey mothers happened to the surrogates or transitional objects. The little ones soiled them.

To enter the range of the human, which ranges from dependency to leisure, means to lose all innocence or efficiency in disposal. Our brains grow because the other always goes first – at our leisure. Leisure time always also means time to kill. We're smart enough to get depressed, even suicidal about it. What offers a stay to the leisure suit of death wishes is the transition state, which increases the survival rate of humans.

In the first volume, we visited stations in D.W. Winnicott's thought set aside for fantasizing or daydreaming and set apart from the night dream and poetry, playing and reality. We saw in the case study of the dissociated daydreamer in *Playing and Reality* that the patient, like Freud's hysterics in his day, dictated to her analyst a new approach to treating her predicament, which we called fantasizing fantasy, and which in effect breaches the impasse in Freud's poetics of daydreaming. In contrast to the exceptions we addressed in the first volume, including the ektopic creativity of incorporation (the case of a male carrier of a girl), creativity is approached in *Playing and Reality* from the vantage of the reader, whose receiving area, beginning with the transitional object, lies in the play or elasticity in the (theory of) object relation.

Winnicott reintroduces the respite basic to Freud's understanding of sublimation via his own notion of the transitional object in the opening chapter of *Playing and Reality* ("Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena"). The infant tends to "weave" other-than-me objects into his or her personal pattern

at the start of the transition state.³³ Whether an infant's babbling or the way a child goes over a repertoire of songs when it's bedtime for help in falling asleep, transitional phenomena tend to defend against depressive anxiety (2, 4). Out of these phenomena an object can emerge, one that bears a name, often partly incorporating in it an adult word (5). The special qualities Winnicott attributes to the traditional transitional object give us reason to recall those that Freud assigned to the lost object (the target of death wishes or the ghost). Some omnipotence is abrogated to the transitional object, which must show to the infant that it has vitality or reality of its own. Indeed, it must survive instinctual loving and hating and cannot undergo any change other than what the infant brings about.

Winnicott often gathered invaluable information on relationships to transitional objects that were still in progress from the subjects' older siblings. But then as a bonus there could be a souvenir, too. An eleven-year-old remembered his bell rope, which he tugged to fall asleep until he (and in time it) dropped off. But then shyly he recalled the rabbit with red eyes. His younger brother had it now because it was naughty and so he gave it away. "It still visits me. I like it to visit me" (8).

The transitional object is dependent in theory on Melanie Klein to the extent that it is, in fact or function, dependent on the tested reality of internal and external objects (9). Only when the internal object is "good enough (not too persecutory)" can the infant turn to a transitional object. But the internal object depends for its qualities on the existence and aliveness of the external object. The transitional object thus may stand for the external breast but only indirectly by standing first for an internal breast. Unlike the internal object the transitional object isn't under magical control; nor is it outside control like the mother herself.

The transitional object is the "root of symbolism in time" (6). Thus a "schizoid" patient was nipped at the root and left wondering, for example, whether Winnicott had enjoyed eating her at the Christmas feast. The delusional component would be her

33 D.W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (Hove and New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2002), 3. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

valuation and identification of herself as the Host. She wanted to know whether he had really eaten her or only in fantasy,³⁴ a query that carries forward the distinction Winnicott drew right above the case example between the Protestant and Catholic views of what's eaten in Communion (6). As Carl Schmitt underscored, the Elizabethan legacy as third party to the continental religious wars (like the underworld organization SPECTRE in the Cold War world of James Bond) allowed Hamlet, for example, to draw on both perspectives.³⁵ What applied to Hamlet is what Winnicott says of his patient: "Her split needed the double answer."

Winnicott amplified Freud's theory of sublimation, whereby a spot of early cannibalistic or melancholic identification is mixed into the very constitution of the superego, the secret agency that, on unmourning watch, knows whereof it ejects. Like Klein, he moves the theory of sublimation into pre-Oedipal precincts, but this time truly like Klein, leaving it in itself intact. Before the father as antibody, associated with that single-minded and diversionary trajectory of Freud's thought, can make an entrance in Winnicott's presentation of development (though he already stands to the side or, as Klein would underscore, on the inside in the mother's body) there is the transitional object that binds connection/disconnection. Its success lies in its ultimate disposability. The transitional object may have been the prop required for the connection in disconnection to be absorbed, but the object itself simply fades away – without mourning, substitution, or repression. It enacts the possibility of going or letting go from the very midst of one's life.

Winnicott cites another child patient whose attachment to the mother herself did not leave enough room to pass the transitional test. His stuffed animal was a "comforter" and not a "true" transitional object. If truly transitional, the object would be almost "more important than the mother" – "an almost

34 This brief case study example is not given in the version of the 1951 essay as it is elaborated and emended twenty years later in *Playing and Reality*. The example can be found in the original version included in D.W. Winnicott, *Through Paediatrics to Psychoanalysis: Collected Papers* (New York & London: Brunner-Routledge, 1992), 234.

35 See my *SPECTRE* (Fort Wayne: Anti-Oedipus Press, 2013), 78–80.

inseparable part of the infant” without interpersonal or anthropomorphic reference (7). This patient’s younger brother did use his transitional object typically or properly. In the meantime a father of children, he was interested in and observed “the thumb-sucking of his own children and their use of ‘Baas’” (ibid.). The older brother never married.

When Winnicott introduced the transitional object “between primary creative activity and projection of what has already been introjected, between primary unawareness of indebtedness and the acknowledgment of indebtedness” he placed the challenge of creativity – originality – under its restraining order (2). The transitional between-position is not protective of its liminal function, as might be said of fetishistic dissociation according to Freud. It goes on only if not challenged in the midst of our ongoing “task of keeping inner and outer reality separate yet interrelated” (ibid.), which as rocking momentum of oscillation carries forward the argument(s) in *Playing and Reality*.

In the third chapter of *Playing and Reality* (“Playing: A Theoretical Statement”), Winnicott sets his understanding of playing off against a certain masturbatory understanding or application of playing (with oneself). This is one thing he wants “to get out of the way” (38), which accords well with the topic at hand, which is also a form of short hand. After pushing aside what Freud might have termed “wild analysis,” Winnicott identifies his tack: “playing needs to be studied as a subject on its own, supplementary to the concept of the sublimation of instinct” (39). First Freud is projected as the wild side, then Klein is left beside the point since, strictly speaking, she addressed only the use of play in analysis as proxy for the language skill not yet available for free association.

Playing has us in training for the ability to be alone (47–48). We can first play alone because the reliable loved one is available and continues to be available when remembered again after being forgotten. It is felt that the available one reflects back what happens in the playing. Playing is always a relationship. In time playing together will make it possible to experience an overlap between two play areas.

In chapter 5 of *Playing and Reality* (“Creativity and Its Origins”), Winnicott unpacks the full implication of depen-

dence (as environmental provision) in creative playing and living. Rather than resign himself to what he terms the original sin hypothesis of the Death Drive, Winnicott prefers to see the environmental provision as counterforce: “good-enough environmental provision at the very earliest stages makes it possible for the individual to cope with the immense shock of loss of omnipotence” (71).

The admission of environmental influence in session, which yields a self-reflexive allegory of analysis between inside and outside, traumatization and treatment, suspends, to borrow an image from the photographic session to which Winnicott likes to return, the “backcloth” for his pursuit of object use, as distinguished from object relating. In chapter 6 of *Playing and Reality* (“The Use of an Object and Relating through Identifications”), psychoanalysis is charged with giving preferential treatment to relating, whereby all environmental factors that are not projective are eliminated (88). The very thesis statement, as it seems to approach him early in the chapter, gives pause: “It seems I am afraid to get there” (89). Because psychoanalysts did not address the use of an object, they also did not attend to the space bars between relating and use. You can only use an object that is not a bundle of projections but a thing in itself. That means it lies outside the area of the subject’s omnipotent control. The change from relating to use, therefore, means that the subject destroys the object. The next between space: the object must survive its destruction by the subject; it must not retaliate. If the subject begins to live in a world of objects then he must accept “the ongoing destruction in unconscious fantasy relative to object-relating” (90). While “orthodox” theory views aggression as reactive to the encounter with the reality principle, Winnicott argues that, instead, “the destructive drive [...] creates the quality of externality” (93).

What was hard for Winnicott to state still has some play in it. Over the next chapters it will evolve in a kind of rocking motion into, for example, the revalorization of potential space as that which allows for the negation of “the idea of space and separation between the baby and the mother” (110). This is in chapter 8, “The Place Where We Live,” where our reading orbit lands us before the “impossibility of separation” (108). The potential

space thus can become “an infinite area of separation, which the baby, child, adolescent, adult may creatively fill with playing, which in time becomes the enjoyment of the cultural heritage” (ibid.).

In chapter 7, “The Location of Cultural Experience,” Winnicott already drew the line through the transitional state to show the way to “the separation that is not a separation but a form of union” (98). “Our psychotic patients force us to give attention to this sort of basic problem” (ibid.). What is life about? The absence of psychoneurotic illness may be health, but it is not necessarily life. “Psychotic patients who are all the time hovering between living and not living force us to look at this problem” (100). It is the problem of cultural experience where we find again the “phenomena that are life and death to our schizoid or borderline patients.” Without experience in the area of transitional phenomena, the instinctual gratifications, which start off as part functions, become seductions. In addition to all the false-self scenarios of psychopathy folding out of deprivation of dependability, there is the danger that the “potential space will be filled with what is injected into it from someone other than the baby. It seems that whatever is in this space that comes from someone else is persecutory material, and the baby has no means of rejecting it” (102).

The back-and-forth momentum of *Playing and Reality* becomes the Before and After of the patient presented in chapter 10 who liked to proclaim that, logically, there was no point in feeling sorry for anyone who was dead. You might feel sorry for the survivors, if they missed the deceased, but otherwise dead was dead (132). That a mutative change had taken place in the course of treatment became clear when the patient said she felt sorry for her mother (who was dead), because she was unable to wear the jewelry that the patient had inherited but could not bring herself to wear. “Now she was *imaginatively* living, or wanting to live through wearing the jewellery, in order to give her dead mother some life, even if only a little, and vicariously” (136).

The Trace against Time

Pablo Picasso made no bones about the wish that he brought to his encounters with technical media, first photography, then film. It was to see conserved the successive changes going into a work, which are lost upon completion of the process. The meditative prospect of simultaneity of visualization or remembrance was the place Freud marked in his book of analogues for unconscious thought. To illustrate the unconscious, he asked us to see the history of a city in the light of remembrance. When gazing upon Rome, see not only the Colosseum, for example, but also, at the same time, the edifices it replaced.

There is certainly not a little that is ancient still buried in the soil of the city or beneath its modern buildings. This is the manner in which the past is preserved in historical sites like Rome. Now let us, by a flight of the imagination, suppose that Rome is not a human habitation but a psychical entity with a similarly long and copious past – an entity, that is to say, in which nothing that has once come into existence will have passed away and all the earlier phases of development continue to exist alongside the latest one. This would mean that in Rome the palaces of the Caesars [...] would still be rising to their old height on the Palatine [...]. But more than this. In the place occupied by the Palazzo Caffarelli would once more stand – without the Palazzo having to be removed – the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus; and this not only in its latest shape, as the Romans of the Empire saw it, but also in its earliest one, when it still showed Etruscan forms [...].³⁶

The model for this instructive assignment was the POV affixed by grief misplaced in time that Freud had already used to illustrate

36 Sigmund Freud, “Civilization and Its Discontents,” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXI (1927–1931): The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and Its Discontents, and Other Works*, ed. and trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), 70–71.

hysteria.³⁷ The hysteric is like a modern citizen of London who, before the train station Charing Cross, still recognizes and grieves over the original station in the crossing of the funeral procession bearing Queen Eleanor to her place of burial. Only the POV fixated “in deep melancholy” sees in a city’s historical monuments souvenirs of grievous events and, by endopsychic extension, in hysterical symptoms the mnemonic symbols of traumatic experience. The witness stuck in grief can see better the alternate realities that fold out of loss.

Henri-Georges Clouzot and his wife Véra became Pablo Picasso’s neighbors and close friends upon relocating to Southern France. Clouzot’s documentary artist film *Le mystère Picasso* (*The Mystery of Picasso*) followed in 1956, but it also followed directly upon and out of Clouzot’s breakthrough suspense thriller from the year before: *Les diaboliques*. In the footnote underworld of his study *Book of Kings*, Klaus Theweleit assigns to Véra Clouzot the role of Eurydice between the men going into their art film, in which a new technique won from the visit to Hades allowed paint and color to emerge directly on the screen.³⁸ Although Véra Clouzot was around for three more films, the coincidence can’t be discounted between the heart ailment of Christina, the figure she played in *Les diaboliques*, who in the end is shocked to death by a staged haunting, and her own weakness to which she succumbed in 1960.

The 1952 novel that Clouzot adapted, *Celle qui n’était plus* (*She Who Was No More*) by Boileau-Narcejac, assigned the heart condition to the man in the triangle, who however jumps the gun when it looks like the missing body of his wife has come back for him. He thought he and his girlfriend had murdered her, but

37 Sigmund Freud, “Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis,” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XI (1910): Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, Leonardo da Vinci and Other Works*, ed. and trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1957), 16–17.

38 Klaus Theweleit, *Buch der Könige*, vol. 2y: *Recording angels’ mysteries: zweiter Versuch im Schreiben ungebeter Biographien, Kriminalroman, Fallbericht und Aufmerksamkeit* (Frankfurt a/M: Stroemfeld Verlag, 1996), 679.

it's both women who walk away from their perfect crime. In the film, the wife is the dupe and the husband that she thought she murdered was all along in cahoots with the other woman who only pretended to be her accomplice. The manipulated death of Christina in *Les diaboliques* adapts less the novel and more Véra's heart condition and future heart attack. But by overlooking the delay Theweleit does underscore that the relationship to Véra Clouzot's mortal illness was one to be watched as much as staged.

The Mystery of Picasso was at first projected to be another short in line with the veritable subgenre of film documents of artists painting that followed Paul Haesaerts's 1949 *Visite à Picasso*. Instead, Clouzot wrapped at feature length Picasso's melancholy wish to witness the changes (or losses) going into his art making, not like the architectural history of Rome according to Freud's evocation of what the unconscious alone can see, but in a roundabout compromise formation reminiscent of Freud's turn to the mystic writing pad. You can watch the film document of the process, which outlasts in advance the completion of the painted work, but the result is a succession of images rather than the simultaneity of unconscious remembrance. Each station of the film is demarcated in the manner of the mystic writing pad lifting away one image from the screen to clear it for the next image in progress.

At one point, Clouzot offers a cinematic answer to where the painting goes. He reverses the film to redo or undo the painting process we just witnessed. The works that we watched unfold in variations and versions in *The Mystery of Picasso* count as missing, and were most likely destroyed upon the film's completion. The ambiguity testifies to the import of the film for Picasso, who brought along for the recording his discovery of the special ink shining through the sheets,³⁹ his own motion picturing of a live transparency in intimation of simultaneity.

Although Picasso had the ego strength to accept the compromise, the foreign body of his unfulfillable wish triggers side

39 Critic Roland Lacourbe acclaimed Picasso's discovery as that summit of technique that turns around into the disappearance of all technique. Cited in Christopher Lloyd, *Henri-Georges Clouzot* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2007), 143.

effects of the impossible possibility of simultaneity, acted out in the scene of Clouzot's challenge to Picasso to complete a painting in the time left before the roll of film runs out. The suspense Clouzot builds in this scene is continuous with signature moments in his earlier films, including the 1953 elaboration of the life or death consequences of hauling nitroglycerin in *Le salaire de la peur* (*The Wages of Fear*). The highpoint of Clouzot's mastery in the genre, however, was the death by haunting's special effects in *Les diaboliques*, which prompted Alfred Hitchcock to assign the film to his crew working on *Psycho* for constant study of the scene's consummate construction of suspense. Clouzot had beaten Hitchcock to the draw, obtaining the rights to adapt *She Who Was No More*, a setback Hitchcock reversed when he successfully secured the next novel by Boileau-Narcejac, *D'entre les morts* (*The Living and the Dead*), which he made into *Vertigo*, his 1957 construction of a haunted POV held in suspense by body doubles.

In making *Psycho*, Hitchcock drew from the suspense account opened through his work on television, the medium defined by its ability to transmit live, which is the fantasy referee of Clouzot's staging of a real-time contest between filming and painting. Hitchcock made *Psycho* with the crew of his TV show *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* from both sides of the contest between film and television, which he had been studying closely. Leading up to the time of Hitchcock's detour through television, Theodor Adorno studied the new medium in the 1950s in terms of the culture industry's doubling and shrink-wrapping of our sensorium to fit the swift attention span of expertise, a POV trained on evaluation of realism lying in the technical details. Adorno in "How to Look at Television": "Modern audiences, although probably less capable of the artistic sublimation bred by tradition, have become shrewder in their demands for perfection of technique and for reliability of information." Mass culture, therefore, Adorno continues, "if not sophisticated, must at least be up-to-date – that is to say, 'realistic,' or posing as realistic – in order to meet the expectations of a supposedly disillusioned, alert, and hard-boiled audience."⁴⁰

40 Theodor Adorno, "How to Look at Television," *The Quarterly of*

Adorno argues that a TV murder mystery is immersed in or comes out of this expert verification of pseudo-realism heightened by suspicion:

The way the spectator is made to look at apparently everyday items [...] and to take as hints of possible crime common settings of his daily life, induces him to look at life itself as though it and its conflicts could generally be understood in such terms. [...] What matters is not the importance of crime as a symbolic expression of otherwise controlled sexual or aggressive impulses, but the confusion of this symbolism with a pedantically maintained realism in all matters of direct sense perception.⁴¹

Hitchcock installed in this set of responses a demo of his technical realization of fright unseen. The shower scene cited and summoned our death wishes to supply the equation between the cuts of editing and the stabs of murder. In the crime dramas crowding the TV set in the 1950s, Adorno concludes in “Prologue to Television,” it is not the victim, not the survivors at the end of the murder spree, but the criminal alone who models the cynical norm of adaptation.⁴² However, before the norm of adaptation on TV can be said to be criminal, it is in the first place adolescent, which means that a period can be set to the psychopathic violence. The Psycho Effect, the staggered course of the post-traumatic impact of the shower scene through *Psycho*’s own subgenres, slasher and splatter movies, which reached the film therapy’s termination phase by the 1990s, carried out the hope that D.W. Winnicott attributed to juvenile delinquency, the reality effect of the death wish that passes.⁴³

Clouzot’s race against TV can be seen to replay another race between his film protagonist and another film director’s art-

Film Radio and Television 8, no. 3 (Spring 1954): 229.

41 Ibid., 227–28.

42 Theodor Adorno, “Prolog zum Fernsehen,” in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 10, no. 2, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 2003), 514.

43 This is the gist of my book-length study *The Psycho Records*.

ist subject, Jackson Pollock. Film documentation of a painter painting reformats the self-reflexivity of reflective or transparent surfaces, from the glass on which Picasso paints in the Haesaerts film to the see-through screens in Clouzot's feature, into a psychological test situation. That Picasso passes the test, for example by not surrendering to the finish line of the contest, but in other ways as well, may obscure this issue, but doesn't annul it.

That Hans Namuth's 1951 film of Pollock painting is a test before it is a document is also made manifest by the introduction of glass, the reflecting surface on which the artist is directed to paint. The conditions of the test are significantly aggravated by the placement of the camera. Pollock's process famously was a dance-like involvement of the body in the act of painting, which the canvas on the ground helped choreograph. To be filmed from below through this horizon recalls and triggers a derangement of the mirror relation, which the peripheral recording of the painter at work face to face with the canvas upholds. To be seen and reflected from below immediately extends the mirror relation to its intrapsychic afterimage, the body in pieces. That the Namuth film-test put a strain on the narcissistic disorder for which Pollock self-medicated has been taken far indeed by those speculating that the artist's mental balance shifted into decline as a direct consequence.

On the soundtrack of Namuth's film, Pollock's voice-over comments that his painting on glass is a new event in the history of his practice, and then begins again after, he says, losing contact with the glass. For the next try he introduces by a mixed media layering of detritus a less-transparent foundation for the painting. The split between soundtrack and silent film upgrades as sublime the document of the near decompensation of the artist as psychological test subject. In Clouzot's film, Picasso announces that he will strip away or destroy one work with which he has lost contact, a loss that he first staggered by applying a sort of sedimentation to the surface, prep work reminiscent of Pollock's second try. Tearing away as best defense of the contact high means that Picasso tests on the safe side of the border to psychosis.

When it comes to the big picture, however, we are given to identify with lost causes, which we reverse or restore for a prospect of history without precursors, the way Roman mythico-poetics

got around Greece through identification with Troy. Following the Haesaerts Picasso film, the Namuth document introduced Pollock as mascot for a postwar American painting billed as a new start without precedent or compromise. Beyond the vulnerability of the artist as film-test subject, Pollock's mad reputation found its pop-cultural rhyme with psycho criminality: Jack the Dripper. Does this reflect the adaptation to the horror and crime detection setting of psychopathic violence (as seen on American tv according to Adorno)?

The trend counted a late arrival in the cluster of commercial films made in the late 1990s by established US visual artists, like Cindy Sherman's *Office Killer*, in which the protagonist, who produces simulacra of the director's own artworks outside the film, invariably qualifies as psycho. At the time, a declaration of independents in the US film industry allowed Hollywood to compete against itself and eliminate the competition of European art cinema, which these films directed by bona fide artists represented and repressed. In the finite course of the Psycho Effect, we saw that the psycho could serve as mascot, like Pollock, because the innovation of the survivor (Picasso) was holding sway.

The image that concludes the scene of the race between painting and filming in *The Mystery of Picasso* looks like another one of Picasso's grimacing pagans or demons. Theweleit takes us by surprise, when he identifies it as the artist's self-portrait.⁴⁴ Theweleit's speculation allows me to reenter the Narcissus legend but via Pausanias, who argued that it was not his own semblance or portrait that riveted Narcissus; it was his recognition of his lookalike sister back from the dead looking out of his reflection. What outlasts the final image at the end of the race is Picasso's sketched portrait of his younger sister Conchita, which he made when he was yet a child prodigy. The scene in which this portrait was made was installed in Picasso by age thirteen upon her death. The artist followed the scene's reprisal in the couple next door into the project with Clouzot.

In photographs taken of the Clouzot couple and Picasso already in 1953 at the Cannes film festival, we catch the painter delightedly but fixedly watching Véra, for signs of a projected

44 Theweleit, *Buch der Könige*, 2y:680.

demise or its containment. The eight-year-old Conchita died at the end of a protracted case of diphtheria over which the family watched and prayed, bargaining with God for her health in exchange for the sacrifice of the very vitality of survival, including the future of the young artist's vocation. There is a motif that recurs in Picasso's work early on showing a sleeping or inert woman lying under the watch of a male figure, a scene carried forward throughout his oeuvre, often in the self-reflexive setting of the painter or sculptor gazing at the revenant, recuperated as a woman to be watched, his model. This is as far as the scene of Conchita's deathwatch made it into Picasso's pictorial art. But it was a scene that gained new traction for repeated reinterpretation by Picasso in the years following the making of *The Mystery of Picasso*.

Françoise Gilot recalls:

I didn't know at the time that it was a recurring pattern, but after Maya's birth, Pablo began abandoning Marie-Therese and seemed unable to get on with his work. The birth of a girl in Pablo's life was clearly traumatic. He had made a pact with God over his little sister, and now he was reliving the trauma of that pact over the birth of his daughter: she might die and then he would feel terribly guilty, or she would live and his work would suffer. All his unresolved fears were activated again. He kept saying how beautiful Paloma was, but he was restless, agitated. It was a creatively barren time, and he even started talking about getting another apartment where I could be with the children when we were in Paris.⁴⁵

The pledge to give up his art for Conchita's continued existence turned around into her blessing in disguise. It was the *blesé* that the birth of a daughter reintroduced by intercepting the guardian of his conception art within the family plan of substitution. Picasso's compulsively belabored scene of the artist at work gazing upon his model keeps turning the vigil kept for the dying sister into the staging area of his art. The sister stands surety that

45 Cited in Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington, *Picasso: Creator and Destroyer* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 356.

his future was rescued from the underworld by the look back at her. By its subterranean proximity to simultaneity and live transmission, the contest scene in *The Mystery of Picasso* releases the portrait of Conchita. It is not the parting shot, nor is it the promise of early work, but the ongoing price and prize at the end of a trace against time that all the representations of inert women under the painter's gaze in a row could not show.

In *Les diaboliques*, the staging of death or undeath to induce a cardiac patient's exitus is the death-wish version of the watch for signs of recovery or decline. The scene therefore bears being turned around by the child witness, the schoolboy Moinet, whose ill-fitting testimony is situated within the loop of a fully projected ambivalence. Twice in the film, his testimony is denied as punishable mendacity, but after the fact his first outrageous claim proves true. That he saw the schoolmaster we presumed dead ends up substantiated when the plot is revealed and foiled. Christina did respond to the boy's testimony, which she mistook to signal a visitation by her murder victim. But when she confessed her crime to the detective, he was misled by a ghost story. Then at the end of the film, following the conclusive scene of Christina's fatal heart attack, Moinet is punished for his fantastic claim of continued contact with the schoolmistress, who, he alleges, herself restored the slingshot with which he has broken yet another window.

Moinet's testimony is suspended between counter-testimony and mendacity like the legendary pronouncements of Cassandra. According to Melanie Klein's interpretation of *The Oresteia*, the curse of a reception of disbelief expresses, she writes, a tendency towards denial she deems universal:

Denial is a potent defence against the persecutory anxiety and guilt which result from destructive impulses never being completely controlled. Denial, which is always bound up with persecutory anxiety, may [...] undermine sympathy and consideration both with the internal and external objects, and disturb the capacity for judgement and the sense of reality.⁴⁶

46 Melanie Klein, "Some Reflections on *The Oresteia*," in *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works: 1946–1963* (New York: The Free Press,

Denial is the kernel of the hard shell of the early superego. The Erinyes lead a procession of injured complainers in *The Oresteia*, the retinue of the early maternal superego, which Athena intercepts and subsumes by a superego under parental or paternal guidance. Like Cassandra's struggle to be believed, the schoolboy Moinet's insistence at the end of *Les diaboliques* announces the development of the superego toward consciousness and conscience away from the setting of pre-Oedipal injury of and denial of love to the dead. His first hard-to-follow testimony doesn't save Christina, but leads the detective in the end to serve justice. His second testimony addresses and entrusts to the audience the prospect of an identified ghost. A final title screen adjures the moviegoers to keep to themselves the ending of the film.

Picasso's entry upon the optical unconscious of cinema to extrapolate from the analogue setting a form or forum of simultaneity is classic science fiction, also to the extent that it falls short of foreseeing the digital relation, the fantasy that is true. In the gap the overlap falls into view – with a ghostly sister. H.G. Wells and Brian Aldiss were petitioners for undead sisters and defined the science fiction genre through the inside viewing of their own double occupancy. While these cases can only be studied one at a time, in theory we can follow Klein, who introduced through her notion of an inner world of posthumous relations a modification of the crypt befitting a norm of mourning basic to psychic reality.⁴⁷ In "Mourning and Its Relation to the Manic-Depressive State,"⁴⁸ she turned Freud's threefold application of reality testing in his brief essay "Mourning and Melancholia" around its underworld ambiguity into clear text: the ghost is clear. What external reality is good for is as a control disambiguating the influence of the unconscious in the ongoing course of reality testing the inner world. With each new loss this world is shaken

1984), 293.

47 In my *SPECTRE*, I followed Klein's modifications of melancholia into the adult profile of mourning that Fleming's James Bond accedes to in the course of his engagement with Blofeld's underworld organization.

48 Melanie Klein, "Mourning and Its Relation to the Manic-Depressive State," in *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works: 1921–1945* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 344–69.

to its foundations, which the work of mourning must in the first place shore up, even reincorporating the original occupants, before the new ghost is then given shelter.

Klein's modification of the crypt wraps the primal questions of fantasy: Where do babies come from and where do the dead go? In the later essays "On Identification" and "On the Sense of Loneliness,"⁴⁹ she introduced the imaginary twin at the front of the line of unborn casualties of a young child's wish to be an only child. "Who was born?" or "Am I completely born?" are twin questions often associated with Samuel Beckett's work. That there is after all an answer to the basic question of conception aligns the unborn with the undead before a questioning that, forever begging an answer, must be posed ultimately to upend the sentencing of loss: Who died? Whose loss is it? The undecidability that allows each party to a loss to lose, to be lost to, the other, loops through P.K. Dick's application of alternate reality always as present reality, his expansion of the finite recording surface of a multiplied remembrance. Dick's origin story, according to which he first embarked with his twin sister on this alternation of realities following his or her birth or death in infancy, heads off the death wish, the great explainer, at the impasse. Never say never the twins shall meet. By Klein's metapsychology, our identifiable lost objects are our inner-world twins, identical but for the shadow of a difference that lies between the sexes. We pry loose along the seams of seeming difference the drag of mourning from psychotic splitting and doubling, the pre-Oedipal turbulence that Klein designated the paranoid-schizoid position. The relationship to the undead twin ushers in what Klein called in saving contrast the depressive position.

49 Both essays are collected in *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works*.

A New Mythic Fairy Tale

Deserters

In introducing his selection of American science-fiction short stories, which were translated into German and then published in his 1952 edited collection *Die Überwindung von Zeit und Raum* (*The Overcoming of Time and Space*), Gotthard Günther elaborates the conceit that these new-world works intimate a new mythic fairy tale inexorably cut loose from the old metaphysics of the European fairy-story. Already the transition from primitive historical lifeforms to the regional civilizations, which first arose in the third or second century BCE in the eastern hemisphere of planet Earth, was rehearsed in the fantasy life of mankind long before the transfer was complete. “At the border between primitive consciousness and the mentality of the human who spiritually already belongs to the realm of civilization we find the literary form of the mythic fairy tale.”¹ By its naïve, transparent mode of storytelling, which a child can follow, the fairy tale outlines “the fundamental limit conditions for all human being at a certain historical-cultural level” (77). The figures in these tales are unambiguously identified as good or evil – and admit no mediating third option. Without this intermediary or alternative

1 Gotthard Günther, *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik? Dr. Gotthard Günthers Kommentare zu “Rauchs Weltraum-Bücher,”* ed. Dieter von Reeken (Lüneburg: Verlag Dieter von Reeken, 2015), 77. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

value, the evil stepmother must kill Snow White: her evil is commensurate with what is a thousand-times more beautiful (80).

In a fairy tale, there is no murky background in which, upon reflection, the reader seeks out deeper motives. The fairy tale has no more profound backstory, because it is itself the ultimate metaphysical backdrop. It offers an image of spiritual border conditions not of human existence as such (obtaining since creation and unfolding unto the last judgement), but as they appear to human consciousness on the basis of a specific historical epoch (79). Its structure is resolutely dyadic. There is no third term. It is therefore wrong to consider it akin to animism. The fairy tale left behind the unicity, univalence, or unibrow of a primitive consciousness immersed in the objective environment without a means for separating itself spiritually from what is other. The epoch the fairy tale so resolutely defined is, however, now reaching its end, and a higher, three-valued level of consciousness will supply the psychic conditions for a third epoch of mankind's historical existence. "The period of colonization of our planet is gradually reaching its conclusion and the gaze of mankind is beginning to turn to cosmic living spaces. The stars that until now were mythic quantities are moving slowly onto an empirical plane" (80).

The prep work for a new B-genre, that of the new mythic fairy tale, takes apart old standards, which Günther checks off with each story from the collection he introduces: "man as the high-point of spiritual life, the metaphysical character of the starry heavens, the inviolability of the soul, the question of the absolute priority of either theoretical reason or pure will, our understanding of the nature of time, and, finally, the relationship of thought to reality" (86).

We already had occasion in the first volume of *Critique of Fantasy* to underscore through Clifford D. Simak's "Desertion," the story that opens Günther's edited collection, a genre distinction between the valorization of escape in Christian fantasy unto the Gospel truth of a happy end and the sci-fi affirmation of desertion from our evolutionary milieu to join a higher form of intelligence and existence. Simak's story, in short, skewers the collection's titular overcoming upon the alleged highpoint occupied by man. Humans are shown to be, Günther writes, the primi-

tives of the universe, whereby he aligns the story resolutely with animism. In the story, however, what both deserters, a dog and his human, leave behind are the morons of the universe.² The relay of “deserters” among the big names in history that Günther lets roll to drum up the imperative that the title pronounces resituates Simak’s interspecies fantasy on the scale of European to American to alien evolution. Adorno adds Kafka to Günther’s list of big names. He signed up with the deserters by substituting for human dignity the family resemblance with animals.³

The commander doesn’t want to send out any more men to Jupiter’s surface to be converted or mutated into the bodies of lopers, the local intelligent critter species, since no one has returned from the mission. He is determined to go himself, but can’t leave his loyal dog behind. So, he commands that two conversions into loper bodies be performed. The gist is that whatever else the greater vitality amounts to – largely a heightened aesthetic and scientific appreciation of color and sound – what really counts is that between species there can now be a fully conversant bond.

In the afterword to *Out of the Silent Planet*, Lewis separates the creaturely utopia he set on Mars (a.k.a. Malacandra) from our experience with totemic pets. Lewis considers the interrelations among the three species of Martians: “Each of them is to the others both what a man is to us and what an animal is to us. They can talk to each other, they can co-operate, they have the same ethics [...]. But then each finds the other different, funny, attractive as an animal is attractive. Some instinct starved in us, which we try to soothe by treating irrational creatures almost as if they were rational, is really satisfied in Malacandra. They don’t need pets.”⁴

2 Clifford D. Simak, “Desertion,” *The Australian Women’s Weekly*, October 25, 1978, 145–57, available online at <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/48211665/4777581>.

3 Theodor Adorno, “Aufzeichnungen zu Kafka,” in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 10, no. 1, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003), 285.

4 C.S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet* (London: Voyager/Harper Collins, 2000), 165.

Another Christian-fantasy anticipation of an anti-Oedipal standard, this time perverse reterritorialization, Lewis's dismissal of the need for pets belongs to the rigorous side of Christianity, which doesn't allow for reunion or continuity in the afterlife but an existence so other you might as well be dead. However, as Tolkien wisely stipulates in "On Fairy-Stories," the ultimate end that Christianity reaches and preaches is not the happy end of fantasy fiction.

Tolkien ascribes to his fantasy genre the satisfaction of the primordial desire to "hold communion with other living things"⁵ Since the prospect of the happy ending already gives consolation, the strain Tolkien bred in his essay around the Eucatastrophe postpones ultimate redemption in individual works of fantasy – or better yet, in the work of fantasy. Every sojourn in a creaturely other world defers the ultimate end by exploring prospects for utopia on Earth. Dick introjected utopian fantasy in his science fiction via the android testing for an empathic or a psychopathic relationship to animals, thus underscoring the identification of humanity by the animals we keep close. When Dick offered "the tame" as an alternative translation for "the meek" (who shall inherit the earth), he sent our totem pets to the foreground of deferral of the fantasy that is true.

What the meek and the tame have in common, which Disney animation-fantasy pursued, is their evolutionary share in neoteny, the cute juvenility that inspires the impulse to spare and care for them. In the first volume, we followed Hanns Sachs's analysis of the import of beauty in cultural production high and low, which already addressed the survival trait called neoteny in Disney's signature rotoscoping of adolescence inside childhood. Cuteness, we saw, has evolutionary significance.

In "A Biological Homage to Mickey Mouse" (1980), Stephen Jay Gould tracked the neoteny of cuteness in the development of Disney's mascot.⁶ Gould's precursor in reflection upon the

5 J.R.R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," in *Tree and Leaf / Smith of Wootton Major / The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth* (London: Unwin Books, 1975), 20

6 Stephen J. Gould, "A Biological Homage to Mickey Mouse," in *The Panda's Thumb: More Reflections in Natural History* (New York and

influence of neoteny on our animation of the environment was Konrad Lorenz, who developed the first thesis on the cute in 1943.⁷

The “mouse” we learned to use to click through the archival links was once home on the range of the industry of invention that raged during World War Two. In 1941, the trackball was first introduced on the British side of the air war as input device for a computing system that radar-plotted the future positions of target aircraft. In the 1960s, military secrecy was abandoned both at the Stanford Research institute and at Telefunken. Independently or telepathically, the Californians and the Germans had succeeded in reversing the rollerball or *Rollkugel* to afford a moveable device that no longer required a track with holes for its guidance. The colleagues on the Coast christened the device (because of the wire that dangled like a tail) “mouse.”

What Lorenz termed the *Kindchenschema*, the baby portions or proportions of the very young face, gets you to care about and for infants and children. Then the gray libidinal zone of cuteness extends into the delinquent phase of juvenility. In fact, the teen “likability” that neoteny guarantees continues longest in the human species.

That Lorenz turned to dolls for illustration prepared the way for Gould’s approach to the art of Disney animation. Gould hesitates, however, before accepting Lorenz’s reservations about anthropomorphic projection of the baby-face schema all the way to the “smiling sky.” Spread around and thin in this way the survival value in our faces was reduced according to Lorenz to domestication and misinformation.

Lorenz gives the example of the camel’s profile, which triggers our sense of being spurned. However, if we want to know

London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1980), 95–107.

- 7 From 1941–44, Lorenz served as military psychologist in German-occupied Poland, assessing people of mixed ethnicity to determine their suitability for remaining in the Reich. One result of this season of research and destroy was his notion of the *Kindchenschema*, which he first elaborated in a 1943 publication: Konrad Lorenz, “Die angeborenen Formen möglicher Erfahrung,” *Zeitschrift für Tierpsychologie* 5, no. 2 (1943): 274ff.

whether the animal will accept the food or spit at us we should heed not the face but the ears. It is indeed misleading to examine early childhood in humans by analogy with animals. Critters, like the mice in “Josephine the Singer or the Mousefolk,” skip childhood. In Kafka’s story the mice are all childish, no one more so than their star performer Josephine. She allows them the imposture of lending her, like members of a paternal group, their deaf ears. Composed by a music-phobe in earshot of the first burgeoning of background music, the story can be read through Adorno’s “On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening” (1938).⁸ Animal testing to assess the behavior of human infants and young children is only justified if, as Adorno and Horkheimer argued in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944), the tested animal can be seen as equivalent to a human subject deranged and mechanized by torment, an equation toward which we would thus be preparing the way.⁹

When Lorenz was reflecting on the pros and cons of a survival trait, he was advising on the selection of candidates still suitable for breeding. When in 1950 he revisited his thesis on the cute and gave the counter example of the camel, among the linguistic examples he gives of evocations of spurning, many of which are onomatopoeic, he also cites a Yiddish expression and finds subterfuge in reparation.¹⁰ If *Ähnlichkeit* (resemblance) is the crux of error, then its loose use betrays our responsibility to our *Ahnen* (ancestors).¹¹ Lorenz followed the parallel he sketched between the behavior of geese and our own comportment to conclude that the negative influence of domestication on the animal applied, in the setting of interbreeding, to the human, too.¹²

8 See my reading of Adorno’s essay and “Josephine the Singer” in *The Case of California* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 35–37, 56–59, 64–65.

9 Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1997), 246.

10 Konrad Lorenz, “Ganzheit und Teil in der tierischen und menschlichen Gemeinschaft. Eine methodologische Erörterung,” *Studium Generale* 3, no. 9 (1950): 477–78.

11 *Ibid.*, 471.

12 *Ibid.*

The art of animation, in Gould's reprisal of the neoteny thesis, amounts to the return of animism, our ancestral resemblance to the animals we keep close. In *Laughter* (1924), Henri Bergson addressed the evolution quotient in the latter-day animism of animation when he termed the animal resemblance used in caricature the metaphor or vehicle for admitting our own machine-like tendencies, which we are thus invited to laugh off.¹³ Mickey Mouse's headshot also outlines a projector, the ears two reels of film.

Desert Ghosts

Corollary to human consciousness that is earthbound, Gotthard Günther argued in his commentary on Jack Williamson's *The Humanoids*, is the sense that the sky is the limit. That's what is meant by the proviso that the believer can enter there only after death. In *Overcoming Space and Time*, Günther included Isaac Asimov's "Nightfall" (1941) to illuminate the rerouting of this fork in the road within American science fiction. What prompted the huddle of Campbell and Asimov to enter upon the speculation leading to Asimov's story, legend has it on-line, was a Ralph Waldo Emerson "what if" quote, his question, if the stars only appeared one night in a thousand years, how generations of mankind would preserve the remembrance of the starlight in the night sky, the veritable "city of God." Campbell and Asimov concluded that the bulk rate of humanity would go mad. The Emerson quote is the epigraph on the story's skyline.¹⁴ The title is what is literalized until madness lies in the acute sense

13 Henri Bergson, *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*, trans. Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell (Los Angeles: Green Integer, 1999). "Several have defined man as 'an animal which laughs.' They might equally well have defined him as an animal which is laughed at; for if any other animal, or some lifeless object, produces the same effect, it is always because of some resemblance to man, of the stamp he gives it or the use he puts it to" (9).

14 The skyline I glimpsed is online: Isaac Asimov, "Nightfall," http://mysite.du.edu/~treddell/3780/Asimov_Nightfall.pdf.

that the planet is impossibly enclosed by or even jettisoned out into the night sky.

The story presupposes and shows, Günther writes, that the heavens have dropped their metaphysical distance in the consciousness of man.¹⁵ We draw nearer to the stars until they are the next village we travel to and through with our thoughts on business as usual. By becoming “empirical landscape” the star world becomes “trivial.” But more importantly, “just as earth is a vale of tears, in which humankind is threatened by misery, illness, and death [...], so the astral landscape belongs in Asimov’s story now to the curse-poisoned terrestrial space. Its manifestation brings only destruction, madness, and the end of civilization so that man must by the sweat of his brow move on to a new beginning of his history.”¹⁶

The faraway stars that in keeping their distance once conveyed good fortune become up close uncanny, in other words, out of place at home. This is the gist of Günther’s remarks on the story in his monograph “Die Entdeckung Amerikas und die Sache der Weltraum-Literatur” (“The Discovery of America and the Case of Science Fiction”). With this advance preview of what he was developing more fully in *Die amerikanische Apokalypse (The American Apocalypse)*, Günther gave a genealogical introduction to his edited series of German translations of exemplary works of American science fiction. He joins the recurring consensus that “Nightfall,” if not the greatest science fiction story of all time, is the quintessential sci-fi story. He singles it out as “perhaps the most important story which best illustrates the break with the cultural tradition of the eastern hemisphere.”¹⁷ Throughout the eastern half of the globe we recognize a common and binding respect for the stars as messengers from the divine realm. After listing examples from legends and fairy tales, Günther summa-

15 We return to Günther’s collected commentaries: Günther, *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik?*, 88.

16 Ibid.

17 Gotthard Günther, “Die Entdeckung Amerikas und die Sache der Weltraum-Literatur,” in *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik?*, 28. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

rizes: “The eternal melody of these stories is that humanity has no better friend than the stars” (29).

Asimov’s story reverses its Emerson epigraph, a continuity shot with the regional civilizations hailing from the eastern hemisphere, into a completely different meaning. Not the conceit of an author, it is the mounting prospect of space travel that motivates the reversal. The stars could maintain the metaphysical essence of their divine sublimity only as long as they remained beyond human reach. “What humans cannot reach out and touch is either divine or infernal” (30). Günther sees in the title of John W. Campbell Jr.’s 1950 novel *The Moon Is Hell* the ultimate consequence of the secularization of the beyond: “every approaching spaceship transforms an Elysium into an outpost of lost souls” (ibid.).

“Nightfall” is set on the planet Lagash, which is illuminated round the clock by six suns. But the time also comes that the sunlight is completely eclipsed and the dark implodes and the stars explode the firmament. That the planet is dropped into a cave and the inhabitants robbed of their souls for their sins by the descent of the star-gods is the interpretation passed on in a cult. Isolated scientific researchers (in long medieval robes) are only now beginning to speculate that this fatality in fact recurs at “regular” intervals, albeit every 2,500 years, which is rather how we measure epochs not intervals. Can there be a parable of this cave when light is not on a more regular timer in alternation with night? While the sunlight is on, there are only few guardians of the sacred book in which the religious interpretation of the apocalyptic darkness is passed on. It is based on the fugitive memories and babblings of those psychically immune to the impact of the eclipse: children, drunkards, and half morons.¹⁸

After centuries, science has developed a law of gravitation that in the recent upsurge of contradictory data can compute the factual basis underlying the testament, which would thus be, albeit in a distorted form, the historical record. After the planet plummets into an absolute night eviscerated by the multitude of points of starlight, the masses go mad, torch the cities for emergency illumination, and enter upon another onset of this

18 Asimov, “Nightfall,” 18–19.

planet's dark ages. Only the followers of what is always a cult, never a religion, mark a purpose. This time around, the scientists holed up in the observatory aim to pass on their basic knowledge of gravitation by protecting it. The scientists will record the eclipsed sky to offer a stay to what regularly follows, the dark ages of psychosis. That's why the alliance that the astronomer Aton formed with the cult leader to treat the sacred text as record of the past for his purposes of charting the history of the planetary civilization is so uneasy, and leads members of the cult to attempt the destruction of Aton's recording agency. When the sky falls, the cult cashes in on the fulfillment of its prophecy, but for all the turbulence of starting over from scratch no religion takes root. While science vies with the cult for the leadership of a medievalist setting, the narrative, more contemporary in style, follows a local reporter who's interviewing experts he's hoping to debunk for his headline story. The historical disjunctions are reminiscent of the time-traveling culture clashes in Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court*.

Tolkien cites his colleague Max Müller in "On Fairy-Stories" to disagree with the view that myth is a disease of language.¹⁹ Myth, Müller argued, is another word for word, which expands from naming a natural event to becoming a more substantial narrative of the event's divinization. That the sun appears in the east, crosses the sky, and sets in the west, and does so recurrently, inscribes a narrative with a beginning and end. The metaphysics of our regional civilizations would, then, be unthinkable without the rhythmic, cyclical modeling that natural events provide in the trail of the sun's course. On Lagash, there is instead a cult that would be recognizably Christian if it weren't stuck in a rut – and a culture of science that would be aligned with our own if it were not weighed down by the lopsided nature of its achievements. What we know on and as earth belongs among the outer limit concepts on Lagash.

Supposing you had a universe in which there was a planet with only one sun. The planet would travel in a perfect ellipse and the exact nature of the gravitational force would be so

19 Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," 27.

evident it could be accepted as an axiom. Astronomers on such a world would start off with gravity probably before they even invented the telescope. Naked-eye observation would be enough. (22)

But a planet which is immersed in total darkness half of each day, the scientists conclude, couldn't support life.

The exceptional eclipse that brings on the night sky lasts only for hours. But an amusement park ride in the dark of a tunnel that lasted only fifteen minutes recently claimed the life and sanity of many individuals. In the end, the scientists in the observation and recording tower also go mad: it's not the darkness, it turns out, but the stars that leave them whimpering that they knew nothing. The testament of the cult was right: it's over or under the stars that men lose their souls and become like beasts.²⁰ The narrator is inspired to rip through the epistemology of time and place: "Not Earth's feeble thirty-six hundred Stars visible to the eye; Lagash was in the center of a giant cluster. Thirty thousand mighty suns shone down in a soul-searing splendor that was more frighteningly cold in its awful indifference than the bitter wind that shivered across the cold, horribly bleak world."²¹

Asimov's ultimate science-fiction fable fell short of adaptation. A film version long planned by Julie and Roger Corman could at last be completed in 1988, after bringing in Paul Mayersberg to rewrite the script. He then stayed on to direct the movie. Filmed largely in Arcosanti, Arizona – an experimental community combining architecture and ecology – the civilization on screen, by the spiritual look of it, would be almost impossible to separate into science and religion (if the cultists weren't such fanatics). Mayersberg even added the plot boiler of a Tristan-and-Isolde-style escapade to this alternate world's ruling side, which tentatively accepts scientific rationality but defers machines. The close combat between the ruler (in the role of King Mark) and his second in command (who like Tristan overstepped his match-making mission) is the film's libidinal hot spot.

20 Asimov, "Nightfall," 17.

21 Ibid., 26.

In Mayersberg's movie, Aton is not the astronomer who leads the scientists but the ruler of the community that promotes the study of bees in order to anticipate cosmic events. Aton's grandfather designed an artificially lit habitat for surviving the forecast darkness but it never made it past the model stage. The world in Asimov's story belongs to the history of the world on screen. The new generation lacks the know-how to continue or complete grandfather's models. The decrepit observatory also belongs to a more advanced age. To adapt Asimov's story, a contest between science fiction and fantasy, in which fantasy is in the ascendant, must be brought to bear in order to give the film recognition value. And yet Asimov's story addresses editions of science and religion so drastically limited that it is hard to see them as continuous with our terrestrial traditions. In the 2000 remake (another Corman production), the cultists, now the Watchers, are in control. Scientific research authorized by the university also exists. But when two students stumble upon an archaeological dig that shows a Pompeian still life of a vanished but preserved historical period lying a thousand years before, including cameras more refined than what is available in their own time, we learn that only the Watchers can examine the past (which means they censor it).

Mayersberg had worked on *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976), which used the desert-scape of New Mexico to turn around a new world/outer space axis. And yet, in Mayersberg's view, any film that reaches to outer space through the landscape soon runs up against a limit. The vaster the landscape, he says, the less cinematic is its effect. Mayersberg concludes that science fiction doesn't belong in pictures, because the imagination cannot be brought to the screen. In movies, we only see what we already know. If you build an outer-space colony on a set, then that's what the audience sees: a prop.²²

Only the landscape gives a chance, then, to race against the diminishing returns of its expanse. There is an aesthetic value earned by exploring the limits of your medium in the Arizona desert. Facing the suns of Lagash, Mayersberg followed out his

22 Mayersberg quoted in Kyle Counts, "Watching the Nightfall," *Starlog* 134 (September 1988): 60.

earlier reflections on film culture collected in *Hollywood: The Haunted House* (1967).

Extreme brightness can be as mysterious as darkness. Under the blazing noon sun the abstract and the physical, illusion and reality, merge in the desert air. The space and the light create a perspective within which you are at a loss, unable accurately to determine the distance between points.²³

At night, “the imagery of a movie studio” takes over: “a world powered by artificial light” (22).

The disorientation that allows haunting to book a roundtrip into the light comes out of the desert and its milieu of extras, which presents a “different world of fantasy” in the very environs of filmmaking: “The hot, dry desert [...] is the happy hunting ground of ghosts [...]. The ghosts of the desert thrive on sunlight, like holidaymakers” (11). The desert ghost dwells in a stage set. “Rip it down,” Mayersberg enjoins, “and you find nothing behind it” (17). What makes the setting so “ghostly is that, amid such a natural landscape, a town itself seems artificial” (ibid.). “Artificial” is syntonic with fantasy, for which the desert town Arcosanti supplies the datemark of New Age spirituality. In Southern California, the 1980s were still coming out of the 1960s. “Apart from a belief in the future there’s a strange fascination with it. There are more clairvoyants, fortune-tellers, palmists, numerologists, faith-healers, occultists, and religious nuts in L.A. than in any other city in the United States” (15). The afterlife is a beach.

Their props are swimming pools, parking lots, patios, martini glasses, Thunderbirds, and freeways. The most disturbing thing about desert ghosts is that they appear as substantial as you or me. [...] We are not used to ghosts with suntans. But they are apparitions none the less, caught by the sunlight. (11)

23 Paul Mayersberg, *Hollywood: The Haunted House* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1969), 11–12. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

While the male members of the secular community in Mayersberg's *Nightfall* uphold the standard of the young male body, like a future post-machinic retrenchment of the narcissism of antiquity, the women heed the call of the cult to abnegate the visible body and vision itself. The wife of Aton joins the cult and once her eyes are plucked out in a gnarly ritual with birds she sees better. The blind cult leader, who is ugly, can now play hot body with her. The blind date is an advantage that awaits the male members of the cult. The women fleeing their sinking feeling about the graeco-secular order go along in a nihilistic trance.

In *Hollywood: The Haunted House*, Mayersberg aligns the disorientation in the desert light with "hallucination," which he argues is characterized by "a feeling of separation" (24-25). In Southern California, "among the effects of great distance [...] is a curious mixture of separation and loneliness on the one hand, and of merging and uniform identity on the other" (25). The "desert ghosts," "trapped in time, held not by the past as other ghosts are, but by the future," are "always receding before you, can only be guessed at" (11). They mark the progress from prediction to realization in the science fiction that is Southern California, which by its "pioneer tradition" has "roots" lying "deep in the future" (14). "Within Los Angeles County you will find the *avant-garde* of the aircraft industry, of space research, of nuclear physics and of computer systems" (15).

In Hollywood's "haunted house" "the ghosts of the past [...] play catch-as-catch-can with the living ghosts of the future" (25). Mayersberg closes his ghost frame in the final chapter on the departure of Hollywood projection and ghostliness from the science fiction of the new world in order to form a more perfect union with the "romantic background of Europe which is yet another escape from the reality of twentieth-century America" (164). While the new ghosts harbor "a deep resentment against Europe," which "comes fundamentally from the knowledge that Europe is old, but won't die and is hanging on" (156), the old ghosts are tempted to seek "integration, not so much with the rest of America, but with Europe" (155). That the old ghosts of Hollywood, needing darkness and pastness, "have to find a new home" (164) means that in the 1960s "they can't stand the

sound of data processing” (163). Hollywood “has always lived and worked in a world of fantasy” (ibid.).

In 2019, the new ghosts are the humans-going-on-zombies in Jim Jarmusch’s *The Dead Don’t Die*, the follow-up to his 2013 vampire movie *Only Lovers Left Alive*, which is where the old ghosts are. In 2013, the collectible night vistas of ruinous Detroit and the alleys of Tangier are duly cinematic; in 2019, Centerville’s consumption by the zombie epidemic is TV-centric. The extraneous self-referencing by the film actors, who sometimes know the Jarmusch script, at other times recognize the Country-and-Western ballad on the radio as the theme song of the movie they are acting in, is reminiscent of early television when the sensibility of vaudeville was up against the close quarters – but fluent transitions by dint of the medium’s capacity for liveness – of the artifice of studio production. The only counterparts in B-pictures that come to mind would be slasher films like *Scream* and its sequels made during the termination phase of the subgenre’s film therapy. Jarmusch’s zombie movie was shot outside New York City, far or close enough to qualify for the slasher formula that the scary part of America begins not in Texas proper but in a “Texas” that is just outside the greater east-coast metropolitan area or just inland from Los Angeles.

The film or the audience must know more than the locals or the actors. At one point someone is surprised that the zombies disemboweled the waitresses since it’s known that they go for the brains of their victims. But that was an added feature of the *Return of the Living Dead* series that let roll during the Reagan years. The film uses zombieism to count down the eras of soulless presidents. Blockbuster fare during the Bush Jr. years, the zombies return in 2019 because the fracking at the poles shifted the axis of the planet. The TV newscasters discount it all as fake news.

The new ghosts of the film industry exist to exit in the terrorist mode of American zombie fiction since Romero. The vampires in Jarmusch’s 2013 film called the humans zombies. That’s the loop we enter in 2019. All the token citizens are set up in a row like dominoes that one bout of living death can strike down. At the diner counter, the token Black American sits next to the token racist and both remain on good terms even though the lat-

ter wears on his cap “Make America White Again.” The token hipsters from Cleveland are wiped out too. *The Dead Don’t Die* targets the friendly tokenism, the inconsistency in political opinion, in which the new ghosts of American fascism hide out.

The Centerville locals decorate themselves with eclectic fantasy, from the nickname of the token hippie, Frodo, and his *Nosferatu* t-shirt, to the officer’s *Star Wars* key chain. The new mortician in town, the only recognizable continuity shot from Jarmusch’s earlier vampire film by dint of her exotic independence and because played by Tilda Swinton, masters skills of oriental sword play and entertains eccentric ideas about making up the corpses under her care. Adept at warding off the living dead with her decapitating swords, she joins forces with the police, at one point offering to look after the station while the officer buddies drive off to combat the zombies all around town. When she’s alone with the computer, she fills the screen with streaming symbols, a scene reminiscent either of Devil movies or SF. It’s the latter. She has contacted the flying saucer that beams her up and takes her home. By her iconic look she brings back the European vampire of *Only Lovers Left Alive* and cites the first new world vampire story in which the undead travel through outer space (A.E. van Vogt’s “Asylum”), while below the new-world predicament of the resounding science fictionalization of undeath in Richard Matheson’s *I Am Legend* is on the rampage. Although ecological disaster resulting from a heightening of technology not yet quite current already advances a sci-fi motivation for the zombie epidemic, the flying saucer’s appearance would be the most extraneous B-picture reference in *The Dead Don’t Die*, if we weren’t by now ready for it. With the shredder of zombieism the indie film identifies and takes apart the *Heimat* of blockbusters in the borderlands of fantasy and science fiction.

Overcoming Subject, Will, Time, and Reality

Following the check-off list that Günther provides for his edited collection, the questioning of where the ego goes in the science fiction future is next in line. After “Desertion” and “Nightfall” comes John W. Campbell’s “Who Goes There?” (1938). Günther opens his commentary on the title that already echoes the call

for identification by the guard at the gate, and argues that the story interrogates the terrestrial concept of the ego or soul. The ongoing inviolable identity of the individual ego is basic to the history of civilization; its syndications are the immortality of the soul and the continuous self-identity of the ego.²⁴

Soul and truth are metaphysically identical: “Man is revealed unto himself and can thus distinguish himself from the animal and from the world.”²⁵ But the simulation that comes from outer space in Campbell’s story renders the truth incarnate just as secret as the unrevealed truth. One no longer knows who is human and who is not. Respite is offered by a side effect of alien possession, namely that the doubles of the humans who are gone cannot fight. But it is a happy ending that can be dismissed. The time wasn’t yet ripe for the inevitable ending. “Whatsoever can identify itself absolutely with the other no longer needs to fight. It simply takes possession of its foe.”²⁶

Günther noted, however, at the start of this rundown of the story’s deep break with the metaphysics of regional civilization, that the foe from outer space doubles its targeted human so completely that it forgoes the traces of possession that hail from Satan and his signs. The German phrase Günther uses to convey the completeness of the doubling says, literally, it leaves nothing to wish for. But then there is a wish, after all. For, there is another happy musing on the end in the story that Günther singles out in his introductory monograph *Die Entdeckung Amerikas und die Sache der Weltraum-Literatur* (*The Discovery of America and the Case of Science Fiction*). Since the doubles that consumed the dearly beloved also incorporated them it’s possible for one of the survivors of the stopped invasion to think that it would be so nice if the imitations were still around. Günther identifies the wistful empathy for the imitations in necrospect as the readiness he discerns in American science fiction to accept a multitude of coexisting doubles.²⁷

24 Günther, *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik*, 88.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 89.

27 Günther, “Die Entdeckung Amerikas und die Sache der Weltraum-Literatur,” 25–26. I read the story and the first blood-sucking

For the question of the absolute priority of reason or will, Günther relied on Stanley G. Weinbaum's "The Lotus Eaters" (1935).²⁸ That it is one of very few science-fiction stories set on Venus fits, as we'll see in later reflections on the impossible planet, the predicament of a newlywed couple unable to face without succumbing to a crisis of uncanniness. The story reshuffles the ingredients of the future world visited in *The Time Machine* into an impasse between two species at cross-purposes of survival. Rapacious creatures crossed over from the twilight zone between the divided halves of the non-rotating planet and now hunt the intelligent life-form that evolved on the nightside. The warm-blooded plant (since even life on ice must be lived in liquid water) meets the initiative of its hunters with indifference, indeed lethargy.

The scientific mission to explore the nightside of Venus was the couple's excuse for a honeymoon. The husband is American and the wife British; the planet is an Anglo-American colony. The winds that eddied into pockets of relative warmth near a main mountain range allowed basic plant life to evolve into an intelligent species. The couple at first takes the sentient plants to be living phonographs, since they speak English by picking up the words used and repeating them. They don't only record and play back, however, but as more and more words become available they learn what is to them a completely alien language. Words are facts and the alien plants discover facts from any fact. By reasoning from a fact, they are able to build a picture of the universe. Every other fact is similarly reasoned from and the pic-

adaptation closely in *The Vampire Lectures* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999). Campbell's story, its adaptations, and the related literature-into-film franchise, *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, show a readiness to accept the multitask of administering double or second death. In Abel Ferrara's 1993 *The Body Snatchers*, the protagonist recognizes that since her father and brother have been body snatched, doubled, and are therefore not her father and brother, she can kill them. What's more, at the close of the film she and her rescuer can indiscriminately bomb the military camp that the doubles have taken over.

28 Stanley G. Weinbaum, "The Lotus Eaters," *Project Gutenberg Australia*, <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebookso6/0601231h.html>.

ture is confirmed to be true. Exchange isn't necessary therefore, as the newlyweds realize when they're not asked anything in return. The species that knows as much as they do, even more, doesn't learn by wanting to know. That's why the only law is chance, which a fact-finding intelligence can exhaust. Only what is possible is real – like the genesis of this new species.

Do they lie? No. There is no need. They know about machine technology and weaponry, know how to make machines. Why don't they enter the machine stage and age? No need. Although they are thinking creatures, it seems they are content to sit and “dream” away their existence, their daydream of reason. The evolved intelligence is reason-centric to the exclusion not only of will but also of desire. Each is the same as the others but each is alone, reproducing by the tumors that grow from surface irritations and split them in two.

Without sex, there is no family, and no motivation to fight extinction, the couple of explorers conclude. The American notes that he and his wife are contracting from the spores a tranquilized condition that makes the plants tough as snails and that they are beginning to form a couple organism that doesn't care if it lives or dies. And so, he sets their rocket for immediate return to the colonized half of Venus, still a metonymy for the Anglo-American world on Earth. Günther included the story because, by its projection of a form of intelligent life on Venus bereft of will, it experimentally explores the decision on behalf of the priority of reason. The medieval or fantasy alternative says that God created the world fully out of his omnipotent will and that even the truths of reason depend on divine will. The secular compromise places theoretical reason first, the standard God used in the creation.²⁹ That a third way, however, is not yet taken makes “The Lotus Eaters” still akin to the old fairy-story.

To illustrate the new understanding of time in American science fiction, Günther selected H. Beam Piper's “Time and Time Again” (1947), a story he judges far more abstract in its core than “The Lotus Eaters.” “Time and Time Again,” says Günther, shows the disruption of the classical notion of a flow of time in

29 Günther, *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik*, 89.

which man acts but which remains beyond his grasp. In the science fiction of traveling through it, time is as inert as space.

The idea is absolutely nonclassical and irreconcilable with the theological thought habits of the great world religions to date, but it seems as if such an idea belongs to the mental armor that alone will enable man to make himself at home in cosmic space.³⁰

The time traveler protagonist argues that the ego moves through time like a train traverses the landscape, which, glimpsed from the compartment window, appears as a motion picture.³¹ Freud also offered the analogy by way of enjoining the patient to free associate: just imagine you are in the train and describe what you see through the window.³² Outside the frame, the unconscious is totally present like time in this story.

Certain concepts of soul, space, and time form the abstract frame within which the different images of the history of an epoch alternate kaleidoscopically. The frame itself remains unaffected by the historical masquerade it contains. [...] It is a sure sign that a spiritual metaphysical epoch of man is coming to a close and a new one is being heralded when such fundamental conceptions of our experiencing consciousness are challenged.³³

At the story's opening, we are in the future, in 1975, in the midst of an atomic attack on fortress Buffalo during World War Three.

30 Ibid., 90.

31 H. Beam Piper, "Time and Time Again," *Project Gutenberg*, <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/18831>.

32 Sigmund Freud, "On the Beginning of Treatment (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis I) (1913)," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XII (1911–1913): The Case of Schreber, Papers on Technique and Other Works*, ed. and trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1964), 135.

33 Günther, *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik*, 90.

Allan Harley, the author of three well-known detective novels, is one of the fatally wounded casualties. He wakes up, however, in his past, even in his fourteen-year-old body. It's the summer of 1945, the real-time recent past of the novel, which happens to be the eve of the atomic destruction of Hiroshima. Is it just a dream under the influence of too many comic books, too much science fiction? No, an enormous concentration of energy can upset the stream of time. And yes, a man can get a second chance at life.

When the fourteen-year-old Allan explains to his father a boy's own mysterious adult behavior, he relies on the psychic research on precognition to make the point that if the future is available to the present mind, then all time is totally present. Looking out the train window the ego whizzes past all the "nows," which are standing still. His father joins in the brainstorming: if the ego is time-free and extra-physical, then physical death shall have no dominion. Allan gets to hear from his father, the anchorman of mourning, that there is no full stop in time.

Already in his discussion of the night sky in Asimov's story, Günther concludes that by pulling out of the Beyond and entering the Here and Now the celestial bodies form with the Earth a common and continuous landscape. Traveling in time, psychoanalysis at the movies, the domestication and uncanny-proofing of haunting, and, ultimately, the digital relation occupy this continuum with Outer Space. The point Günther was making through "Desertion," too, was that our new horizon line disbands the old terrestrial conception of man.

Allan doesn't go all the way back to his parents' first date, like in *Back to the Future* (1985), but to his early youth when the mother is already gone and life with father is what's left. Desire and rivalry are not the draw nor is it their denial. What flashes before the eyes of the dying Allan is neither Oedipal nor oedi-pal. He wants to relive a life in mourning as worthy of being his father's colleague. The double Allan tests his ability to change events by his time-traveled vantage and advantage. When he succeeds, he starts formulating a plan whereby he and his father can prevent the next world war. The discussion of Kant's Enlightenment view of an afterlife on the outer planets, which the first volume of *Critique of Fantasy* closely studied, is part of Günther's introduction of the six stories. Here, too, as

we also saw, Günther introduces *The Magic Flute* as the highest standard for assessing the extent and limits of alien intelligence. There are in the early 1950s already countless time travel fictions. That Günther chose “Time and Time Again” reflects, I submit, the draw of the planetary father function, the Enlightenment introject fundamental to Piper’s story.

To illustrate the change coming over the relationship between thought and reality in science fiction Günther selected A.E. van Vogt’s “Resurrection” (1948), originally titled “The Monster.”³⁴ Before the story makes it to the techno change the new title gestures toward there is a surprise twist in what we think is really happening, which the old title advertised. At first, we assume that human explorers in the distant future are visiting a fantasy-scape inhabited by a variant of humankind that stored its techno-machinic history in museums but, by the time their world ended, seemed to have settled on an “unmechanical” culture for everyday life. By all appearances it looks like we have entered upon an alternate history of our species. But it turns out (or around) fairly far along in the story that the visitors who were our seeing-eye delegates belong to an alien octopus-like life form (their appendages are “suckers”) checking out Earth for future colonization. By this one turn, the story breaks free of the orbit around *The Time Machine* in which “The Lotus Eaters” was arrested.

Van Vogt, we know, was the first to summon vampires to the new world, in other words, to outer space, and in “Resurrection” (“The Monster”) he introduced the tentacular alien. Unlike the benign sucker touch of the aliens waving through a new inscription of time in *Arrival* these tentacular explorers are grim researchers. They are reviving the skeletons of the human dead to find out what took them out. Since the absence of any skeletons of children suggests that the adults had attained personal immortality before going extinct, the cause of their exitus is of compelling interest. After each briefing, the aliens blast the revived being back to nothingness. The ease with which the explorers move from the first to second death of their test subjects is metaphor

34 A.E. van Vogt, “The Monster,” *Prospero’s Isle*, <http://prosperosisle.org/spip.php?article220>.

enough for the death machine they have visited upon countless inhabited planets.

All it takes is one revived sole survivor to draw the benefit of his kind's discovery of the secrets of the nervous system, like the ability to travel through space at will, and the alien species that is still dependent on machine technology can be outwitted and overtaken. Beware what you wish for, when you resurrect the knowledge of the long dead. The extinct human species had perfected wish fulfillment but was undone by a low-tech oversight. What humanity didn't have at its disposal during the fantasy highpoint of its civilization was a map that might have led to other star systems. The desire for such mapping had been discarded together with their spaceships. When the nucleonic storm hit, they couldn't aim the wish fulfillment of their flight capacity toward remote safety. But the sole survivor gains a map and the secret of resurrection in the encounter with machinic science fiction. While his fantasy world couldn't follow finitude beyond the first death, the suckers know how to look past life or death to the component parts of organic life.

Günther cuts to the race and summarizes both advances revealed in the showdown between species as expanding human consciousness. The story, he argues, plots the return from death according to the larger theme of the power of consciousness over the merely material.³⁵ Once again, a metaphysical problem becomes a practical, technical, existential problem. Not only the heavens are secularized – the metaphysical perspective of consciousness is also secularized. Is a causal influence possible that would skip the intermediary of objective-mechanical technology?

Within the concise history of secularization, we arrive at the idea of magic. No longer the spell, not even the thought, in this story it is the physical activity of thinking and willing that can introduce change into the factual existential state of the world. At the same time this is the logically necessary consequence of idealist philosophy. "Metaphysics thus discloses itself as the historical anticipation of a state of consciousness that on the next higher historical level can be empirically-practically realized. But

35 Günther, *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik*, 91.

once philosophical idealism climbs down from its transcendent regions and becomes an extroverted practical position of the pragmatic mentality of everyday life, a terrible metaphysical vacuum arises. The necessity of a new metaphysics [...] becomes apparent.”³⁶

Dianetics of Enlightenment

In his 1975 “Selbstdarstellung im Spiegel Amerikas” (“Self-Presentation in the Mirror of America”), Günther turns to the short stories of American science fiction he considers exemplary, largely the same ones he selected for his collection. But rather than bring back van Vogt’s “Resurrection” (a.k.a. “The Monster”) he turns to a new entry: “Perhaps the most exciting of his productions [...] is ‘The Search,’ in which the hero of the story searches for his ego-identity (*Ich-Identität*) over and against the You (*Du*) in reversible sequences of time.”³⁷

The protagonist Drake keeps waking up in oblivion of the recent past while the story rolls back the time of the narrative.³⁸ When Drake returns to the last setting he remembers from his forgotten week, a fellow salesman starts filling him in on what happened back then, at which point the reader is transported to that other narrative time, sans the mediation of retelling. Then Drake wakes up in a vast office building streamlining with technologies of the future. In this science-fiction setting he stumbles upon the archive internal to the story, which he at first dismisses as madness, each entry another report attributed to a “Possessor.”

Drake next awakens in bed next to the young woman who was the red herring of his missing week, who now turns out to be his wife. Out of her conjugal concern that their “time-relation” was worsening and that he must spend more time at the palace to reverse his aging while she must go to Earth to add a few years to how old she looks, the story of a reversal of oblivion

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Gotthard Günther, *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen II*, ed. Ludwig J. Pongratz (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1975), 40.

³⁸ A.E. van Vogt, “The Search,” *Prospero’s Isle*, <http://prosperosisle.org/spip.php?article332#TheSearch>.

switches to the greater narrative (and memory) of a future world buoyed up by time travel. There are many probability worlds, alternative worlds that have their terminus in the Palace of Immortality, “built in an eddy of time, the only known Reverse, or Immortality, Drift in the Earth Time Stream. It has made the work of the Possessors possible.”

Drake, it turns out, is a Possessor, a member of the time-travel police force recruited over the last five hundred years in a single small district in the United States. When he was a salesman searching for his missing week, he retraced his usual territory, which turns out to be the primal hometown of the Possessors. The rail line on which he travels organizes his beat as salesman without missing the beat he polices as Possessor. The line summons Einstein’s famous example of the train of relativity. Restored to his Possessor identity, Drake uses a glove of destruction to reverse the time-travel capacity of the saboteur, who had derailed the mission across centuries. We are pulled inside out like the enantiomorphic glove put on (by both scientists and spiritualists) to illustrate the fourth dimension.

Just when I was about to give up wondering why Günther didn’t refer to van Vogt’s novel *The World of Null-A*, which by its title alone anticipated the interest he brought to science fiction and cybernetics, I discovered its mention in Günther’s letter to Ernst Jünger (dated December 3, 1951). Why was he writing Jünger, who experimented with a more local science fiction stuck in the groove/grave of the no-man’s land of World War One, within, in other words, the losing stretch of Faustian Europe’s human race? I guess he was science fiction’s representative in post-war Germany and Günther had several editions to promote. While outlining his current project, tentatively titled “The American Apocalypse,” Günther extolls the new finitude hung out to try on anew in A.E. van Vogt’s novel *The World of Null-A*, a title that’s the address of a future in non-Aristotelian logic.

In this book life and death no longer represent a totally dyadic disjunction. The hero of the story has, just as we have different suits hanging in our closet, different bodies. And when he is shot dead in one of them, he puts on a new one and lives on

in “another” life. Please note the radical shift in meaning in this understanding of “body” and its inner relation to the idea of the “mechanical brain.” The classical machine of European tradition is “dead Being” and as such constant. There are no degrees of differentiation. Machine is machine. There is no metaphysical difference between a scale for weighing letters or a Rolls-Royce. Both partake of the same dead body of Being (*Seinsleib*), which cannot bestow its identity anywhere or on anything. A mechanical brain, however, which is constructed not after the model of the hand, like the classic Archimedean machine of Europe, but rather on the model of the working brain, is, if the expression is permitted, a transfigured body of Being (*Seinsleib*).³⁹

Günther’s affirmation here notwithstanding, which we will let stand, I was right to let go the rhyme between Null-A and Günther’s project. Günther regularly sends memos to his readership that the address of a new logic is misleading as long as we are not in possession of the philosophical idea of a second logic, one that joins itself systematically to the first Aristotelian idea of theoretical thought, supplementing and extending it. Even in Aristotle, two contradictory sentences regarding the future, which is undecided, can be true or false. Günther follows Hegel, who in his *Logic* treats being and nothingness (to be or not to be) as interchangeable. “Both and” is a step beyond “either or,” but does not yet enter upon the multivalued logic that a computer alone can master. We will require its skills for translating and mediating our contact with alien intelligence. Dyadic valuation is the language the human brain speaks to itself.

The “both and,” however, does open onto the knowledge transmitting through the metaphysical traditions that the Enlightenment clearing blocks. Georg Hamann’s beef with his good friend Kant on this score is aptly recognized by Hegel to be a wrap with a style of writing that spreads Antiquity and Judeo-

39 Gotthard Günther, letter to Ernst Jünger, December 3, 1991, available online at http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~gerbrehm/GG_Seite.htm.

Christianity on the same page.⁴⁰ Hamann's stylus is passed on to Walter Benjamin's revalorization of allegory.

Günther addresses in American science fiction the new frontier for a daydreaming or fantasizing that can no longer be retrofitted to the fairy tale of dyadic logic. Its theoretical content, however, cannot get past the demolition work of clearing away metaphysical traditions. That the science-fiction sensibility had begun to live this directive affectively, as Günther claims, counts as optimization of the legacy of the Enlightenment.

Van Vogt followed his vampire story to Hollywood where in time he would put out his shingle as practitioner of Dianetics. He was already a follower of a precursor of L. Ron Hubbard, A. Korzybski, whose General Semantics made it into *The World of Null-A*. Not only does the topography of the novel include the address, The Semantic Institute, Korzybski Square,⁴¹ but we also find floating above in an anonymous epigraph the dialectic or dianetics of identification and difference spelled out:

A chair is not just a chair [...] to think of it simply as a chair is to confine the nervous system to what Korzybski calls an identification. It is the totality of such identifications that create the neurotic, the insane, and the insane individual.⁴²

In the novel, exponents of Null-A emphasize over and again the negative therapeutic outcome of failure in the requisite effort to coordinate or integrate knowledge and the potentialities of the brain: "you have a tangled personality – over-emotionalism and, in fact, all variations of neuroticism." A positive outcome means: "the nervous system can withstand almost any shock."⁴³

Van Vogt stopped short of extending his interest to Scientology because the future in which he was interested was

40 G.W.F. Hegel, "The Writings of Hamann," in *Hegel on Hamann*, ed. and trans. Lisa Marie Anderson (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 6–7.

41 A.E. van Vogt, *The World of Null-A* (New York: A Tom Doherty Associates Book, 2002), 201.

42 *Ibid.*, 259.

43 *Ibid.*, 24.

without religion. But the clear text of identification going into his future worlds threw a perfect fit with the therapy of dianetics, the delivery of a client from “identification.” Van Vogt recalls the case of a client whose marriage failed because he wouldn’t take on the identification with a line of work his wife arranged for him. In general, van Vogt allows, the average person is identified with and by his first job, which he finds by chance. Any initiative toward improvement of his lot is then limited to the field of that identifying first job.

That’s the way most people get identified. [...] They get a job at seventeen, eighteen, nineteen or twenty. They don’t choose this job; it’s the only one available. Pretty soon, it’s all they know how to do. Then, that’s what they are, and if they do anything for themselves, they go into that business. There they are, all their lives. They don’t know how it happened or how they got trapped.⁴⁴

Van Vogt carried theory and therapy of dianetics into the clearing of his future worlds, the all-clear verdict on the past (of being identified by one’s first job). Günther interprets in American science fiction a separateness going on loneliness that results from the rejection of the old metaphysical traditions without a substitute prospect on the rebound: a new metaphysics. With van Vogt, we espy instead a social relation organized for the time being around the therapeutic separation from the junkyard “Back East.” The lot that is common in the identification by one’s first job (and date) is that of adolescence. For van Vogt, science fiction and its therapy of dianetics guide the social relation in adolescence and its midlife crisis/criticism through a clearing in the fixity of identification and loss.

In the fall of 1968, van Vogt had to prepare for his new dianetics schedule, which meant that prior to going to work he followed out an early morning “experiment with exercise, com-

44 A.E van Vogt, *Reflections of A.E. van Vogt: The Autobiography of a Science Fiction Giant with a Complete Bibliography* (Lakemont: Fictioneer Books Ltd., 1975), 50. Subsequent page numbers are given in the text.

binning jogging with self-auditing” (50). It already brought about a clearing by dislodging his identification with the schedule-of-the-author, which he thought meant he could not get up before nine. Auditing can modify the other extremity of identification, the crypt, that it might fit the new social relation. Like the contents of adolescence signifying prematurity and postponement, loss amounts to an identifying force that must be put away, the overwhelming affect reduced to a tenable sense of “storedom.”⁴⁵

In conversation with J. Grant Thiessen in 1979, van Vogt allows that he first stumbled upon dianetics not on the cusp of a cure but in the course of taking a break from his writing and in circumvention of the writer’s block he dreaded.⁴⁶ He was Californian enough by then to recognize that his teen sensibility had run its cycle and was now grounded in throwaway “history,” the horrific prospect of outgrowing the promise never kept, and, without future, just piling up the years while running on empty.

I deduced that a writer has a hot period during which he reflects the current reality of his times. There’s a period when he comes up from below, from the teen period into his twenties, and if he’s writing about something that is real to the generation that he belongs to. I figure that has a ten-year cycle. At the end of that ten years, I began to get worried that I would run into what is known as the writer’s block, the feeling of not being able to do these things. My theory was that what I had to do was make a study of human behavior.⁴⁷

Van Vogt restarts his autobiography to demonstrate the difference he derived from his contact with the non-Aristotelian thought of Korzybski and Hubbard between “old-style thinking” and what

45 See my discussion of the cybernetic reworking of boredom as storedom in Lyotard’s dialogue “Can Thought Go On Without a Body?” in *The Devil Notebooks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 150–53.

46 J. Grant Thiessen, “An Interview with A.E. van Vogt,” *The Science-Fiction Collector* 8 (1979): 4–6. Available online at <http://www.icshi.net/sevagram/interviews/thiessen.php>.

47 Ibid.

the “new-style” should be (52–53). In Korzybski’s view, which van Vogt plans to follow out, most biography is “elementalistic. We live in an intermediate stage of history, in which people are not aware of what has motivated them” (53). “In the new-style framework, the experiences of childhood, which are the normal stuff of that portion of a biography, are never more than mildly significant; they have what might be called a sociological importance. Bearing these limited thoughts in mind, here are a series of short statements about the members of my immediate family” (ibid.).

Reduced coverage and what’s her motivation converge, when van Vogt lists that his mother’s “first child, a girl named Amanda, died in babyhood. She subsequently bore five other children” (54). He registers his place in the lineage: “I was the second living child” (55). The replacement daughter/sister, the fourth living child, was Edna. “She was a shadowy figure in her early years, very quiet, slow-moving, thin” (56). After her husband’s death in the war, she and her daughter joined her brother and his wife in Hollywood in 1945. During the period of their cohabitation, van Vogt’s wife dropped her own name Edna and started using her middle name Mayne, “and so she has been known ever since” (56).

In association with her husband, Mayne composed occult horror fantasy and science fiction. Van Vogt recalls her writing process, making an example of her composition of the story “The Ultimate Wish.” “The idea was that somebody – the main character – is given one wish, and wants it to be the ultimate wish. So what could it be? [...] Finally, after about three weeks, she got it. As soon as she told me, I knew it. No other wish would have the proper suspense – it had to be that, and so the mood must lead up to it” (75). The ultimate wish is not revealed in the autobiography.

His own story “The Witch” appeared in the same issue. In the story, a family relation returns from the past to join a young couple’s household. The protagonist becomes suspicious of her true identity and the woman finally admits that she was a friend of the deceased relative whose identity she borrowed to survive in the guise of his family member. In truth, she’s a witch in need of the switch with his wife’s young body. To that end, she urges

on the young woman the intake of herbal medicine to treat her headaches. The husband intercepts the drug that she tries to administer to his wife's sleeping form. When he takes it to be analyzed, it turns out to be the seaweed used by sea witches to lube the transfer between bodies.

He digs up the grave of the relative that the family friend claimed to be representing: empty. At the showdown with the witch and her eleven projected doubles, the protagonist tries to drop each one into the sea. But his wife joins him with a more expedient approach: she throws open all the windows to the sea below. The witch's panic is justified when an entity that has been searching for the last of the sea witches (switches) enters and removes her from the borrowed corpse of the family relation.

During the cohabitation with Mayne, van Vogt also changed his first name. Henceforth he went by Van. Van writes of Mayne:

Dianetically speaking, she is a wide-open type, always filled with intense emotions. There was a period, just before dianetics, when she was having an operation every two years, and had been subject to ever more severe migraine headaches for over thirteen years. Her response in this area to a single dianetic session was what aroused our interest in the subject. The migraine disappeared, and never returned. (74)

In "The Ultimate Wish," an evil crone has been granted the power of wish fulfillment and has until the end of that day to make the wish. She speculates on what the "ultimate" wish could be, since she wants nothing else or less, and thus reprises Mayne's thought process prior to the story's composition. The granting agency, a genie, is available for her to bounce off the candidates for the ultimate wish: love, beauty, or revenge. She can't come up with a satisfactory wish content and takes another approach. Although he cannot reveal it to her, he knows the answer. So, she asks him for the ultimate wish. Whatever it might be, he knows what it is. And then she dies. Three of Mayne's four sole-authorship short stories have "wish" in their titles.

A friend rescued the transcript of Van's contribution to an abandoned oral history project dating back to 1961, which had been deposited in a university library. Van brought it up to date

for publication in 1975, the year Mayne died. She's gone without saying but the book of life closes with two page-filling portraits of Van and then Mayne and then proceeds to the bibliography of his and her collected writings.

In an interview with Robert Weinberg in 1980, Van returned to the relief the therapy of dianetics afforded Mayne after a decade or more of symptoms and procedures that wore her down, but adds this time that the specialists kept saying in the 1950s it looked like cancer. After the problems were audited they were gone, and Mayne never went to another doctor. What dianetics accomplishes in the treatment of problems, Van now admits, behind the fading away that sets in immediately, is not in fact their removal. The problems "are not erased, they were just put back, you might say, into some slot." The slot machine was on again, when they "went to a funeral of a friend who had died of cancer in Phoenix in 1970. On the way back she said, It's like the end of an era, and she burst into tears. One month later she had blood in her urine."⁴⁸

In another interview (with Jeffrey Elliot), Van describes the aftermath of Mayne's death, which he distinguishes from grief. He's talking about "vivid memories."⁴⁹ The slot-machine-like apparatus of helping/healing oneself enables him to "put back" by thought command "special remembrances which induce fear or sorrow or guilt. These vivid memories serve to inhibit thought and action."⁵⁰ He relied on the dianetics of slotting away to unimpede his writing, which had a method to it, one that also calibrated feeling.

When his interest in writing science fiction commenced upon contact with "Who Goes There?" what struck him about Campbell's story was "the mood and feeling of it" (47). What makes his own "science fiction more enduring than that of most writers," van Vogt writes in his autobiography, is that when he

48 Robert Weinberg, unpublished interview with A.E. van Vogt, 1980, <http://www.icshi.net/sevagram/interviews/weinberg.php>.

49 Jeffrey Elliot, "An Interview with A.E. van Vogt," *Science Fiction Review* 23 (1981), available online at http://www.angelfire.com/art/megathink/vanvogt/vanvogt_interview.html.

50 Ibid.

describes a scientific idea he goes about it not poetically but with “fictional sentences,” which allow a certain reality to emerge. “Every once in awhile, I realize, ‘Oh, I’d better describe something in fictional sentences. I need some enduring reality.’ [...] Every line of it is there on purpose for a reality reason” (103–4).

In conversation with Jeffrey Elliot, van Vogt adds that “emotion” is mixed into every one of his real “fictional sentences.” Another ingredient is the “hang-up” – something missing in a sentence that gets the reader involved. The sentence thus counts as hot in the sense, he says, of Marshall McLuhan. Finally, van Vogt works with his night dreams. In the autobiography, he concludes: “I decided long ago that out of dreams must come another kind of enduring reality, and that readers would respond to such in a very involved way, without knowing what deep, unconscious motivations stirred them” (104). Van Vogt goes into greater detail in conversation with Charles Platt:

I took the family alarm clock and went into the spare bedroom that night, and set it for an hour and a half. And thereafter, when I was working on a story, I would fall asleep, waken myself every hour and a half, through the night – force myself to wake up, think of the story, try to solve it, and even as I was thinking about it I would fall back asleep. And in the morning, there would be a solution, for that particular story problem. Now, that’s penetrating the subconscious in my opinion.⁵¹

No classic science-fiction author had to put away quite as much criticism of his writing. Damon Knight led the way and then eventually retracted his opinion. It’s more the retraction than the initial assault that Stanisław Lem identifies as symptomatic. In “Philip K. Dick: A Visionary among Charlatans,” which is largely a review of *Ubik* (although he confuses half-life with cryogenics, suggesting that those in cold-pac were afflicted by fatal illnesses without known remedy at that time), Stanisław Lem adopts the

51 Charles Platt, “A.E. van Vogt – A Profile,” in *The Dream Makers* (New York: Berkley Books, 1980), available online at <http://www.icshi.net/worlds/Plattprofile.htm>.

evolutionary perspective of true literature.⁵² I guess Lem wrote science fiction as literature, which explains the ill fit in his work of classical metaphysical traditions stuck in outer space. Lem's comp is Kafka (rather than Shakespeare), which begs the question: Can one say why Dick's writing is so great? I could show what it is about Kafka's sentences that can be considered unique. When we enter upon B-genres there's no going back. It is like what Benjamin says of allegory on the German Baroque stage: the transcendent is immersed in finitude. From the vantage of B-genres, Dick himself defended van Vogt in the interview with Arthur Byron Cover, arguing that in the beginning it was van Vogt's writing alone that drew him onward.⁵³ What van Vogt says of his fictional sentences, holds for his future worlds: they were more real than anything else Dick had encountered in his readings.

Vogt by Hollywood

Van Vogt wrote a few occult fantasy stories before carrying an occult figure into science fiction. Leading up to "Asylum," his science-fiction stories were influenced by Campbell's "Who Goes There?" They were the staging area in letters for films like *Alien*. In his autobiography, van Vogt addresses the monster-movie adaptation of Campbell's story: *The Thing from Another World* (1951).⁵⁴ Typical of occult horror made in Hollywood at that time, there are two things at the North Pole and on the protagonist's mind: the blood-drinking monster that is finally destroyed and, because he has a thing for her, the sole female around who finally walks with him down the theater aisle out of the horror into the happy ending of their coupling. Ergo: I'm sure he saw Tod Browning's *Dracula*. In "Asylum," the background is limitless

52 Stanisław Lem, "Philip K. Dick: A Visionary among Charlatans," trans. Robert Abernathy, *Science Fiction Studies* 2, no. 1 (March 1975), 54–67, available online at <https://www.depauw.edu/sfs/backissues/5/lem5art.htm>.

53 David Streitfeld, ed., *Philip K. Dick: The Last Interview and Other Conversations* (Brooklyn and London: Melville House: 2015), 8–9.

54 Van Vogt, *Reflections of A.E. van Vogt*, 47.

time and space, while the foreground is a relay of interlocking chambers, like the alternation on screen between the vistas of the uncanny and the theatrical introject.

In his science fiction, van Vogt tends to use POV to mask the first perspective the reader enters and entertains. After several paragraphs, we see by the same POV we've been reading through that its bearer or embodiment is equipped, for example, with tentacles. We were inside an alien creature watching the human astronauts, whose POV we now adopt with a jolt. His first "fix-it" novel *The Voyage of the Space Beagle* (which although published in 1950 contains many of his earliest science-fiction stories) also opens inside an alien POV, that of the Coeurl, the surviving mutation spawned through animal experimentation conducted by a long-gone human species. What slips out of the pure parameters of POV are the ear tendrils but also an unusual thought, the longing for id creatures. These could yet be mutation details describing another branch of the human species. But then: "Coeurl gazed at the two-legged beings who had come from inside the ship."⁵⁵

The isolation of Elliott Grosvenor, the only Nexialist aboard the *Space Beagle* and thus the herald of a new approach to learning and problem solving, also wields an implied POV. One example that can be multiplied: "Grosvenor was glad that Siedel had used the other's name. It was another voice identified for his collection" (10).

Developments in SF special effects parallel van Vogt's schooling in Hollywood horror. One overlap between another chapter of *The Voyage of the Space Beagle* and *Alien* seemed evident enough on the story line that van Vogt's infringement suit was settled out of court. The creature Ixtl, adrift in boundless night for eons of time before the explorers make contact, adds the contact persons to his breeding list. "He had discovered in the man he had unintentionally killed that the stomach and intestinal tract were suitable for his purposes" (113). Ixtl is the kind of creature that can pass through the walls and ceilings of the spaceship by adjusting his own atomic structure. But when it

55 A.E. van Vogt, *The Voyage of the Space Beagle* (New York: Orb Books, 2008), 2. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

comes to reproducing himself by eggs laid in the guuls, the guys on board he has knocked out and up, we enter a core of horror that transmits its special effects through SF films.

He builds a nest within the air conditioning tract for the bodies he collected and turned into his guuls: “he inserted one of his wiry hands into his own breast, removed a precious egg, and deposited it into the stomach of the human being. The man was still struggling, but Ixtl waited for what he knew must happen. Slowly, the body began to stiffen. The muscles grew progressively rigid. [...] Within hours, the eggs would be hatching inside each man’s stomach. Swiftly, the tiny replicas of himself would eat themselves to full size” (149).

Dan O’ Bannon, who wrote the *Alien* screenplay, was in his youth already a declared science-fiction enthusiast. But he disclaimed familiarity with van Vogt’s work. Going into *Alien*, O’ Bannon may have been closer to more contemporary science fiction. His first screenplay was for *Dark Star* (1974), his collaboration with the film’s director John Carpenter. It should count by the role of the dead commander as the first adaptation of P.K. Dick’s *Ubik*. The crew grieves over the loss of Commander Powell. But he’s in half-life and can be consulted when the robot bomb is set on detonating.

A running gag has been underway involving glitches that keep issuing the unintended command to the bomb to detonate. But then the feminine voice of the computer must each time talk the determined bomb into returning to its ready position in the bay. After yet another miscommunication which the words from the computer must again correct: “alright, but this is the last time.” The next time even the mechanism for detaching the bomb from the ship malfunctions. The counsel that Commander Powell offers is to teach the robot phenomenology. Following a surfer’s instruction in Descartes and Kant, the bomb jumps to a nihilistic conclusion. Since he can refuse to recognize or perceive external communication he is god. Let there be light! We watch Commander Powell fly past in the wake of the explosion to die “beautifully” as a falling star while the last survivor surfs on a piece of debris into the void, signing off in the loop between outer space and California.

The near miss between van Vogt and O'Bannon, the prospect of progeny bursting out of the digestive system, is modeled on the horror of male birthing, a tradition even older than David Cronenberg's niche market of bursting cores. Like the cannibals in Texas in Tobe Hooper's 1987 sequel, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2*, alien monsters in space float atop the waste matter of their metabolism. The circulatory system of occult horror special effects that gave way to gore and offal or to entry through passageways inside the core is also an alternative to reproduction. The intestinal twist to science-fiction horror, which we witness not only in Hooper's *Invaders from Mars* (1986) but even in David Lynch's *Dune* (1984), comes out of the misplacement of male birth, which can cover for something more basic or primal: the infernal father's anal impregnation of both genders to carry to term excremental babies, interchangeable blanks stamped with face value. Sometimes an un mournably dead/undead sibling is hidden and preserved in an anal crypt beneath the Christian/Oedipal false bottom, in which case the techno-phantasmagoria of male birth offers another protective diversion.⁵⁶

Mario Bava's 1965 *Planet of the Vampires* (a.k.a. *Planet of the Damned*, *Planet of Blood*, *Planet of Terror*, *Demon Planet*, and so on) is another *Alien* near miss. For assorted pundits, the memory going into the later movie is eidetic, although both O'Bannon and Ridley Scott denied foreknowledge. The resemblance is noted to extend even to *Prometheus*. Members of the crew of the *Argos*, beset by possession and recycling of the dead, visit a third spaceship, long abandoned with long-dead skeletal remains of a species three-times the size of humankind.

When the search party enters the plastic alien ship the communicators are still active. Now they know that the alien planet is not a place of burial. When they roll back the stone on their porto-grave, they witness the plastic that bags the dead fly up like a ghost – but empty. We have already witnessed that when no one else is looking the slab opens and a cellophane-wrapped

56 I identified the anal pocket holding the crypt of a dead sister in the corpus of Antonin Artaud in chapter 4 of *Aberrations of Mourning: Writing on German Crypts* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988).

body strips off the effluvium that billows out and emerges as another undead double. “I really saw them – the three we buried – yesterday. I saw another one, even though we buried him.” They keep placing their dead in the grave they brought along with them (kept just outside the ship), the crucible it turns out for their resurrection.

It’s *The Jetsons* meets *Metropolis*. The astronauts wear motorcycle-like space suits. Inside the Argos, the seating units wrap around them and their consoles like coffins. At the end, one of the possessed lets the rest in on what their only chance is. “I only inhabit this body. We cannot be wiped out. Perhaps our survival is possible somewhere else – the sun is dying – our technology doesn’t operate on the plane that produces ships.” What he now proposes isn’t parasitical, he says: it’s symbiotic. He has removed the meteor rejector, a vital component in the ship’s operation. “You can have it only if you take us with you.” “We’ll give up our lives to save our own race.” Zombies or demons crowd in upon them. “My brother, he’s turned into one of them!”

The brothers traveled separately on the two ships that landed on Aura. The transmission between ships at the start of the film is interrupted, just as the younger brother on the Galliat was about to address his older brother on the Argos. Upon landing, members of the Argos crew become possessed and fight one another. When one crew member follows his possession out to the planet below he seems to recover outside. I guess it’s different if you die first. When they locate the Galliat what they find all aboard are the bloody corpses of the members of the crew. At the end, then, the younger brother speaks, but as possessed: “Fortunately only the body’s the same – you can’t harm me with violence.”

The showdown with the zombies leaves only three for the getaway take-off. “I’m ashamed to be alive. They died to save our planet.” The third one, Wes, has found out about the captain and Sonja. “All you have to do is to want it. A wonderful new complexity.” Wes destroys the rejector. The zombies must choose the closest compatible planet. A scan of New York City elicits the remark: “a puny civilization.” A POV trick like that used by van Vogt at the start of several of his stories. This damned crew came from another system, just like the giant crew on the third ship. All these doubles of humankind scuttle the origin of species and

trust instead in the mutation of possession crossing the divide between the living and the dead. The Italian author, Renato Pestrinero, given adaptation credit for his story “One Night of 21 Hours,” later wrote a novelization of van Vogt’s short story “Enchanted Village” in collaboration with the American author, titled *The People of the Wide Sands*.

At the latest when O’Bannon wrote the screenplay adapting *The Space Vampires* for Tobe Hooper’s *Lifeforce* (1985), he must have read that van Vogt was finally on board. In the acknowledgements to his 1976 novel, Colin Wilson writes: “The book originated, many years ago, in a discussion with my old friend A.E. van Vogt, whose story ‘Asylum’ is a classic of vampire fiction. (Aficionados of the genre will recognize my indebtedness to it.)” All his contemporary plugs are in a row reaching back to *Dracula*: “The book also owes much to the stimulus of discussions with Dan Farson – on vampirism in general, and on his great-uncle, Bram Stoker, in particular.”⁵⁷

The vast space vessel parked on an asteroid belt must have come from planet fantasy. Upon entering “Frankenstein’s Castle” (a reference to early Hollywood adaptations), Carlsen recognizes the genre trait of beauty: “If earthmen had built this, they’d have made it all look mechanical – square columns with rivets. Whatever creatures built this had a sense of beauty” (4). The paintings on the walls remind him “of lying in a wood as a child, surrounded by bluebells” (ibid.). In a space reminiscent of the grotto in Capri, seven glass coffins are arrayed like Egyptian tombs (7). The woman looking like Snow White or Sleeping Beauty alive in her tomb prompts “something he had never expected to see, some distant memory of childhood that had left no trace on his consciousness. It had something to do with trees and running water, and a fairy or water spirit who was also his mother” (17).

His first thought was aligned with the family-romance alternative to evolution: those creatures could be our ancestors (8). The horror fantasy that’s entombed with the human doubles is

57 Colin Wilson, *The Space Vampires* (Rhinebek: Monkfish Book Publishing Company, 2009), n.p. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

a souvenir of van Vogt's "Resurrection." It's the pictorial representation showing a black octopus with a human face dragging a man towards a hole in the rock (58). "Snow White" tells Carlsen: "I took my shape from your deepest thoughts – I am the feminine in your mind – let me go." On and on.

The vampire is inside Carlsen, like Dracula inside Mina. "For days, the vampire had been using him, sucking energy" (62). The Van Helsing figure on this update is the one with the three brides. But he still counsels using hypnosis on Carlsen to track the vampire (71). The vampires intend to "set up a network of energy donors" (73). "The major problem is to force a vampire into retreat. [...] Once the vampire can be induced to flee, he has lost the advantage" (75). All criminals get unlucky sooner or later.

While a constant low-level draining and restoring of energy like around self-pitying people (27) is in evidence, it also becomes clear that without an invitation a space vampire doesn't take a real dose of life, not at least to the point of destroying you (69). The Stoker convention, the Freudian interpretation of loving the dread, also means that succumbing to the undead is a hidden norm. Like Dracula in the vicinity of Seward's asylum with his double agent Renfield on the inside, the vampire is found hiding out in a hospital for the criminally insane (81). It's not so much the criminality as the split personality that accords well with the vampiric strategy (90). When Carlsen interrogates the nurse there, he has to reassure his colleague on this mission that she wants him to hurt her: "If you don't want to watch, go into the other room." "Not at all. I am a natural voyeur" (89). A woman, who knew better, had already concurred with Carlsen that "vampirism" is another word for the desire to get to know your partner, swing yourself around, and become part of the partner. "I suppose masochism's a kind of distorted form of the same thing – the desire to be absorbed, to give oneself completely and entirely" (80).

The vampire tries to get back inside Carlsen: "it was trying to force its way past the hands, to spread-eagle his will and force its way into his essential being" (93). Not a super-IQ guardian, like in the story "Asylum,"⁵⁸ but a super paranormal power indwell-

58 In his *Autobiography*, van Vogt notes that he hoped to make a novel

ing Carlsen begins to take the upper hand in the contest with the vampires. In prehistory, it was contact with a black hole that turned the aliens into vampires. Once they are apprehended by Carlsen but given a way out, they condemn themselves to extinction (114). Oddly the story continues beyond Carlsen's death, which was a long time coming. He leaves behind the proviso that the vampires were wrong. The true solution lies in time reversal (118).

After "life after death" is identified to be the doctor's bailiwick, O'Bannon's adaptation adds the twist that the victim comes alive upon autopsy contact and takes the doctor's life force. Without a steady dose of the force, the victim who's come back to life returns to the desiccated state and, when no more life force is consumed, second death follows. An Anglo-American mission aboard *The Churchill* is exploring Halley's Comet in the trail of the self-fulfilling prophecies of doom. When the comet starts "bombing" London, while the vampires let zombieism roll through the population to harvest and beam up life force to the vampire vessel, we're advised that it's the biggest catastrophe since the Blitz.

Thirty days after the discovery of the alien vessel, it turns out there was a fire on the ship that was bringing the three humanoids down to Earth. They seemed worth saving and studying in a vessel otherwise crowded with decaying bat-like creatures. When he crawls out of his escape pod back on Earth, Carlsen admits that he set the conflagration to contain the threat he recognized. However, he could not help himself; he also already commingled his life force with that of the female vampire. The three alien nudes in glass coffins arrive intact although presumed dead. Once all agree that they are in fact dead, dissection of the alien bodies can proceed. What follows allows the fantasy elaboration to start wrapping special effects around the horror and its invitation. How do you kill the vampire? Leaded iron shot into the energy center beneath the heart. But the protagonist is in a different boat: "I was in love on a level you've never known. She

out of "Asylum" to take up the challenge once again of showing "by mood and atmosphere – someone with an I.Q. of 1200. That was the hardest scene I ever wrote" (68).

was calling me, spiritual, more than spiritual.” She’s in the crypt under the cathedral, the source or bottom of the abyssal blue light beaming up the souls of London. A male vampire invites victims to come to him. The detective pierces him *de rigueur* and before he goes, exploding into blue dust, he becomes a winged creature. Carlsen is making out with the vampire. “Just a little more,” she keeps saying. When he consummates their soulmating in Love Death, he cannot get past the wounding, and his vampire bride takes him up with her into the vessel for an eternity of healing. The end is awash in blue blood.

Carpenter, O’Bannon, and George Lucas, among other Hollywood directors and screen writers, were SF fans – or Slans as the fans called themselves in identification with the outsider mutants in van Vogt’s novel *Slan* (1946). In interview with Robert Weinberg, van Vogt scopes out a vanishing act of published novels that’s the magic trick of screenwriters. “When I came to Hollywood, I met a number of screenplay writers. And so I discovered that ‘original’ screenplays were actually parallels of published novels. Later, when television came into full power, paralleling was a way of life. Probably all the stories of history have been taken by a TV writer and brought up to date in some way, and paralleled on the story line.”⁵⁹

Through the Looking Glass

The new B-genre of American science fiction supplies a space-holder for a new metaphysics. But the stories are not there yet. The final story included in Günther’s collection *Overcoming Space and Time*, Lewis Padgett’s “Mimsy Were the Borogroves” (1943), addresses, as Günther underscores in his commentary on the story, both the breakthrough and the step not taken. Like Moses, the members of the current generation of the new B-genre can glimpse the Promised Land but cannot enter it.⁶⁰ So, a child is needed. Do babies still remember only to forget the realm from which new life is carried over? Is it the realm of the dead? The

59 Weinberg, unpublished interview with A.E. van Vogt.

60 Günther, *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik?*, 92. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

young children from the 1940s in Padgett's story, who discovered a box of old educational toys sent from the future (from an era in which time-travel experiments are underway) recognize or remember the meaning of a poem from *Through the Looking Glass*. But the verse that the title refers to can be understood in Lewis Carroll's story only by Humpty Dumpty, who inhabits another world. A look in the mirror glimpses this reversed world, but we are not a species intelligent or young enough to go there. The two American children know the way, the older brother learning from his two-year-old sister who is an instant initiate.

There's a girl from the UK in the late-nineteenth century, who is also in receipt of another box of toys from the same sender. But she, Günther concludes, was "too old," in other words, too old world, to find the way there (93). In the story it is evident, however, that the English girl is young enough to follow all the novelties. In fact, she's Dodgson's Alice, who recited the poem in the foreground of this story. This verse was the only one Dodgson included intact. Thinking her source was fantasy and not the future, he otherwise felt free to modify the many stories she told him. In the new world, precocity, which entails greater proximity to the enigmatic source of new life, is on the rise. The American baby scribbles directions around a copy of the poem while her brother lays out the objects that mark their pathway into another dimension.

Günther observes that this story is matter of fact about the existential change in the environment brought about by a change in consciousness. Europeans can be found who could also carry the conviction that a change has occurred, Günther advises, but then it would be meant spiritually or psychologically (93). What leaves Europe behind is the American conclusion that the change equation is meant ontologically. One world goes so that a new one can take its place. However, since we are lodged within the perspective of the grownups in Padgett's story, reality doesn't dissolve and the two American children simply cross over, desert, and disappear.

For Günther, the stories in his 1952 collection, which are without comps in European letters, are tentatively en route to a new metaphysical worldview:

To date in his history man has had two major metaphysical worldviews. The first goes by the name “animism” and commands the primitive niveau of world history. The next is the bivalent ontological metaphysics of all the civilizations holding the belief in the outright opposition between (empirical) subject and object and the credo that both merge in the absolute. The transition from the first to the second metaphysics was accomplished by declaring all the consequences of the animist thesis to be “superstition.” Today we are in the midst of first attempts to bring about the transition from the second metaphysics to a third metaphysical niveau of mankind. Surprisingly, one does not devalue the metaphysical ontology by decrying it false, but instead by declaring what we hold true for the beyond should, by rights, be that much more self-evident in the here and now. (94)

In his contribution to the second volume of *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen* (*Philosophy in Self-Presentations*), Günther again singled out Padgett’s story for performing the radical break from Europe that he claims is the content of science fiction, but which must be understood in tandem with cybernetics, which supplements what is but fantasy by demarcating new scientific, logical, and physical frontiers. Through the unfollowability of the alien toys from another time, Padgett’s story illustrates Norbert Wiener’s thought experiment, which Günther quotes:

[I]t is a very interesting intellectual experiment to make the fantasy of an intelligent being whose time should run the other way to our own. To such a being all communication with us would be impossible. Any signal he might send would reach us with a logical stream of consequences from his point of view, antecedents from ours. [...] *With any world with which we can communicate, the direction of time is uniform.*⁶¹

61 Günther, *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen II*, 42. Günther is quoting from Norbert Wiener’s *Cybernetics* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1948), 45.

We are in the middle of Günther's presentation of the fundamental distinction in cybernetics between the reversible time of the dead object and the irreversible time of a phenomenon of life.

Padgett's "Mimsy Were the Borogroves" lets the children come unto a traversal of this distinction in terms of time, a new frontier. In Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End*, an old saw is decorated with science fiction. Christian redemption guides the mutation of the milieu of evolution into a suddenly one-minded childhood organism and raises it up to the Beyond, which comes from Outer Space. In Padgett's story, the alarmed parents ask a psychologist to check out their children and the toys. The expert conclusion:

We are dealing with madness. [...] All children are mad, from an adult viewpoint. [...] All I say is that babies think in other ways than we do. Not necessarily better – that's a question of relative values. But with a different manner of extension. [...] The mind becomes conditioned as the human animal matures. It follows certain familiar theorems, and all thought thereafter is pretty well based on patterns taken for granted. [...] A child knows nothing of Euclid. A different sort of geometry from ours wouldn't impress him as being illogical. He believes what he sees. [...] A child wouldn't be handicapped by too many preconceived ideas.⁶²

In the middle of his summary, the psychologist quotes from a book that his host happens to have on a shelf in the living room: *A High Wind in Jamaica* by Richard Hughes, about children captured by pirates and their adaptation to the new environment. Its views already entered the narrator's omniscience regarding the evident compatibility of the young children with the toys their parents can't follow:

A self-contained, almost perfect natural unit, his wants supplied by others, the child is much like a unicellular creature [...]. From the standpoint of logic, a child is rather horribly

62 Henry Kuttner, *The Best of Henry Kuttner* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1975), 16–17.

perfect. A baby may be even more perfect, but so alien to an adult that only superficial standards of comparison apply. The thought processes of an infant are completely unimaginable. But babies think, even before birth. In the womb they move and sleep, not entirely through instinct. [...] But a baby is not human. An embryo is far less human.⁶³

In *The Last Mimzy* (2007), when the babysitter reads from Lewis Carroll's story, Emma hears "Mimzy" and, looking at the photo of Alice Liddell in the book, a girl from the past clutching a stuffed animal that is the lookalike of her transitional object, she recognizes that Mimzy was already there. She tells her brother Noah that what went wrong back then was that Alice didn't have a brother to act as engineer.

All the other toys in the mystery box that the children discovered on the beach are components of a "bridge" for Mimzy's return. In lieu of expert speculation on the alien intelligence of very young children, we have the boy's science teacher, who is privy to what Carl Jung called big dreams. His partner, a New Age type, is well versed in Tibetan mandalas, which Noah's doodles in science class reproduce. The couple supports the children because "the universe is calling." A Patriot Act squadron descends upon the household after Noah's experiments accidentally caused a statewide blackout. When the scientists check out the toys, however, they discover deep inside Mimzy not only artificial-intelligence technology unavailable in their day, but also the commodity logo "intel," which supplies the reality effect of an update that makes it all look like it comes from a future they can "buy."

What Emma saw through the "looking glass" were strange scientists. The future is doomed by an uncontrollable contamination that can be reversed only by uncorrupted DNA from the past. The two children don't depart, but send back to the future the toy rabbit Mimzy bearing the uncontaminated DNA that Emma has imparted through their close and constant contact. Emma fears that Mimzy is dying, and when her tears fall she

63 Ibid., 12.

deposits what saves the future, where she will be celebrated as “the mother of us all.”

Children in the film version are not the novel’s natural-born aliens, but are at most more imaginative than grownups. Under Steven Spielberg’s influence, the child in science fiction became Oedipally grounded in the PG rating, the family pack. Not the children but Mimzy (or ET) goes home. The Spielberg family typically counts no more than two children, which reflects reproduction control following the decrease in the rate of childhood mortality.

The two-seater new generation that comes from outer space in *Batteries Not Included* (1987) fits the holy family model plus one, the extra placeholder of the denied little girl, the inner girl and Holy Ghost. Away in the manger on the rooftop of a building without a future, including the reproductive kind, two smallish alien robot-critters reproduce two smaller ones. But one is weak and dies. The trauma-schizo neighbor, a former boxing champ who now never speaks, takes the inert one and reanimates it in a chemical bath he mixes in his sink. He advances out of his second infans phase, but must quickly learn as well to let the alien pet go back to its family. The happy end reinstalls the two-child family from or for the future. The backstory of this ambivalence lends to the alien in *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982) the allegorical attribute of the diaphragm that upon entering the birth-control-pill-like space capsule undergoes an essential upgrade.

The teamwork of Hollywood inspiration and development brought the mirror stage into Spielberg’s *War of the Worlds* (2005), but in order to confound the infant, namely the seeing-eye-probe from outer space. There’s only a brief glimpse of the sphincter that absorbs and disperses the human blood fertilizer in the course of approximating the Martian environment, but the anal trajectory is immediately pulled through the digital camera that someone in the crowd flips open to record the first advance of the alien tripods. (“Are they terrorists?” is the ongoing question.) Even after the innocent bystander is laser evaporated, the camera on the pavement continues to show us the alien advance through its rearview mirror. The infant-like alien eye is so transfixed before its image in the mirror, that there’s enough time for the father and daughter duo to make it to another hiding place

in the basement before it begins sniffing the mirror's backside. The surveillance eye from Mars represents the kind of advance in technology that Wilfred Bion saw linked in the course of human adjustment to regression to a motor-uncoordinated condition.⁶⁴ In *Robocop* (1987), the new rotund robot, which is billed as an advance over the Hamletian cyborg, can't, once knocked down, get up again for all its tantrums. This scene, too, signals Bion's insight into the regression that initiates our relationship to new technologies. No wonder the ghosts contacted in the course of modern spiritualism babble so.

R.I.P. in Time

Lewis Padgett was one of the noms de plumes adopted by a writing couple (Henry Kuttner and C.L. Moore), whose ambivalence toward progeny in "Mimsy Were the Borogroves" lets the fictional children go, but as privileged deserters, and is further warded off by the niceness of their parents. Plus, the disappearing act reverses passing in real time.

Time travel, a Lewis Padgett specialty, allowed the duo to map, through an allegorical mix of media and other literary corpora, the contest between and the resulting borderland of fantasy and science fiction. Prior to the Mimsy/Mimzy crossover, two other Padgett time travel stories had extended their tour and booked motion pictures.

In the 1953 movie *The Twonky*, which adapted their 1942 story of the same title, the Twonky is an autonomous TV robot that arrives in place of the set that was ordered. In the story, it's a radio set and we are given a glimpse of it being built, when a fantasy figure from another time and space drops in at the factory and makes this particular set according to its understanding of a job well done. Is time so wide open that an unplanned stopover by one of the interstellar wee folk straying from home can happen at any time? Apparently, the boundaries between fantasy and science fiction are permeable enough to allow the crossover. The

64 Wilfred Bion, "The 'War of Nerves': Civilian Reaction, Morale, and Prophylaxis," in *The Neuroses in War*, ed. Emanuel Miller (New York: Macmillan, 1940), 180–200.

protagonist, Kerry, a professor at the local college, begins thinking of his new radio set as a “hobgoblin.”⁶⁵

In the course of its unwanted service, the Twonky in both incarnations reveals that it is following a program from another era that dictates a law of health in conflict with the lax standards of the couple living there. In the movie, it turns off Mozart and dictates a preference for marching music. In the story, it removes *Alice in Wonderland* from Kerry’s grasp (154). In both versions, the monitor zaps the professor with instant sobriety when he comes home after a bout of acting out. In the movie, he protests: “a man can’t escape in your time. I want security but not at your price.” In the story, one of his college colleagues has been observing him and tells the wife, who is back from the trip during which the husband was to be comforted by the new radio set: “It’s more than a robot. And it’s been readjusting Kerry. [...] When I checked Kerry’s psychology patterns, I found that they’d altered. He’s lost most of his initiative” (158).

The wife was out of town assisting her sister, who was ready to deliver a newborn, and the husband had to face alone a charge of replication that the robot delivers like progeny from hell. On screen, the wife rushes back home, because she gets wind of the helpful Twonky’s efforts to make the master happy again by contacting a service that supplies women. Because of the television’s illegal pandering, as well as its earlier counterfeiting of the money that the professor needed to pay for the set, police and treasury department officers converge upon the Twonky’s turf. While in the story the radio set imposes semantic blocks, oblivion, and far more radical interventions, in the movie the TV set protects itself by inducing a happy trance in any opponents of its service. The

65 Kuttner, *The Best of Henry Kuttner*, 153. Subsequent page references are given in the text. Between story and adaptation, the Twonky may count as the only robot that’s just not cute. That the radio set is sinister is appropriate to the World-War-Two era. But even the TV robot’s drop scene on the Cold War screen, whenever he’s a bumbling servant on spindly legs under a boxy monitor trying to light the owner’s cigarette, doesn’t get past beware of what you wish for.

brainwashed subjects are kept in line, the line they mutter over and again: “I have no complaints.”⁶⁶

The TV set turns the denial to neutralize the lamentation of protest and mourning. In the story, the professor reacts to the evidence of his adjustment by saying the hobgoblin-like set is Hitler (155). In the original language-culture of psychoanalysis, the complaint was up against the borderline of psychosis, which offered shelter to the authors of letters sent to the chancellery during the Third Reich. A series of psychiatric studies from that era analyzed this material to reflect on the “complaint delusion” (*Querulantenwahn*), a diagnosis that was largely used to institutionalize for the duration of psychodynamic treatment those citizens who were writing letters to Hitler, trying to get him back on track, their good boy for all his mistakes.⁶⁷

On screen, the couple triumphs over the robot in the course of an extended scene of car change and chase that ends with the Twonky crushed in the trunk. In the happy end adaptation, the couple is restored in mourning’s light after the replicational interlude has been worked through. Destroying the Twonky, however, does not change the future, the wish expressed in story and film, if only because it belongs to the repressed recent past, the datemark that the story identified. The story ends with the couple taking turns trying to strike the radio set with a hatchet, but the machine protects its mission by killing the wife and then the husband: two “unsuitable” subjects (160). The robot awaits the new tenants, the next trial subjects of the improved world it was programmed to bring about.

While the politics of complaint dislodged the mournful plaint in the fable about a fantasy robot from the future, in the couple’s 1946 time-travel story “Vintage Season,” as well as in its adapta-

66 In *Complaint: Grievance among Friends* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), 129, Avital Ronell reads this phrase or rather its typical variation – “I can’t complain” – as a rebus of denial, suppression, and adaptation.

67 In *Nazi Psychoanalysis*, 3 vols. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), in the closing section of the second volume, I explore the shelter of this diagnosis within the German history of therapy with psychotics.

tion, *Timescape* (1992) (a.k.a. *Grand Tour: Disaster in Time*), the traumatic history that occupies the foreground is brought home. In the story, an artwork made in the future reflects on loss and grief lodged in the real time of the story, but which for the future artist is so long ago that in his work it is more like a dream of loss (the consolation prize for the loss of Weena in *The Time Machine*). The film adds loss and a child, thus realigning the timing of its trip with a direct hit of mourning.

The landlord–protagonist in Padgett’s story, Oliver, is a blank without history. He has no backstory, only Sue on the line, demanding that he shoo away the tourist–renters, who have already paid handsomely for their stay, so he can sell the house to yet other exotic outsiders willing to overpay if they can move in by the last week in May. When the equation between real estate and trauma so basic to the overlap between horror fantasy and science fiction slides into place, Sue is no more. The house, the viewing outpost booked by travelers from the future to witness the meteor crash at the appointed time in their past, is in turn eventually detonated, together with Oliver’s record of the truth of the tour, a document he hoped could change history.⁶⁸

The first fold in the “timescape” on screen is set on nineteenth-century Americana. There’s a covered bridge in the countryside and a horse-drawn carriage on a country road. But coming ‘round the bend, there’s all of a sudden an automobile. The surprise crash in the recent past is the flashback upon which Jeff Daniels awakes with the jolt of recurrence. His doomed wife said they would be passing through what’s also called a kissing bridge. Was their last time together the first time they toured the antiqued landscape? It is apt that for all our returns there we will never completely disentangle the scene of coincidence and collision.

In the story, the impeccable mannerism of the tourists is twice conjured from behind the scenes of a screen image: “Only an actress on the screen, who can stop time and the film to adjust every disarrayed fold so that she looks perpetually perfect, might

68 Robert Silverberg and Martin H. Greenberg, eds., *The Time Travelers: A Science Fiction Quartet* (New York: Donald I. Fine, Inc., 1985), 284. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

appear thus elegantly clad” (226). Or again: “all of them must come from that nameless land where people controlled their voices like singers and their garments like actors who could stop the reel of time itself to adjust every disordered fold” (247). We are invited to think of time as a movie that can be manipulated for a perfectly adjusted performance. What lies on the other side of this invitation is the highest art from the future, a musical *Gesamtkunstwerk* in progress that integrates documentary audio and video recordings and shows images floating in a relay of dissolves. The visitors from the future summon virtuality from TV. How this future culture industry is assembled by collector-connoisseurs of the recent past is indicated when, waiting around for the catastrophe they traveled in time to witness, the tourists engage local movie theaters to screen for their delectation specific parts from “a lot of third-rate films.” They are awe-struck by one actor’s sublime performance glimpsed in bit parts (234). They refer to him or to the genre of their viewing as Golconda, meaning “rich mine” or, more broadly, source of great wealth. It’s the resource that the collector picks over to assemble a montage of highlights transforming detritus into treasure.

Oliver is granted a first glimpse of their culture industry, when one of the tourists, Kleph, turns on some kind of traveling monitor she brought along. Preliminary to the viewing, however, you should partake of a special tea, a euphoriac.

Oliver followed Kleph’s gaze towards the picture of the blue water above the bed. The waves there were moving. More than that, the point of vision moved. Slowly the seascape drifted past, moving with the waves, following them towards shore. [...] The waves lifted and broke in creaming foam and ran seething up a sandy beach. Through the sound of the water music began to breathe, and through the water itself a man’s face dawned in the frame, smiling intimately into the room. (241)

The man starts singing a song Oliver knows: “Make Believe” from *Show Boat*, but from another world. “What’s he doing to it?” The manner of “covering” selections from Oliver’s culture is called “kyling.” Kleph switches the channel to a daydream-like

recording of the fleeting fixity of film scenes one forgets, then re-collects from the surf of forgetting, yielding false memories, like those of the android.

It was confusing to follow. The song made even less sense than the monologue, which had something to do with a lost slipper and was full of allusions which made Kleph smile, but were utterly unintelligible to Oliver. [...] Other performances followed, some of them fragmentary as if lifted out of a completer version. One he knew. [...] The music was tinny, the images blurred and poorly colored, but there was a gusto about the performance that caught at Oliver's imagination. He stared, remembering the old film from long ago. Dennis King and a ragged chorus, singing "The Song of the Vagabonds" [...]. "A very old one," Kleph said apologetically. "But I like it." (242-43)

The science fantasy on screen follows a schedule of historical catastrophes, according to which the future books its tours and fulfills the wish for more than the perfect present holds in store. In the story, the import of catastrophe seems ambiguous or speculative, perhaps only because the future knows more. The last stop in the tour was the vintage fall season of Chaucer's England. Did a meteor's crash in the fourteenth century contribute to the onset and spread of the Black Death? The story ends with a fictional Blue Death following the fictional meteor strike, which allows the speculation that a vintage season is always the calm before the storm of epidemic catastrophe.

The film's challenge is that the traumatic history that cannot be toured is the personalized one that commits Jeff to loss. His contact person among the visitors behaves like a sex tourist. With the door open, the provocatively attired wraith-woman rubs salve all over her body. "Tell me what you imagined when you looked through my door and I'll show you what we can do." She's careless about the strict regulations governing their time travel and tells Jeff something about their home: "I want you to think of an imaginary place - utopia - a grand world - and that's its one flaw." The flaw is that the utopia of one-night or one-visit stands with natives of the past doesn't allow the regular contact

that goes into substitution and mourning. These tourists want it raw. Not one of them has a camera, as the driver of the tour bus tells Jeff. Instead, a late arrival to this May group of visitors is covered in ash, the index of the disaster site he last visited.

When the catastrophe also claims his daughter, Jeff decides to change his personal history. He already had occasion to study a passport that one traveler inadvertently dropped and noted the date stamps. With flash cards that his daughter used to prepare for tests at school he's able to link the dates to historical catastrophes like the San Francisco earthquake. He confronts his one-night understanding among the alien visitors. He tells her that she's dead because she doesn't feel. But she is moved by the draw of the double take of his more personalized traumatic history. She slips him a passport that's really a gadget that takes you to the date you stamp inside it. He stamps the day before, the very *Zeitmarke* of the historical catastrophe that recurs to happen. When he eavesdrops on the tour group's intrigues before the strike, he realizes it worked. He clutches the passport in his breast pocket and proclaims, heartfelt, "Yesterday!"

But when he proceeds to save his daughter from the explosion, he stumbles over the subplot that endangered her to begin with. His father-in-law, always brooding on what he sees as Jeff's responsibility for his daughter's death, was awarded custody over his granddaughter on the day of the meteor strike. When Jeff returns, his apparent infraction of the custody sends him to jail. But he encounters himself there and convinces his double that they must escape together to save the girl and warn the town.

The old man's charge that Jeff abandoned the scene of the accident that killed the daughter/the wife is answered between doubles: he ran for help, which is now their run on the double. They summon the town by double-ringing the bells in the church tower, which keeps the summoned crowd out of the way of incipient harm. That the strike he predicts happens stuns the authority of the father-in-law and allows Jeff to secure the survival of his daughter in the one house, as he now knows, that is guaranteed to be the safest place in town. At the end, the daughter hears "For Elise" being played on the piano in the next room. Although she should know that her father likes to perform the piece in memoriam of his wife who played it regularly,

she calls out: “Mother?” Like the supplemental ending of P.K. Dick’s *Ubik*, in which Runciter finds funny money bearing the likeness of Joe Chip in his pockets, we can’t be sure if all three are dead, all along each lost to the other, living on only in the other’s memories.

The adaptation reaches the outer limit of cinematic possibility in the alliance between true doubles, a prospect it intimated in the opening fantasy scan of an “antique” Americana setting (covered bridge and horse-drawn cart). What looked like the past then collided with the machinic representative of the 1992 present, the car and the camera. It wasn’t that long ago, and the degenerating influence of loss that threatens the child can be halted by the science fiction of stepping back one day into an alternate reality, the science fiction of doubling.

And yet the story is just as cinematic in drawing the time lines and projecting media art innovation belonging to the (near) future. The story ends with the annihilation of Oliver’s building and whatever else he left behind, society’s futile effort to stay the Blue Death. But before that, the composer from the future, Cenbe, arrives post-catastrophe to stay in the former viewing post, and Oliver witnesses the completion of the masterpiece he heard in part when Kleph had played for him a fragment of the work in progress.

“I am a composer,” Cenbe was saying. “I happen to be interested in interpreting certain forms of disaster into my own terms. That is why I stayed on. The others are dilettantes. They came for the May weather and the spectacle. The aftermath – well, why should they wait for that? As for myself – I suppose I am a connoisseur. I find the aftermath rather fascinating.” (279–80)

When Oliver brings up the moral charge that time travel should change history and reverse the damages, he must recognize instead the distance across the eons of time separating the dead from the living:

Cenbe was a composer and a genius, and necessarily strongly empathic, but his psychic locus was very far away in time. The

dying city outside, the whole world of now was not quite real to Cenbe, falling short of reality because of that basic variance in time. It was merely one of the building blocks that had gone to support the edifice on which Cenbe's culture stood in a misty, unknown, terrible future. (281)

We're allowed a glimpse of the future world, when we attend the premiere of Cenbe's completed composition. At the climax, one face in particular, of course it is Oliver's, floats up into the great sweep of the composition and looms huge on screen. "Cenbe had never caught an emotional crisis so effectively" (283–84). It is what Cenbe saw looking at him from across "a vast distance, as time is measured" (281) and considering the plaint of one long gone.⁶⁹

Fairy Chess

On account of their night dream logic, Tolkien ruled Lewis Carroll's stories out of the canon of the fairy-story. By that token, we might conclude that the Twonky robot from the future is at home in fantasy when in the Padgett story it prohibits reading Alice in Wonderland. A line from Carroll's work in Padgett's "Mimsy Were the Borogroves" turns the key of a future logic for which the child in the new world is ready to go but in the mode of desertion, not escape. In another Padgett science fiction, the novel *The Fairy Chessmen* (1946), Carroll's version of fantasy proves key to distinguishing the fantasizing that goes into science

69 The relief that time travel afforded Wells's protagonist in *The Time Machine* has served since as a leitmotif in science fiction. It looped through the consolation of fantasy, as does the relief afforded by Cenbe's music video, a fantasy introject within the science fiction of time travel. Among early works by which Wells marked and worked through the transition from the memory of grief to ambivalence in the couple on which his bona fide work of science fiction, *The War of the Worlds*, closes, there was a work of outright fantasy, *The Wonderful Visit* (1895), about an angel on Earth who must become human or otherwise adapt to his fallen state.

fiction from consumer fascination with fairytale magic or special effects.

In a topography demarcated by the ruins of one-way time travel in the past, scientists and clinicians contribute to the current war effort. One of the mutants changed by the radioactivity emitted from the so-called Duds, the earliest-known one-way deliveries across time, flexes not ESP but Extra Temporal Perception.⁷⁰ Because he sees duration, he alone recognizes that one of the government agents, Daniel Ridgeley, is an alien from another time in space, who is profiting from the war to sell secret weapons from the future (161–63). The ultimate weapon he is pandering is an equation that potentially can end worlds. Ridgeley has already given it to the enemy, but in an abridged form to guarantee his control. The enemy has started lobbing potentiated but paradoxical bombs that mercifully don't work against their energy shields, but then it turns out the shields are, after all, giving way. The novel narrates the all-out US effort to reverse the enemy's advantage by assembling the complete future weapon, both the complete multivalued equation and the counter-equation.

It's the US versus the Falangists, "a hybrid race as Americans had once been" (117). Following World War Two, the "émigrés from all Europe" formed "a new free state with arbitrary and well-guarded borders [...], drawing their name from Spain, their technology from Germany, and their philosophy from Japan" (ibid.). By the misprision of his own one-way time trip, Ridgeley may have assumed that they were on the winning side, but didn't realize that his itinerary reopened the past in the future to alternate endings.

In the lexicon of the novel's recounting of the total war between the US and Europe, "psychopathic" is used regularly as the abbreviation, it seems, for psychopathological, meaning in most cases some gradation of psychotic. Every expert attempting to formulate the equation indeed goes psychotic. One expert, Dr. Emil Pastor, does solve the equation, not completely but to

70 Lewis Padgett, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and The Fairy Chessmen: Two Science Fiction Novels* (New York: Gnome Press, 1951), 158.

Subsequent page references are given in the text.

the extent of applying it beyond the level of destruction that the enemy science wields. But now that “nothing matters any more” (171), he sees himself as god aiming the equation’s power of annihilation at will. In a long-distance communication by visor, evil Emil informs his colleague, scientist Seth Pell back in the central research facility, of the extent of his discovery: “Everything is hollow, like a soap bubble. Maintained in existence simply by a certain coherence of will, the acceptance of the expected” (171). Can Pell visit him at his home facility? “Oh, it’s gone. [...] I stopped believing in it and it disappeared” (ibid.).

Before the psychotic break, Dr. Pastor was inordinately drawn to his Fairyland box and control panel. While in this future world there’s one in every household, his box he amped up: “I got away from the company patterns years ago. I create my own systems and paradoxes [...]. In this sequence, I’ve assigned human emotions to colors. I make up the plot as I go along” (150).

When Pell tries to guide the visor conversation back to the equation, the mad scientist counters that it would be hard to explain: “It deals with certain variables I’m sure you wouldn’t accept. But they’re surprisingly effective in practice. I simply used my will power on my house and it was gone.” When Pell can’t see how will power is an integral part of the equation, Pastor shows him by commanding what happens next, Pell’s nonexistence (172).

Because Ridgeley knows what a threat Pastor poses, also to his controlled release of the import of the future weapon, he tracks the psycho down and liquidates him by surprise attack, knife in the back. The US scientists were scanning him in the hopes that he would use the counter-equation, which the new scientist on board, Eli Wood, is prepared to recognize and reconstruct upon witnessing its application.

Wood’s dossier was selected by a new search for a psycho-proof profile matching as closely as possible the “thoroughly elastic mind” of Lewis Carroll (186). “But no mathematicians existed today who wrote fairy tales of symbolic logic” (ibid.). Wood, however, plays “fairy chess,” a version of chess following variable rules (199). After studying the research to date, Wood recognizes with equanimity that the equation is “founded on the variability of truths:” “If mutually contradictory truths exist, that proves

they're not contradictory – unless [...] they are, of course. That's possible, too. It's simply fairy chess, applied to the macrocosm" (200). Fairy chess pushes scientific fantasy toward contact with a new logic and thus diverges sharply from the fantasizing going into the Fairyland boxes, terminals that give the interior decoration for the psyche that breaks down in the face of multivalued logic.

"The ordinary technician" faced with "mutually contradictory truths" must seek "refuge in insanity:" "His imagination, his mind, won't be sufficiently elastic to embrace a whole new set of variable truths. It would be like going through the looking glass. Alice did it without trouble, but she was a child. An adult would have gone insane" (169). Thus, by a phrase that is at the same time a citation, Lewis Carroll is summoned as model. A direct hit is unlikely, the technicians aver as they sort through the dossiers, since there are at this time neither mathematicians who write fairy tales nor fairytale writers who make math their avocation. This leads to clarifications that turn around Tolkien's exclusion to exclude in turn the fairy-story from the fantasy that is science fiction.

"Not that Alice is a fairy tale." "What is it? Allegory?"
 "Symbolic logic, beautifully worked out from arbitrarily assigned basics. Pure fantasy – the purest kind." (170)

Fantasy Strikes Back

Other World and Other Time

In the first volume, we already identified the mission that the Inklings C.S. Lewis and Tolkien conceived in the 1930s to write fantasy versions of the science fiction of H.G. Wells. Tolkien, as noted, couldn't finish his assignment to write a fantasy version of the sci-fi conceit of time travel. Instead, he delivered the lecture "On Fairy-Stories," which in print served as the manifesto of the fantasy genre. Tolkien's ambivalence toward Wells in the essay allows a blending of genre borders, when his objection to the machine in *The Time Machine* does not eclipse his admiration for the work as successful fantasy. As we will see, in his fantasy trilogy's revision of science fiction, Lewis doesn't have any difficulty dumping on Wells but runs aground instead in his ambivalent relationship to psychoanalysis (and, in tandem almost, to modern spiritualism).

In *Out of the Silent Planet* (1938), Lewis's protagonist Ransom (conceived as Tolkien's cameo in the trilogy) has read H.G. Wells's *The First Men in the Moon* (another near-miss comp that Tolkien excluded in the process of delineating his new genre in "On Fairy-Stories"). It's a cautionary tale that Ransom heeds. He resolves to take care before confiding to his Martian hosts just how destructive mankind is. But Ransom goes ahead and risks it after all, because the natives are wise.

Ransom's experiences of outer space already turned up the contrast with the control text. All that he encounters "appeared away from the Wellsian fantasies to an earlier, almost an infantile,

complex”¹ and cast off the “nightmare, long engendered in the modern mind by the mythology that follows in the wake of science” (29):

He had read of “Space”: at the back of his thinking for years had lurked the dismal fancy of the black, cold vacuity, the utter deadness, which was supposed to separate the worlds. [...] “Space” seemed a blasphemous libel for this empyrean ocean of radiance in which they swam. (ibid.)

Upon his return to earth, Ransom joins Lewis in studying the old astrology and plotting the universe according to the medieval map of the solar system under a canopy of equidistant stars. “We have found reason to believe that the medieval Platonists were living in the same celestial year as ourselves – in fact, that it began in the twelfth century of our era. [...] The dangers to be feared are not planetary but cosmic, or at least solar, and they are not temporal but eternal” (159–60).

Weston is the scientific mastermind who abducted Ransom to supply the aliens on Mars a human sacrifice, which is how Weston misunderstood the leader’s wish. It is a projective identification that suits Weston’s colonial ambition to mutate white man into pure mind, indeed over-mind, the divinity in a technossecular cosmos. Throughout the “Space Trilogy,” Weston and his cohorts are delegates of the nihilism of science fiction, which is the contemporary byproduct of infernal rebellion against God.

The danger from “Weston” that the spaceship heralded is the spread of White Man’s Burden to other planets. Ransom shook it off through contact with other worlds that refuted the influence of science fiction. “The old dreams which he had brought from earth of some more than American complexity of offices or some engineers’ paradise of vast machines had indeed been long laid aside” (107). But the spaceship also breaks through the ban separating Earth from its medieval cosmic prehistory. It is by this breach that the cosmic spirits or gods are able to watch and do battle with the demonic proponents of a science-fiction universe,

1 C.S. Lewis, *Out of the Silent Planet* (London: Voyager/Harper Collins, 2000), 45. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

first on Venus, then on Earth. For these subsequent installments, Lewis dropped first the machine technology of space ships, then the setting of outer space.

At the close of the first novel in the “Space Trilogy,” then, we learn that now that the spaceship is no more and Weston has absconded with its secret, the prospect of a return engagement lies through the passage of time, which the scholarship undertaken by the characters Ransom and Lewis was opening up: “If there is to be any more space-travelling, it will have to be time-travelling as well” (167). It is by this conclusion that the posthumously published unfinished work, *The Dark Tower*, can be recognized as Lewis’s first try at a sequel. It opens with a remake of the introductory discussion of traveling in time in *The Time Machine* (a pendant, thus, to Ransom’s earlier monologue of disagreement with Wells’s space-travel fiction). But whereas the interlocutors in Wells’s novel consider dislocation in thought brought about through imagining and fantasizing psychological proof enough that we’re already time tripping, Lewis’s version involves a more “scholastic” reflection on memory.

Right from the start, the travel-machine must be ruled out because “the sort of time-travelling you read about in books – time-travelling in the body – is absolutely impossible.”² The material world consists of preexisting recyclables: “All the matter which makes up your body now will be being used for different purposes in 3000. [...] In other words, [...] there are no spare particles to be had in the universe at any given moment” (18). If movement in time is possible, “it must consist in looking at another time while we ourselves remain here – as we look at the stars through telescopes while we remain on the earth” (19). What is needed, then, is a chronoscope.

Remaking the reflections of Wells’s inventor of the time machine, the chronoscope’s inventor recalls the breakthroughs in his studies that led him to reconstruct by his ocular device the “organ of memory and prevision” (24). “The first thing I thought of, when I had abandoned the false trail of a time machine, was the possibility of mystical experience” (19–20). By this possibility

2 C.S. Lewis, *The Dark Tower* (London: Fount, 1983), 17. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

he means to say, however, that the “human mind has a power, under certain conditions, of rising to experience outside the normal time-sequence” (20). But to maintain the allegorical orbit of time travel between science fiction and fantasy, he finds he must nevertheless rein in mysticism: “mystical experience took you out of time altogether – into the timeless, not into other times, which was what I wanted” (ibid.).

The inventor of the chronoscope next reconsiders memory along a line that the Catholic philosopher Heidegger also threw out in “Building, Dwelling, Thinking” (1952) for discarding the nineteenth-century psychological apparatus of perception in favor of memory as a mode of going and being there.³ “On metaphysical grounds there is a good deal to be said for the theory that memory is direct perception of the past [...]. When we remember, we are not simply getting the result of something that goes on inside our heads. We are directly experiencing the past” (20).

The inventor of the chronoscope allows that it is not only our past that we go to in the experience we call memory: “the fragments of our own lives are the only fragments of the past which we recognize. [...] When you get a picture of something that happened ages before your birth, you call it imagination; and in fact most of us at present have no test by which to distinguish real fragments of the past from mental fictions” (21). We are brought before the prospect of the real ongoing past in fantasizing for which *déjà vu* is seen to stand surety (23).

Memories afford proof but also stagger the prospect: “You don’t recognize [...] the past ones and, of course, you recognize none of the future” (22). To live in time the mind works sequentially, testing first the real events for recognition value: “you see the resemblance at once; but if the dream comes first, you just ignore it until it is pointed out to you” (23).

To construct an instrument that bypasses the linearity of recognition, the inventor of the lens called chronoscope copied “the time-organ” (ibid.), which required, however, that the “Z substance,” the fluidum of “the organ of memory and prevision,” be isolated and injected (24). The resulting lens “behaves

3 Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper, 2001), 155.

just like memory – moving from place to place and sometimes jumping, in obedience to laws we don't yet know" (28). Scene changes reminiscent of the jumps of daydreaming, give the long and the short of time (40).

The view afforded by the chronoscope upon a period unknown to archaeology (27) never strays more than ten miles from a tower that is its riveting focus. "That's not very like memory" (28). Or, rather, it's very like traumatic memory. Inside the tower they witness a curious idol: a man with a sting coming out of his forehead. He pierces the men and women who come to him for a session and who then leave the room transformed into "automata" (35).

What the chronoscope-viewers are facing isn't a trick (38) played by an occult or a technical medium (26), nor is it another era. The forbidding twist came when the viewers realized that the chronoscope is two-way: "Stingingman" was taking stock of the three time-viewers one by one (36). Ransom is revising his earlier knee-jerk response that what they were viewing was in hell (38), when he reflects: "it is much too mixed up with us for that. And I've been wondering for several days whether the past and the present and the future are the only times that exist" (49). Mr. Lewis is in the story, too; he is the first person narrator.

It follows that one of the users of the chronoscope sees his double in the tower, which means that the body paradox no longer applies in his case (52). When he next recognizes his own fiancée doubled in the girl brought in for a stinging, he crosses over (55).

The switched double enters the library inside the tower and uncovers the local reversal of our civilization's scientific emphasis: advanced knowledge of time corollary to little knowledge of space. He identifies this view of the cosmos as positively medieval (84). In a book, *Time Angles*, he reads up on the theory of time "attraction": "Any two time-lines approximate in the exact degree to which their material contents are alike" (90). "If two times contained exactly the same distribution of matter, they would become simply the same time" (60). At a certain "moment of intersection the whole series of events in each of these times will then be contemporary to those living in the other" (84).

The tower was recognizable after all. Is it a future replica of the library tower currently under construction in Cambridge (46–47)? The man who already saw that his double is in the other time concludes, instead, “it’s only our own world over again. It only has to be faced, like our own world” (49). What’s current, then, is the datemark, 1938, given only once (60). If two times contain exactly the same distribution of matter, they are simply the same time. Man-eaters have destroyed nearly all the world. Because the island is now under attack, the tower power that makes zombies upholds the island’s war economy against great odds (72).

Ransom hesitates to publish *Out of the Silent Planet* as real-time travel document because of what psychoanalysis could diagnose. Ransom and Lewis decide instead to publish it as fiction, the fantasy revision of Wells’s science fiction. Initiates, they are sure, will be able to discern the fantasy that is true. That Lewis dropped *The Dark Tower* is a given when the switched double, who must rescue his double girlfriend from the stinger growing out of his own forehead, admits that the coupling in the doubling doesn’t escape his notice. He has “read psychoanalysis” (63).

Freud’s science is the double that the fantasy genre must leap away from or otherwise get around. The other near-miss comp that Lewis can mark as both already read and not noteworthy is modern spiritualism. Since modern ghost-seeing resembles the infernal ring around the collaring of all figments of fantasy by Christianization, it can be more readily relegated to a reductive part of what the big picture is all about. But it’s more difficult to shake psychoanalysis, and so Freud’s science has to be held up at the border separating fantasy from its rival genre and inspiration, science fiction.

NICE

Lewis skipped his forbidding tale of time travel for the second volume of his “Space Trilogy” and instead turned the unpublished towering prospect of hell on Earth around the third novel’s datemark, 1945, the dial of its denial. *That Hideous Strength* documents the threat of yet another nihilism pitching so-called

progress on the island that withstood the Nazi menace. The nihilistic organization in Lewis's anti-science-fiction novel goes by the acronym-name NICE (National Institute for Coordinated Experiments). It is a possible model for SPECTRE in the world of James Bond, also to the extent that it encrypts its purpose by manipulating political opposition: "Any opposition to the NICE is represented as a Left racket in the Right papers and a Right racket in the Left papers."⁴

Trailing plagiarism charges of improper burial, Fleming deposited in his organization for manipulation of the cold-war conflict the underworld of the recent past. NICE is interested instead in the alleged gravesite of Merlin, which is on the property that the organization purchases at the start of the novel with the express purpose of establishing its headquarters there. NICE outbids a spiritualist group, treated as a laughable contestant. But the competition also cuts too close to NICE's real purpose, ownership of Merlin's grave and magical corpus.

NICE's threat lies in the attempt to marry technology to the primal time of Christianization still associated with the pagan legacies that King Arthur and his knights of the round table circumscribed. Science fiction is thus recast in terms of new improvements upon the recent past, which are making inroads on fantasy in order to score. Considering the occult tendencies of a number of the Nazi ideologues taken together with the Third Reich's final-victory realization of science fiction, Lewis's composite picture is a tenable portrait of the defeated enemy. The cosmic evil spirit working to re-encrypt earth, which the trip to Mars breached in the first foray of fantasy into science fiction, plots to draw on the Merlin composite of primal time and Christianity to stoke mankind's annihilation through science fiction.

Prior to the closing showdown, Ransom holds down the fort of opposition in a utopian-creaturely estate, which he presides over as the Fisher-King, complete with the wound that is his souvenir from the second novel in the "Space Trilogy," a wound

4 C.S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength*, in *The Space Trilogy* (London: HarperCollins, 2013), 436. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

that won't heal or stop dripping (451). Other than lie low, which is the bulk rate of his activity, Ransom does actively recruit the female protagonist, Jane, for her gift of clairvoyance. Her troubling dreams that are really visions prove that she can see the evil unfold behind the scenes at NICE headquarters. At the same time, Ransom treats Jane, and through her, Mark too, her husband. They were without the shadow of a future.

A nihilistic follower of NICE, who extolls good riddance of organic life through promotion of the brain over less and less body (the future profile that Wells projected into the invading Martians) and independence from reproduction, points out that most English women are frigid: "Nature herself begins to throw away the anachronism" (509). Wishing to discuss her troubling dream of decapitation, which seemed syndicated with a murder case in the news, Jane enters the grounds of Ransom's estate and is immediately transported to associations with Klingsor's garden (Novalis and Wagner) or with the garden in Alice (398). Next, Jane dismisses Freud's male views but then immerses herself in contemplation of the mother's body (399).

First step in her treatment is getting her to see that her dreams are clairvoyant visions: external views or news. At a later turning point, Ransom discusses with Jane how he sees her case and returns to Freud's dismissal: "But don't think I'm talking of Freudian repressions. He knew only half the facts. It isn't a question of inhibitions – inculcated shame – against natural desire. I'm afraid there's no niche in the world for people that won't be either Pagan or Christian" (630). It is by this reproach that knowledge of psychoanalysis is kept from disrupting the destiny of the fantasy genre on Earth.

Soon all the gods whose names are up in the lights of the heavens visit Ransom's home on the eve of NICE's annihilation. Merlin is the conduit for the naked power of the allied heavenly spirits and brings to an end science fiction's reign on Earth, which Ransom summarizes for Merlin's edification.

The poison was brewed in these West lands but it has spat itself everywhere by now. However far you went you would find the machines, the crowded cities, the empty thrones, the false writings, the barren beds: men maddened with false

promises and soured with true miseries, worshipping the iron works of their own hand, cut off from Earth their mother and from the Father in Heaven. (629)

The treatment of Jane intercuts with longer episodes in which her husband Mark keeps trying to fit in at NICE headquarters while the inner circle is watching and keeping him only to bring Jane under NICE control. When he stops short of stepping upon the crucifix placed on the floor (670), he is available for the short-term therapy that Jane, returning home to him, can now administer. Earlier, we are given the inside view of Mark as the standard issue of the secular condition: "It must be remembered that in Mark's mind hardly one rag of noble thought, either Christian or Pagan, had a secure lodging. His education had been neither scientific nor classical – merely 'Modern'" (521). Because Jane has read and dismissed Freud and is open to the truth in fantasizing (she is, after all, clairvoyant), she can be cleansed of her modern frigidity and deputized Mark's sexual healer.

Except for occasional words spoken in the Ransom circle, the discourse that dominates in the novel keeps trying to catch up with the evil spirituality behind NICE, but we are constantly advised that each interpreter and exponent of the movement must fall short of its truth and is, anyway, expendable. Even the talking head that models the new man, lifted from the decapitation that Jane saw in her dream vision, and then reanimated (succeeding where a German attempt with the head of a criminal had failed before), is in truth dead and only a prop used by the evil spirit or "macrobe" that claims Earth as its macrophone for speaking to the doomed followers (531, 591–92). The "hideous length" of the novel is also expendable. Then there is the strength not easily conveyed in language associated with the planet Venus to which Ransom returns at the end of the novel, traveling back to the second or central station of Lewis's "Space Trilogy."

After the probe to Mars via H.G. Wells's moon novel, Lewis wrapped the second installment of his trilogy around the restoration of Venus to a cosmic map of original Christianity, which required going back before the Fall. Instead of interplanetary transport, which had already been checked off, the sequels would follow through on Tolkien's assignment. But the fantasy of time

travel can only be visited in the ruins of *The Dark Tower*, a condemned site of proximity to psychoanalysis. In *Perelandra*, Ransom does travel through space but not in a ship. Instead the spirit divinities of the universe bring him to Venus inside what sure looks like a coffin. If not heaven, then it's paradise and Adam and Eve live there. Ransom was brought to protect the couple against taking the fall that Weston is on a mission to bring about. The dark spirit, whose control, though breached by the voyage to Mars, still encircles planet Earth, possessed Weston. Although embedded in the fantasy world of no place, no time, what does happen is that Ransom kills Weston. It's OK because, one, the victim was possessed by the evil spirit and, two, Ransom is given license to kill by the divinity's literal interpretation of his name: the payment that is due. The third novel is the world theater in which this conflict can be reprised and redeemed.

Suicide Planet

Sometimes a work of fantasy is the vehicle for the negative theology of nihilism directed against a particular future belonging to science fiction. In *Melancholia* (2011), Lars Von Trier rolls back Andrei Tarkovsky's 1972 revalorizing adaptation of the concluding affirmation of Lem's novel and projects instead a Wagnerian setting of twilight. The melancholic stars of Von Trier's fantasy space opera – Justine, the rogue planet named Melancholia, and the film containing the mood swings and orbits – take a swipe at the utopian agenda of science fiction. Justine defines herself as someone who “knows things.” She knows that the near miss or fly-by, the alleged course of a gaseous planet plummeting toward Earth, will be in fact a direct hit. She also knows that there is no life on other planets, in other galaxies, no other life *tout court*. Human existence, which she says is evil, stops here.

Suicidality, says Melanie Klein, knows a few variations on its underlying eviction of the bad from the good. In the scenario that fits Justine,

the subject hates not only his ‘bad’ objects, but his id as well and that vehemently. In committing suicide, his purpose may be to make a clean breach in his relation to the outside

world because he desires to rid some real object – or the ‘good’ object which that whole world represents and which the ego is identified with – of himself or of that part of his ego which is identified with his bad objects and his id.⁵

The footnote Klein drops here ties these reasons, given in object-relations terms, to the “state of mind” explored by Freud, in which the melancholic “breaks off all relations with the external world.”⁶

Melancholia ensconces Pieter Brueghel the Elder’s *Hunters in the Snow* (1565) like an epigraph to the end of the world. Inside the outer space station in Tarkovsky’s *Solaris* (1972), the paintings of the months were souvenirs of Earth, continuity shots with the country estate the protagonist called home, which his father modeled after his own father’s home. That the house of the father is a reconstruction doesn’t compromise transmission or tradition. It offers a transference correlative to the readiness of the cosmonauts to receive the changes on the surface of the planet Solaris as mimicry signaling communication and inheritance. However, it remains undecidable whether the planet Solaris is alien existence or, if so, how would one know, since contact cannot after all be convincingly made or exchanged.

In Lem’s 1961 novel and in Tarkovsky’s adaptation, the planet is tested as something analogous to artificial intelligence that in turn tests the human subjects by fulfilling their hidden wishes. The planet delivers the protagonist’s lost true love, Hari, who committed suicide years back. But the double lacks a historical sense of her life or an anticipation of death. She returns with just enough memory to recognize that she or their life together can’t be real, which suffices to restart the depression. She embodies the moment before her suicide, the stuck place of his grief that he wants to leave behind.

After bashing against the obstacle to his conviction that dead is better – even after he murders the Hari-double’s current

5 Melanie Klein, “A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive States,” in *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works: 1921–1945* (New York: The Free Press, 1975), 276.

6 Ibid.

incarnation, another one is waiting in the wings to start over anew in the same nadir of depression – the protagonist prefers to interpret the planet’s steadfast fulfillment of his wish, admitting no wariness or second thoughts, as a lesson in mourning he must take down. He adapts to the double Hari, who is always back without knowing that she went or that he wished her gone. But then, the scientist colleagues in the Solaris space station, also beset by the doubling fulfillment of their wishes, figure out how to extinguish the comeback capacity of the doubles. Hari’s final second death leaves her survivor nothing, but in this clearing, he comes to affirm his own death, an avowal that concludes the novel.

Tarkovsky’s film adaptation doesn’t go there, but adds instead an epilogue that builds on the memory of the father deposited in the Brueghel paintings. At the end of the film, the cosmonaut, whose mission was identified from the start as spanning the period of time in which, in the meantime, his father will have departed, is back with his father in the house of the fathers. The rain falls inside the house and the hunting in the painting releases the benign haunting contact with the dead father, which Von Trier’s *Melancholia* wipes away.

Justine proves to her sister Claire that she knows things by correctly guessing the number of beans in a jar, a party game at Justine’s wedding. Claire, the wedding planner, is the parentified child and Justine the identified patient in a family system hosting only dysfunctions. Like Clara in E.T.A. Hoffmann’s “The Sandman,” Claire holds to the clear text of quick fixes by the ego in charge of the self.⁷ The family estate where Justine’s wedding is being celebrated is lodged on a golf course, its allegorical significance illuminated by the legend and hallucinations of a nineteenth hole.

Where there is a game, there is an outside chance of good fortune, like a hole-in-one, which is underscored whenever a

7 See Friedrich Kittler, “Das Phantom unseres Ichs’ und die Literaturpsychologie: E.T.A. Hoffmann – Freud – Lacan,” in *Urszenen. Literaturwissenschaft als Diskursanalyse und Diskurskritik*, ed. F.A. Kittler and H. Turk (Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 1977), 139–66.

bet is placed on the outcome. But Justine, who knows things, is the other hole-in-one that the family system denies by betting on a betterment outcome. That the English “wedding” is etymologically related to the German word *Wette* names the bet that marriage always makes and in which it must lie. In the course of the festivities on screen, Claire and Justine’s narcissistic father calls each of the young women he grabs by the name Betty. Claire leads the family system to place the “bet” inside “wedding” on Justine’s psychic improvement.

In suspense between her husband’s belief in the near miss of the rogue planet’s itinerary and her sister’s certainty that the end is near, Claire turns to the digital portal and consults the archive. In the recycling of always the same inscrutable reports on a current event and entry, Claire recognizes the defensive neutralization of knowledge on the Web, in other words, the truth of Justine’s knowing denunciation of the media.

The drag of betting on what people want is alleviated and carried toward fulfillment by the exceptional tagline alone, which was oracle Justine’s specialty. Because she can summon such slogans, she was able to get ahead in the advertising business, which at her wedding, however, she denounces as “nothing” and quits. Getting a job and going out on a date are the signal accomplishments of the teenager, which are inflated on the night that’s the night into Justine’s all-out reckoning with the media and the meaning of her life.

Friedrich Schiller concludes the contest of distinction in his essay “On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry” with a warning that fits Justine’s precognition of her crash, which is projected large in *Melancholia*. Faux idealism is terrible, Schiller sets down in the final paragraph, and the proof is the fantast. In a whim, he leaves nature behind to yield without inhibition to the willfulness of desires and the moods of the imagination. Because this excess is free rather than natural and belongs to an inclination that in the infinite is perfectible, the fantast must plummet endlessly in a bottomless depth and can end only in utter devastation.

Justine’s last copywriting assignment was to find the tagline for marketing a campaign that used a facsimile of another Brueghel work, *The Land of Cogaingne* (1567). The nephew of her boss is on assignment to help, somehow, with Justine’s delivery

of the line. Instead she fucks him out in the open and ends her brand-new marriage. Every upbeat, the betting of marriage or the slogan in public relations, is now nothing to Justine. Her sense of compromise and corruption is on the rise and engulfs the earth.

At the digital portal to the media upbeat, it is Claire's turn to catch the fire of this film and turn away from the social contract of journalism. When she types in the metaphysical password "Death," she transforms the search into a quest. The screen-thin archive swings open to Wagnerian fantasy, to the "dance of death," the *Liebested* between two planets.

When Claire tries going out with dignity – toasting in affirmation of life to the music of Beethoven – Justine scatters the arrangement and sentiment. The director's inspiration for the film was his psychiatrist's one memorable comment while treating him for depression, namely that the depressed find their calm before the storm of catastrophe. Justine finds an I in the storm of the coming apocalypse and enjoys a first: her calming immersion in libido, which she enacts by stripping down to catch the rays of Melancholia at night, the night of nothingness, in which she collects herself, another first. Now her empathy is also collected, focused, not scatter-shot-through with self-destruction. She not only promises fantasy comfort to her young nephew but now can also deliver. Stalwart, she leads her sister and nephew inside the tent of animism – reentering child's play and offering the illusion of safety. She can lie to them without feeling compromised.

Impossible Planet

Benjamin's view of allegory as originally rolling in by the Christian demonization of the corpus of the pagan past can be seen to throw a high beam on an occlusion that cannot be undone. That Venus in the heavens was transformed into the original allegorical sign, Lucifer, goes beyond demonization. To touch both stars bright behind the first star you see tonight renews vows with the Devil and pushes any "other story" into the light of Christianity, the night of nihilism.

Allegory was thus first used to revise the evidence of classical antiquity. The naked pagan body was transferred to the account of the creature, with the Devil at the front of the line. "This is

the basis [...] for the survival of fabulous creatures like the faun, centaur, siren and harpy as allegorical figures in the circle of Christian hell.”⁸

At the close of *Origin of the German Mourning Play*, Benjamin introduced the surprise twist (and twist-off) that there is a half-life to the secular mode of allegorical reading, which lies in allegory’s origin. Through the Devil, original allegory’s poster boy, Benjamin projects a turn or return that, by restoring the Christian context, would spell the end of secular allegory. “Allegory, of course, thereby loses everything that was most peculiar to it; the secret, privileged knowledge, the arbitrary rule in the realm of dead objects, the supposed infinity of a world without hope. All this vanishes with this one about-turn.”⁹

Benjamin allows that in a secular setting the abyssal contemplation of evil can trigger the return. I followed this out in *The Psycho Records*. In a split-off corner of mass psychology, the Psycho Effect coursing through countless slasher films had for decades denied and defied the ongoing failure in the interpretation of psychopathic violence. But upon conclusion of the termination phase of the cathartic film therapy, we witnessed the change come over the postmodern allegory of horror B-pictures, notably in the *Saw* franchise. Devilish instruction in and testing of psychopathic survival brought psycho violence back, but to an infernally charged screen that can no longer count as secular.

That the secular setting of inquiry into violence is where the Devil returns means, from the fantasy perspective, that the Prince of Darkness is at home there. In the work of fantasy, the Devil never went away, although he is summoned indirectly from industrial–infernal underworlds on Earth reaching back through the uncanny threshold of the Enlightenment and its classical antiquity. Assembly lines of countless zombie soldiers wage total wars of psychopathic violence, against which the human and supernatural alliance prevails. By the relocation of hell to the industrial wastelands associated with science fiction, fantasy can

8 Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London/New York: Verso, 1998), 226. I use a more literal translation of the German title: *Origin of the German Mourning Play*.

9 *Ibid.*, 232.

affirm and draw on the era of Christianization of non-classical heathen Europe. The clearing in which northern paganism and Christianity communicate clears away all other datemarks.

On the map of science fiction, where we tend to find endo-psychic perception writ large, the planet Venus seems to be without signifying pattern, in contradistinction to the ways in which Mars or the moon have been retrofitted to the projection of outer space. There are comps out there in the receiving area of “Venus,” notably the reflections of Henry Adams, Gilles Deleuze, and Aby Warburg on aspects of the goddess’s representation, but they all skirt a significant lack of ready-made or unconscious genealogical connection.

Farewell Fantastic Venus! A History of the Planet Venus in Fact and Fiction, which Brian Aldiss edited, gives an exhaustive sampling of the slim pickings in the science fiction genre. Although not every entry was scoured for the Aldiss anthology, the examples that remain still strain by their outsider status. Was it on a dare, then, that A.E. van Vogt in *The World of Null-A* selected Venus, transformed into a Canadian big-tree version of California, as the “other coast” on which the game machine society on earth could fully realize an experimental postmachinic – Anti-Aristotelian – society and mindset? Van Vogt, who wasn’t a stranger to the fantasy genre, deploys his science fiction to push aside the limit concepts of science fiction and enter the other coast of wish fulfillment. There is also in every clearing that van Vogt makes the residual temporal paradox of a crypt.

The Null-A-trained population on Venus is tested, when an overwhelming imperialist foe invades and occupies the planet. The population knows to abandon its ranks and engage instead in all-out guerrilla warfare waged in darkness against the enemy camps, which they seize together with the military equipment: “no one expected unarmed hordes to attack one of the best equipped armies in the galaxy.”¹⁰ The Venusians triumph by going against the imperial strategy: “Conquered people or nations, even whole planetary groups, remain at home and the great mass always submits. They may hate the conqueror for a

10 A.E. van Vogt, *The World of Null-A* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 2002), 226. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

few generations, but if the propaganda is handled right, soon they take pride in their membership in a great empire” (228). What was thrown into the scale was the universal government’s prohibition against genocide. The rogue aggressors began tipping this scale by the casualties of the guerrilla warriors, which exceeded what the quick conquest would have exacted. If genocide is proved against a military power, then its government “is declared outlaw, and all those responsible have to be delivered to the League for trial and execution, if convicted. An automatic state of war exists until the terms have been carried out” (229). The blip on the screen of wars Van Vogt has known and foreseen attends this rare use of Venus as sci-fi accessory.

Venus has been available for filming the contest between the B-genres, but with fantasy typically in the ascendant. In *Have Rocket – Will Travel* (1959), the Three Stooges find on Venus a talking unicorn and a giant fire-breathing tarantula, as well as, however, an alien computer that destroyed intelligent life on the planet and now creates three evil duplicates of the brothers who are stooges for Freud’s second system: Larry the ego, Curly the id, and Moe the superego. *Masters of Venus* (1962), in which two children accidentally take off into space, identifies the inhabitants of the outer planet as descended from the lost city of Atlantis. But on screen Venus can also be an accident waiting to happen for which neither genre was prepared.

By its title a 1960 East German and Polish coproduction would seem to fold out of *The Silent Planet*. But the near-future trip to outer space in *Der schweigende Stern* (a.k.a. *First Spaceship on Venus*) lands on the impossible planet (and not on Mars as long planned) because Venus is the return address of an extraterrestrial message recently discovered (in 1985) on a spool ensconced in a rock fragment. The world’s largest computer is still working on the spool’s decipherment, but in the meantime the globally integrated crew (Asians, Africans, and white ethnicities from Europe and America) travels to Venus to establish contact with the sender. The prehistory and the preparations are framed by the international press coverage that broadcasts everything we see until take off, which leaves the reporters behind wearing sunglasses.

The main change that the director, Kurt Maetzig, introduced into Lem's "The Astronaut," which the film adapts, is the deferral of the decoding of what's on the spool, which allows the wish to contact intelligent alien life to go for fulfillment in the spirit of optimism and one-world cooperation. Before they land, however, the spool stands deciphered and revealed. It is the Venusian plan for an attack that would exterminate Earth's population. The crew, no longer under the frame of press coverage, decides not to release this news; the hysteria back on Earth would spread like ignorance. "Humanity survived the atomic bomb through knowledge."

On Venus, the international crew is treated to a set like an Yves Tanguy painting. When a trap is accidentally sprung, a horde of alien-abstract insects bounces up and down. The insects are artificial, like in Ernst Jünger's one bona fide science fiction, *Gläserne Bienen* (*Glass Bees*, 1957). They are gadgets used for recording, while the hole in the trap is their archive. Upon entering the archive, crew members discover that there was on Venus a catastrophe beyond their powers of comprehension. While the astronauts explore the black diamonds that could be buildings of some sort, or mountains, or the nerve centers of Venus, a blob emerges and comes after them. "Don't shoot, don't shoot," the Japanese physician warns. Once shot at, however, the blob withdraws.

They discover the model used for planning the atomic attack in what must have been the operational headquarters. They see the shadows on the wall of their extinct Venusian hosts who were outlined at the instant they were hit by the blast. "Now that's all that's left, their shadows," says the Japanese physician. That she lost her husband recently on another expedition we learn soon after takeoff. She recognizes the site of his demise on the moon just as they are whizzing past it. It is through her grief-stuck sensibility that the others come to entertain empathy with the extinct Venusians. The traumatic history that overlaps with this science fiction is not addressed but rather represented both by the Japanese figure of empathy and the "knowledge" that is a given of the world's survival. She was right about leaving the blob alone: the ray gun has started an atomic chain reaction that will really slime them big time.

It turns out the Venusian scientists not only could change matter into energy but they could also – “they were ahead of us, we have to acknowledge that” – reverse the process. Now it’s time to catch up with this reversal capacity of the extinct scientists. The weapon, which is still aimed at Earth, can be stopped – whereupon, however, the spaceship, *Cosmostrator*, will be hurled into space. Even an East German movie cannot charge the United States with a crime that belongs to a context that must be shared, like the knowledge about atomic weapons that now protects the Earth. That’s why all those who carried the Venusian total war effort are extinct, because they’re the Germans in the recent past who were aiming to win the shootout. We have to acknowledge that they might have pulled it off.

Once we’ve gone the distance that defines American science fiction according to Günther, the outer planets have been left behind but not their allegorical attributes. It’s not so much that *Altair 4* in *Forbidden Planet* is or might as well be Venus, but the crypt that the planet carries of the extinguished Krell civilization belabors the ultimate Venus cognate, *Wunsch* or wish. Under the ban of interdiction the 1956 film demarcates the outer limit of science fiction within the suicidality, impossibility, and keeping silent of planet wish fantasy.

Two thousand centuries ago the Krells were “a million years ahead of mankind,” so ahead they’re long dead. But even the dead plan ahead by enhancing the brains of the living. The original working title of the film was *Fatal Planet*. Morbius, the sole survivor of the original group of colonists who traveled from earth to *Altair 4*, enhanced his brain through a Krell device he calls the “plastic educator,” which corresponds, the philologist advises the visiting astronauts, to “finger painting in our kindergartens.” If these devices fit the Krell children we know that we are only remotely related. The strap-on helmet admits a head many times larger than that of a human adult. By the study of the Krell language and the plastic educator’s upgrade of his IQ, Morbius gained access to a technology that augmented or replaced reality through realization of wishes and thoughts. One astronaut visiting the crypt of Krell technology comments: “Aladdin’s Lamp in a science lab!”

While the Morbius home is SF modernist, the backyard, his daughter Alta's garden, is a fantasy utopia inhabited by deer and a tiger, her "friends." Morbius, who married on the voyage to Altair 4 where Alta was born, knows that the Krells visited Earth before the origin of man and brought back plants and creatures as souvenirs, which evolved into fantasy landscaping and fantasy tamed animals. The garden blends other boundaries closer to home. It recycles props from the village of the Munchkins on the same stage used for *The Wizard of Oz*.

Like the penthouse-level city (complete with pleasure garden) in *Metropolis*, Morbius's fantasy home towers above an underworld of still animate technology (but sans the zombie workers of Lang's breakthrough film). The benign denial of the encrypted technology is Robby the Robot. It wasn't until there was HAL in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* that the uncanny inheritance of German science fiction began to compute. HAL, I pointed out in *Germany: A Science Fiction*, encrypts "Hel," the dead wife and mother haunting a doubly double robot in *Metropolis*.

When we first meet Robby – the robot arrives as a welcome committee of one in a space car – one of the astronauts immediately under the robot's care compares Robby to a "mother." The Earth-bound question raised by the robot's gender just doesn't apply, "is completely without meaning," as Robby advises, just as it wouldn't signify in regard to the early mother. But the astronauts are persistent. When on a tour of his home Morbius demonstrates the disposal service inside the robot, the astronauts hail Robby and the "disintegrator beam" as "a housewife's dream."

Although, as the visiting astronauts recognize, the robot is already "beyond the abilities of Earth's scientists," Morbius dismisses as "parlor magic" his feat of building Robby in consideration of all that the alien technology can in fact accomplish. It follows that Morbius must instruct his visitors in the moral law of robotics. Even when the creator commands the robot to fire at the visitors, Robby demonstrates (to the point of blowing all fuses) the built-in inhibition that prevents any harm coming to rational beings. Morbius added to the Krell technology of wish fulfillment what was otherwise lacking: the fiat of philosophical

ethics. The conscience he gave away in deserting to the Krells he gave to Robby for safe keeping.

The astronaut scientist decides to have a go at the Krell IQ booster. Before he dies of the experiment, he reveals the cause of the extinction of the Krells. He too has to think back to the past of his own civilization to designate what wasn't known: the id, an "obsolete" term from the old psychoanalytic lexicon. It was "once used to describe the elementary basis of the subconscious mind." In pursuing creation by thought alone, the Krells, like their heir Morbius, forgot the unconscious wishes of the id.

Morbius takes a group of astronauts on a tour of the subterranean remainder of Krell civilization and we witness what was for a long time to come the special effects standard for many SF films that followed. On the low road, the uniforms of the astronauts were reused in *Queen of Outer Space*; on the higher road, the influence extends through *Star Trek* to *Star Wars*. "Prepare your minds for a new scale of scientific values," Morbius advises the astronauts. They visit a vast industrial-looking interior of countless vertiginous levels across matching shafts. It counts as a single machine, a veritable *Phantasiermaschine* that still runs and repairs itself.

All along there was on Altair 4, above the underground remains of an extinct civilization, an "unseen planetary force" to which the other colonists, who were pressing to return to Earth, succumbed twenty years ago. Only Morbius and his wife were "immune" by dint of their resolve to stay on the planet. His wife then died after the catastrophe, but of "natural causes." This force has not again manifested itself, although Morbius has seen it in his nightmares.

Forbidden Planet was the first film to use an all-electronic score, introducing difficulties in separating sound effects and score in the evaluation of SF movies, which happened to *Arrival*. With impossible possibilities of wish fantasy in the ascendant special effects arise at the border to invisibility. At one point, a camera POV on an audio track of heavy breathing represents the destructive planetary force. The camera steps back to watch the invisible monster destroy a transmitter visualized by the animation effects imagineered by a specialist on loan from Disney. The look of the threat is further indicated by traces that are hard to

reconstruct. The near misses of visualization set off by the defensive electric force field that the astronauts set up around their camp suggest a foe the size of a house. When a plaster model is made of its footprint it resembles an enormous talon, like that of “some impossible tree sloth.” The scientist on board concludes that such a creature runs counter to any known law of evolutionary adaptation.

Morbius knows that “man is unfit as yet to receive such power” as stands behind the science of the Krells, but still believes that he is in control and by his enhanced brain power can mediate the greater knowledge, and might even, he allows, send portions back to Earth on a schedule. Lots of red flags have gone up and the captain of the investigating astronauts won’t cut a deal with a rogue colonist.

Morbius and his daughter arrive at the camp wary of danger. The commander wonders how he knew? “I seem to visualize it. Call it premonition.” Call it the death wish. Morbius laments: “it’s started again.” We’re the next to last to know. We see Morbius asleep and, when he awakes, we see that the renewed attack upon the astronaut camp immediately stops. At the same time, we learn that Alta also had a terrible dream, which begins to get a rise out of her father’s consciousness. There is no natural death in the precincts of wishing, certainly not for mourners. The apparent continuity error in the concise history of the colony throws a high beam. The id monster, Morbius’s double, all along allowed the scholar, like Victor Frankenstein, to disavow that the remote control he enjoyed over separation and loss ran aground in his own death wishing. When it’s evident that the monster of his unconscious now endangers his daughter, Morbius, the sole heir to the alien civilization, decides to swap the distinction of the Krell inheritance for its extinction.

The first symptom of the tension mounting with the sexual attraction between the astronauts and Morbius’s daughter Alta becomes manifest in the fantasy garden. While Alta is well versed in the “theory” of sex, the commander suggests that practice makes perfect, whereupon they kiss. The pet tiger becomes wild and dangerous – “he didn’t recognize me,” she laments – and interrupts the outsider’s courtship. The commander is amazed that she really doesn’t know why the tiger turned. But it wasn’t

the tiger's jealousy. During Morbius's first demonstration of the special effects that the Krell wish factory can produce, he started with a familiar subject. He conjured a miniature 3D hologram-like image of his daughter: "alive because she's alive in my mind." It's when he realizes that all the goners in the colony died because they were dead in his mind that he decides that the planet together with its trove must pass out of history. But rather than simply go away upon the Krypton-like explosion, the impossible possibility of the Krell civilization has gone back inside the other factory.

Making the Least Last

For his Venus novel, Lewis credited the inspiration of an episode in the 1930 novel *First and Last Men* by Olaf Stapledon, which went to Venus to spin the rise and fall of an etherial fantasy estate. Lewis moreover identified Stapledon's 1937 novel *Star Maker* as his impetus for writing the whole trilogy. That all science-fiction elements in the first novel in the "Space Trilogy" are reabsorbed and liquidated in the fantasy soup of *Perelandra* leaves Wells behind. Stapledon's cosmic combo of fantasy and science fiction cut so close to Lewis's pursuit of fantasy proper – but no vicar, I mean no cigar. Stapledon was a philosopher by training and transported his protagonist across space and time experimentally by all the facets or faculties of the imagination in a row: will, wish, fantasy.

First and Last Men was a hybrid that ran closer to science fiction by specializing in prediction. The subtitle announces *A Story of the Near and Far Future*. But in a 1930 narrative composed as a future history, the fact that Stapledon's predictions of the near future are so far off makes the book almost unreadable. In his 1937 novel, therefore, Stapledon makes amends when the protagonist, returning to the present-going-on-recent-past from his immeasurable flight across space and time and around the cosmos, gradually descends over Europe and catches sight of "the flood-lit Führer."¹¹ By historicizing the *Zeitmarke* of his fantasy-

11 Olaf Stapledon, *Star Maker* (London: Gollancz, 1999), 251. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

driven exploration of the cosmos, Stapledon's protagonist sees correctly that coming soon on "the whole planet" there will be a showdown between "two cosmical antagonists, two spirits" (253). This sets a precedent for the conclusion of Lewis's trilogy, in which the datemarked showdown, however, is fulfilled in the future between science fiction and fantasy.

At the end of *Star Maker*, the protagonist is brought back home to responsibility. The ambivalence in marriage, which was the psychic counterpart to our immunity from decay while yet alive on which Wells's *The War of the Worlds* concludes, is Stapledon's starting point. (John Wyndham, too, tended to make his departure from Wells into the same round trip of marriage therapy.) The seven-year itch crosses the mind of Stapledon's protagonist while he's out for a walk. He looks back at his home and environs, a view soon augmented by his imagination until it extends beyond the horizon line. In no time, he is soaring through space with stopovers at all the inhabited planets where as a "disembodied viewpoint" (a cinematic POV) he is "able to observe without being observed" (23). Fantasying (stretching from the wish to escape the ambivalence-itch to the good will to go to school in the universe) sends him flying, while the "sustaining motive" of his "pilgrimage" was "the hunger which formerly drove men on Earth in search of God" (89). Lewis removed "formerly drove" from the sentence to send Ransom (Tolkien) to attend the heavenly academy already on the map of the middle ages.

Stapledon's protagonist can observe the psychic reality of an individual alien. "I discovered the power of entering into his mind, of seeing through his eyes, sensing through all his sense organs, perceiving the world just as he perceived it, and following much of his thought and his emotional life" (24). Does "much of" stop short of his daydreams? "Psychical attraction" soon takes over where "the method of disembodied flight" by its randomness, its freedom only of space and not of time, kept falling short.

To make it to the next class, he must land in another of the few and far between inhabited planetary systems (63-64).

This method depended on the imaginative reach of our own minds. At first, when our imaginative power was strictly limited by experience of our own worlds, we could make contact only with worlds closely akin to our own. [...] Further, in each world that we visited we sought out a new collaborator, to give us insight into his world and to extend our imaginative reach for further exploration of the galaxy. This ‘snowball’ method by which our company was increased was of great importance, since it magnified our powers. (64)

The magnified powers aim to get past the recognition values of anthropomorphism. The novel expands upon the trajectory of animism long gone to reach to the planets and stars, which are lifeforms, too, and whose motility and language bear comparison with music and dance. Once the powers of attraction that move the protagonist and his colleagues around space and time begin rearranging the planets, the stars react by taking themselves out in explosions that threaten the cosmos. The planets and the stars must instead learn to communicate in a manner comparable to telepathy.

No one in the company of observers is transcendent until the protagonist leaves the group or absorbs it and becomes the cosmos, in which capacity he can encounter the creator, the Star Maker. Now it’s not just the use of the past tense but, in addition, the narcissism of near misses that separates Stapledon and Lewis. The cosmos of space and time through which psychic attraction transports Stapledon’s protagonist is reduced on any given planet to a recycling of always the same rise and fall of civilization, which fits back inside developmental stages. “We were inclined to think of the psychological crises of the waking worlds as being the difficult passage from adolescence to maturity” (132). Thus, once he’s up for it by *being* the cosmos, he sees the divinity, too, *developing* in his capacity as creator.

Prompted by his overview of an earlier cosmos, which “was somewhat reminiscent of Christian orthodoxy,” he wonders “how could the Star Maker, even in his immaturity, condemn his creatures to agony for the weakness that he himself had allotted to them” (235). Would the Star Maker outgrow the immaturity of this cruel streak? No. In “tormenting his creatures,” Star

Maker “did but torment himself in the course of his adventure of self-expression” (236). In each creation, evil brings spiritual sensibility and intelligence into conflict. Creation reaches midlife crisis by the will to power split off from wishing well. However, adolescent fantasizing on its own is another condemned site: “Yet sensibility itself, when it rejected intellectual criticism and the claims of daily life, would be smothered in dreams” (238).

Among Stapledon’s early publications were studies in philosophical ethics, the field in which he earned his doctorate. In his 1939 summary *Philosophy and Living*, Stapledon situates Kant’s contribution. “He even went so far as to say that a ‘good’ act done with pleasure was not really a *morally* good act at all, since a morally good act must have no motive but the goodness of the act itself. There is nothing good, he said, but a good will.”¹² But Stapledon criticizes the categorical imperative that tests the goodness of an act by making it a universal law. The defective cornerstone is lying, which under certain circumstances might count as morally right. “Kant apparently failed to see that *what* I can and cannot will to become a universal law depends in the last resort not on sheer rationality but on my active dispositions and needs” (179).

Stapledon’s cosmology in *The Star Maker* aligns the divinity’s active dispositions and needs, the Star Maker’s passion of creation, with a cruel streak that Kant’s categorical imperative can be seen to contain. In “Das ökonomische Problem des Masochismus” (“The Economic Problem of Masochism,” 1924), Freud declares the categorical imperative to be the direct heir to the Oedipus complex.¹³ In *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (*Beyond Good and Evil*, 1886), Friedrich Nietzsche reads in morals a sign language of affects disclosing tyranny against nature and reason,

12 Olaf Stapledon, *Philosophy and Living*, vol. 1 (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1939), 178. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

13 Sigmund Freud, “The Economic Problem of Masochism (1924),” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XIX (1923–1925): The Ego and the Id and Other Works*, ed. and trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), 167.

which, he adds, doesn't argue against them. However, dossiers must be kept on those who contributed to philosophical ethics, like Kant, whose categorical imperative shows that he valued his excitement over his own ability to obey.¹⁴

In the course of falling short so spectacularly in his predictions of the near future in *Last and First Men*, Stapledon also made Venus the seat in the far future of an era of human evolution that even exceeded the time spent on Earth. Radio and artificial flight are the recognizable highpoints of human civilization that in Stapledon's style of forecast history, as vast as outer space, recycle through decline and peristalsis. Another standard rate of change is telepathy, which however has a history specific to Martian rule on Earth. In the distant future, Wells's forecast of World War One is reversed and Mars is given for a time our place in the sun. When the Martian units are finally driven off our planet, we are able and willing to hold onto their telepathy.¹⁵ But then, later on in the future, life on Earth is about to blow out and mankind decides to settle on Venus.

Since the intelligent marine lifeforms of the wet planet won't cooperate, they are blown away. The settlers are soon beset by metabolic disorders, ranging from rejection of the foreign body of telepathy to profound melancholic dyspepsia over "the deep-seated, unreasoning sense of guilt produced by the extermination of the Venerians" (256). The next species on the future time chart regains "a certain mental stability, at the expense of its faculty of 'telepathy'" (257). But then out of fascination with the idea of flight the Seventh Men native to Venus evolve into birdlike "pygmies" thoroughly "organized for flight" (259). "The social order of the Seventh Men was in essence neither utilitarian, nor humanistic, nor religious, but aesthetic" (264). When the

14 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse, Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 5, eds. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1980), 107–10. Lacan ran with the Freudian Kant, running it into the grounding of Hegelianism in his "Kant with Sade," in *Écrits*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006), 645–68.

15 Olaf Stapledon, *First and Last Men* (London: Penguin 1987), 256. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

aesthetic order goes into decline, the “bat-like” humans, beset by a new race of pedestrians dedicated to science, elect to fly in species formation into a volcano. They fulfill one sage’s counsel during the ascent of their civilization that they eschew “personal immortality,” which would be “as tedious as an endless song” or melody (265). “The lovely flame, of which we all are members, must die, he said, must die; for without death she would fall short of beauty” (265).

Venus Libitina

In *Queen of Outer Space* (1956), the leader of the glamazons on Venus, like all the women comprising her inner circle, wears a mask. The astronauts who landed by accident on planet fantasy don’t know that she’s a victim disfigured by atomic war. But when she removes the mask no more questions need be asked why she wants to destroy mankind. The masked *vanitas* image on screen gestures toward the Venus Libitina, the marriage in classical lore of the ancient goddess of funerals (Libitina) with Venus, which first admitted another side of beauty: its decaying corpse or half-life. By the strict dissociation between benign and malignant fulfillments of the wish, Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* straddles both sides of Venus. Schreber circumvents the uncanny turning point of narcissistic wishing and doubling at the highpoint of his delusion. In *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, the only peep show in town – also because it coincides with the divine perspective, which is otherwise focused on corpses – is the psycho posing or “picturing” himself as a sculpted Venus on the way to becoming the technobride of replicational sex. “I venture to assert flatly that anybody who sees me standing in front of a mirror with the upper part of my body naked would get the undoubted *impression of a female torso*.”¹⁶

In 1968, George Romero’s *Night of the Living Dead* makes a passing reference to the place of Venus in the firmament, which reopens a reading of the obstacle course binding us to and

16 Daniel Paul Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, eds. and trans. Ida Macalpine and Richard A. Hunter (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 207.

banning the impossible planet. Venus was the intended goal of the probe that instead by its radioactive recoil jumpstarted the decaying recently dead on Earth. Around the seemingly realized utopias of primary narcissism in classical antiquity, the uncanny presses upon a border that yields a caption of legibility. The Lamiae and Striges were ghoulish reversals of mothering (found sucking the lifeblood from babies) filling in for what the idealism or eternal youth of the sculpted human form split off: reproduction and death.

At this border, Venus undergoes a series of sub-specializations involving the matrimonial mystery of gender difference. On the meaning of Venus there's little to read up on in *Perelandra*; the entirety of *That Hideous Strength*, however, inhabits the main caption of the goddess's significance. The first word of the third novel, the first word to follow the conclusion of *Perelandra*, is "matrimony."

Already at her Olympian address, Venus starred in marriage and remarriage episodes, now with Mars, now with Vulcan, comprising a virtual sitcom of couples counseling. As we saw in the first volume, touching on the *venus barbata* with Benjamin writing on Gottfried Keller, the goddess as bearded lady originated in rituals of sex change or exchange, in which a profound balance between the sexes beckoned, and which the Argive women performed in the context of the wedding ceremony. An age-old patriarchal emblem, the beard entered the vernacular in the UK to signify a wife of convenience covering her husband's homosexuality. Both in English and German, the word has been used for pubic hair, especially on a woman. According to Freud the primal scenario for the invention of weaving was woman plaiting her pubic hair into a phallus.¹⁷ Although Freud's consequent concession that weaving was woman's one contribution to prosthetic technicity continues to cause consternation, the connection he put through goes to the very art of his own produc-

17 Sigmund Freud, "Femininity," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXII (1932–1936): New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis and Other Works*, ed. and trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1964), 132.

tion. Add unweaving to the weaving and we arrive at Penelope's work of unmourning extending the time before substitution and second death.

Weaving and tying the knot were conjoined when the super-heroic adventures of Wonder Woman, a.k.a. Princess Diana of the Amazon nation, commenced in 1941. Aphrodite created the Amazons to be superhuman (in other words, stronger than men) to counter Ares' ruling that men should command women as their slaves. When Queen Hyppolyte, the mother of Wonder Woman, dropped her magic girdle so Hercules could make love not war, the Amazons were bound in slavery. Aphrodite came to the rescue and then led them off the map of antiquity to Paradise Island, where she grounded them. What is enforced by the purview and curfew keeping men off the island is the law prohibiting marriage.

When Steve Trevor crash-landed his aircraft onto the beach at Paradise Island in 1941, the ensuing love interest organized the relationship between Wonder Woman and the outside world. Aphrodite had decided that World War Two was being waged between war and love. With the triumph of the United States, love would prevail on Earth.

While Trevor was recovering on the island, the queen mother held a tournament to select the worthiest Amazon for the mission of returning Trevor to the good fight. At the end of the contest, it was her own daughter (who had enrolled incognito against the queen's wishes) who emerged as Wonder Woman, the name and identity bestowed on the champion.

Although the prizewinner, too, cannot marry, the princess is from her inception as Wonder Woman determined by the prospect of the spousal relation. World War Two is the conflict Wonder Woman must work through with Trevor prior to marriage. At the outset of her mission in the outer world, she adopted the extra identity of Diana Prince. Thus, she can keep close to Trevor in his everyday life, and, whenever he requires her supernatural assist in uncovering and disbanding Nazi plots, she can switch back into Wonder Woman. In the close quarters of the prohibition against marriage, Wonder Woman projected instead an obstacle that her striving could overcome, but only according to standards that exceeded the outcome of the specific

and extraneous war. She will marry Steve Trevor only once crime and injustice have been eradicated from planet heterosexuality.

The trial that tested for the worthiness of one among them to endure the outer limits of the law in a world of violence and sex (and proximity to marriage) was but a variation on the basic exercises that the Amazons practice in their daily routines. Wonder Woman proved champion, therefore, in the tying and untying of knots, the main mode of Amazon relationality and socialization. The ceremonial contest that Wonder Woman won was a highpoint in the customary fitness regime that staggers indefinitely her decision to tie the knot or not. Because the Amazons derive their super powers from “brain energy” released into their muscles, they must train to be fit to be tied. In free-for-all girl roping contests the Amazons raise themselves to their powers.

The creator of Wonder Woman was William Moulton Marston: psychologist, feminist theorist, and inventor. In research that he concluded in the 1920s, in the course of which he invented the systolic blood-pressure test for the detection of deception, Marston had to hand the honesty prize to women. In the 1940s, then, Marston projected an Amazon network of bondage over which Wonder Woman swings her Lasso of Truth. Marston raised the desire for equality or domination to the superpower. If peace were to be given a chance, it would ultimately be up to the superman in both genders to desire binding. “The only hope for peace is to teach people who are full of pep and unbound force to enjoy being bound.”¹⁸ And again: “Giving to others, being controlled by them, submitting to other people cannot possibly be enjoyable without a strong erotic element.”¹⁹

18 Cited in Gerard Jones, *Men of Tomorrow: Geeks, Gangsters, and the Birth of the Comic Book* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 210.

19 Ibid. While the citations of William Moulton Marston’s work in summary studies and the digital archive suffice to get the paradox across, I did look at one of his available books, *Emotions of Normal People* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928), from which I quote directly an exemplary moment of turbulence (or dialectics): “Nevertheless, looking at the weaker or less complex force as a mechanistic-type cause, it is important to observe that by its very element of weakness relative to a stronger or more complex force, it is able to control the latter by causing the stronger force to select this

Zelpst Reflection between Genres

The scattered introjects supplementing the goddess of beauty with her role in the drop scenes of love and marriage come together again in Philip José Farmer's *Venus on the Half Shell* (1975), itself a liminal work that the author composed around a throwaway fictional title. Kurt Vonnegut attributed it to one of the (non-existent) books of his stick figure Kilgore Trout, a dead-beat science-fiction author occupying the outer reach of satires that Vonnegut composed in the 1960s. Farmer first published the novel under the name Kilgore Trout. What he composed out of Vonnegut's effects was rumored for a time to be the admired author's own satiric venture. Farmer had been suffering from writer's block, but he was able to carry out the exercise of this conceit without impediment – exulting all the way.

A Venus-lookalike robot, modeled after the painting by Botticelli, joins the troupe of the protagonist, Simon Wagstaff (who like Geppetto now leads a group of two animals and a puppet). She was made and programmed on the planet Zelpst where every teenager is given a castle and a bevy of slave-like flesh robots to protect him against harm and fulfill his every wish. “No matter how carefully the Zelpst society was designed to prevent unhappiness and frustration for the humans, it wasn't one hundred percent efficient.”²⁰

Wary of what he wished for, the Venus-robot's master programmed his bevy not to wound his narcissism. He wanted brilliant conversation, but also wouldn't tolerate being upstaged. “So every time we thought of a one-upman remark, it was routed to a deadend circuit in us” (132). Sexual rivalry from the male robots or aggressive behavior from either gender would also “be rerouted through a circuit board and converted into an overwhelming sense of shame and guilt” (132–33). At the ultimate limit of safety in wish fulfillment, her master was a melancholic rager “because his robots didn't love him for himself” (ibid.) or by their “own free choice” (135). We are in the orbit

particular weaker force to dominate” (117).

20 Philip José Farmer, *Venus on the Half Shell* (London: Titan, 2013), 134.

Subsequent page references are given in the text.

of the *an sich*. Simon responds by singing a poem “Aphrodite and the Philosophers,” in which Kant is twice taken to task, his Imperative described as “horse’s laughter up a sleeve” (136).

What keeps Simon trucking is that he wants to know why he was born only to suffer and die. And yet he and his animals have already imbibed the near-immortality that is often the free gift that comes with membership in a science-fiction space-time continuum. But he chooses to live as a mortal who subscribes to “ethics, morality, society as a whole” which provide the “means to get through life with the least pain” (138). On this economic scale, however, Simon’s means remain, says robot-Venus, who was programmed never to lie, no more than “thirty-percent efficient” (*ibid.*). Because his search for the true answer keeps falling short, Simon and robot-Venus keep on keeping their word, he by imperative, she by programming, until the ambivalence, “what the scientists called negative feedback” (249), can only be split off by the parting that death is unable in their case to perform.

The “Riverworld Saga,” for which Farmer was best known, answered a variant of the prime question: Where do the dead go in science fiction? The dead are dispatched to some place between the outer planets and the new underworlds inside media that were explored by modern spiritualism. In *To Your Scattered Bodies Go* (1971), Farmer’s first installment in the saga, Riverworld is a secularized afterlife. There is no second death. A denizen of Riverworld who dies (again) is re-resurrected in another spot. Sir Richard Francis Burton, an inveterate explorer in the nineteenth-century of the British Empire or White Man’s Burden, discovers that “death” is thus a local means of transport and keeps killing himself to travel on what he calls the suicide express. The Ethicals, who administer the omnipotent conception of Riverworld in consultation with a giant living computer, call Burton to account.²¹ But intervention in the process whereby the resurrectee finds salvation is an exception that causes the Ethicals the agony of violating their own moral code.

Through his conversion to the Church of the Second Chance, Hermann Göring befriends Burton as well as the woman who

21 Philip José Farmer, *To Your Scattered Bodies Go* (New York: Del Rey Books, 1998), 211.

in childhood inspired Lewis Carroll's Alice. Both pals, however, earlier "killed" Göring, whose first posthumous impulse was to extend the run of good years of his Nazi past. As in the media underworlds of modern spiritualism, notably the Voice Phenomenon,²² the deceased in Riverworld return devoid of their former setting on opposition, though not beyond its influence at the start of their enrollment.

Riverworld admits not only those who died when mankind was extinguished in the future but the entirety of all humans who ever lived. Before the "converters" did the trick, the Ethicals obtained a historical overview of humanity via a chronoscope.²³ All the characters in Farmer's novel are therefore historical, more recognizable the closer they are to the time of the reader. While the staging of "resurrection," including the accoutrement of a "grail" containing basic supplies for survival, suggests a fantasy-escape, sometimes someone wakes up and remembers the laboratory conditions under which he was brought back by energy-matter conversion. This moment of transition, which is science fiction, is not, however, as in *The Matrix* (1998), the fantasy revelation of a purgatory-like reality behind the illusion.

In *Venus on the Half Shell*, Simon is haunted by dream visions of his dead relations: "the images of his father and mother slid closer to him while behind them crowded thousands of people, imploring, threatening, weeping, laughing, snarling, smiling" (189). When he downed the elixir that gave him near-immortality he also imbibed the other salient trait of the local planetary culture, periodic possession by the dearly departed. "The stuff also dissolved the barriers between me and my ancestors. [...] And so now they must be demanding equal time too" (220). The ancestors are particularly drawn to attend the lovemaking of their delegate in this world. He explains to robot-Venus his new symptom in their marriage-counseling sitcom, his impotence: "How would you feel if you were screwing in the Roman Colosseum and it was a sellout with standing room only? [...] Especially if your father and mother had front seats?" (220). For his pre-

22 See my discussion of the Voice Phenomenon as underworld in *SPECTRE*, 81–83.

23 Farmer, *To Your Scattered Bodies Go*, 212.

dicament, he summons the designation close to Melanie Klein's inner world: "inner space" (221). Simon's experiences with his dead are the stuff of comedy because they belong to what Klein considered the happy ending of integration.

When he has time to kill during life imprisonment, which his near-immortality outlasts, he is grateful that he can "retreat within himself and talk to his ancestors," including the ghosts of Botticelli and Apelles (234). He makes the mistake of introducing the two painters to what they share: the image of robot-Venus. However, Botticelli, who is pleased, painted his Venus based on the description of Apelles' long-lost work. The Greek painter isn't amused. But when they withdraw to their separate cells or crypts to sulk, Simon has discovered a new means of calibrating contact with his ghosts and he becomes adept at steering the internal quarrel of his parents toward the respite he secures through their separation and withdrawal (235).

P.K. Dick's brief interlude on Venus is not included on any of the lists I consulted of science fictions doing time on Venus. Just the same, it demarcates a fitting conclusion to this excursion. In his 1956 novel *The World Jones Made*, the protagonist Jones, like Josef Breuer's famous patient and fantast Anna O., re-lives in real time the year he saw already one year in advance. Rather than the private theater of death watch and death wish behind Anna O.'s production, it was radioactive fallout yielding a large population of mutant sports that also sparked the clairvoyant condition of Jones. In the meantime, everyone is a good sport about the freaks engaged to perform in the entertainment industry (before he chose a political career, Jones, too, was a circus act). Beyond the side shows of metamorphic mutations, including interspecies combos, there are the hermaphroditic gender benders whose sex shows hold the center stage of high culture.

The two figures on the stage, professionally agile and supple-bodied, had begun making love. The action was carried out as a ritual [...]. Presently, as a kind of mounting tempo, the sex of the man began to change. After a time it was the rhythmic motions of two women. Then, toward the conclusion, the figure that had originally presented itself as a woman trans-

formed itself to a man. And the dance ended as it had begun: with a man and a woman quietly making love.²⁴

Reined in by extrapolation, the future sexual norm of entertainment cannot admit two males alone on stage.

Inspired by the radioactive mutation, but administering similar effects under experimental control in order to implement specific traits, a scientist has been fashioning behind the scenes a variation on the human species that can withstand the conditions of survival on Venus. When the government that restricted the conquest of space to discovery of already habitable worlds (second Earths) collapses, the mutant lab subjects are sent from the simulation tanks on Earth to their promised land. Thus, the metamorphic byproducts of the war, which are compatible with the imagination of classical antiquity, and achieve a high point in gender-swapping rituals, model what is produced in their image but according to a specific profile: Hobbit-like denizens of Venus. The citational introject extends from the holy family values of the real artificial Venusians to their alien livestock.

The dobbin raced determinedly down the road; in a matter of seconds it had hit full velocity. Feet flying, it sped like a furry ostrich, tiny head erect, legs a blur of motion. Blop-blop was the noise a running dobbin made. [...] As it reached the ditch, the dobbin unfolded two stubby, rattyhided wings and flapped them energetically. The dobbin and the cart rose slightly in the air, hung over the ditch, and then bumpily lowered on the far side.²⁵

In the rear view of the dobbin ride, Dick spells out how fantasy signifies: “Behind them Louis’ cabin dwindled. He and Irma had singlehandedly built it; a year had passed in which much had been accomplished. The cabin, made of the same bread-like substance, was surrounded by acres of cultivated land. The so-called corn grew in dense clumps; it wasn’t really corn but it functioned

24 Philip K. Dick, *The World Jones Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 82.

25 *Ibid.*, 149–50.

as corn.”²⁶ The mainstream of postwar modernism, which dominates Earth, periodically runs on empty. What’s left, call it history, is the allegorization of that which has lapsed into non-function. But the counterculture of “freaks” forgoes immunity and enters instead upon a pure community of child’s play or make-believe made to function. The historical counterculture (and original US readership of *The Hobbit*) found another *Heimat* in Silicon Valley. From there the functioning of make-believe could radiate out as other worlds somewhere over the digital relation.

²⁶ Ibid., 149.

The Law of B-Genres

The Wizard of Was

Fantasy precedents in American popular culture mixed ingredients of future machine technologies into the fairy-tale brew. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) projects through techno magic new-and-improved gadgetry of the present and recent past into the future, another world, or an alternate reality. Considered in light of Günther's criteria for science fiction, the movie *Zardoz* (1973), which sought to inherit by encrypting in its title the "Wizard of Oz," fell short by occupying a future in terms of the regional high culture last seen in Europe.¹ John Boorman, the British director, wanted to show in *Zardoz* that the past would be part of the future, but it's a past that belongs to the fantasy genre, the UK continuity shot of medievalism. The wizard figure, a trickster divinity named Arthur Frayn, who exercises control over his followers from behind the mask of Zardoz, was modeled on Merlin.

Boorman applied his winnings from directing *Deliverance* (1972) to making this movie, his independent art film. It seems like a non-sequitur, but the Appalachian setting of the American blockbuster can be viewed as enclave of a cultural continuity bordering on prehistory, which is fantasy's preferred habitat.

1 In "Selbstdarstellung im Spiegel Amerikas" ("Self-Presentation in the Mirror of America"), Günther discounts Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* along the same lines (*Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen II*, ed. L.J. Pongratz [Hamburg: Meiner, 1975], 38).

Boorman was in contact with Tolkien because he wanted to direct the first adaptation of *Lord of the Rings*, a project he had to drop because he couldn't obtain the financial backing. This is the backstory reserved for his 1981 Arthurian epic *Excalibur*. But it was already in *Zardoz* that Boorman caught the connection with Tolkien's fantasy genre in the context or contest Tolkien demarcated against and with science fiction.

An era of decline has made the technology and science that achieved outer space transport fall back upon the Earth and separate the "Immortals" (residing behind transparent shields in utopian gated "Vortex" communities) from the "Brutals" who survived in the real world outside or below. The Brutals are kin to the Morlocks and the Immortals to the Eloi, with the difference that the decline of the privileged is yet staggered, while the enslaved Brutals benefit from the Hegelian dialectic and bear the spirit's progress (rendered in evolutionary terms). The spiritualization or evolutionary selection of the Brutals yielded the caste of "Exterminators," to which the protagonist Zed (Sean Connery) belongs. The Eloi decline is embodied by the subgroups "Apathetics" and "Renegades." The latter, punitively dementia-induced, are sentenced to be senile seniors for an eternity of elder abuse.

Zed was stowaway in the last flying machine on earth, the gigantic head of *Zardoz*, which below delivers commands and weapons to the Exterminators but then flies back up into the sky. His hunch was that the truth behind *Zardoz* must lie at the upper end of its trajectory. He passes through the transparent barriers inside the flying head that brings food supplies to the Vortex communities. When he steps out into the higher realm he assumes at first that he is in "Heaven," the afterlife *Zardoz* promises as reward for good behavior.

While he is studied by the Immortals as missing link, the locals also introduce him (for their own entertainment) to their cultural institutions. On a tour of the world museum, largely a collection of copies of ancient classical sculpture, Zed wonders if these are their gods. Yes, the Immortal answers, but they're all dead. It turns out that Zed was bred and led by a force greater than the wizard figure to receive the encrypted knowledge and science of humanity and disband the Vortex communities. Now

that death and evolution are back, the Immortals comprise the missing link.

Boorman wanted to re-direct Burt Reynolds from the film the year before in the role of the protagonist Zed, no doubt because his was a body the public was used to seeing exposed. Reynolds wasn't available, so Boorman chose Sean Connery instead, who was tired of the James-Bond typecasting, but also a tried and true exposed male body. I would nominate the constant viewing of the Connery body in primal bathing trunks, in other words in the setting of repression of the male body in the 1970s, as the *Zeitmarke* of the fantasy component of Boorman's film.

The James Bond body is that of the diehard midlifer. The fantasy trajectory of Boorman's film is a wrap with the evacuation of adolescence. In the future post-apocalyptic world, the embodiment of reproductive sexuality is the issue, which a female lecturer (Charlotte Rampling), who is using Zed as primal-time exhibit, attributes to the mystery of erection, which their Sensurround of exposed female bodies and male bodies clad in fetish garments no longer penetrates. The vortex of psychic transparency, in which complete access to everyone's thoughts and memories requires ethical guidelines to follow, pulls up short before the vital stats of the former Mr. Scotland. The denizens of the future like to quip that the saying "if looks could kill" has been turned into a "when" sentence. But just once looks can't be penetrated and don't penetrate but reflect instead. It's from the looks of Rampling and her audience that we know without seeing it that when the local media show of stimulation stops and Zed looks only at Rampling, he's got a miraculous hard-on. Along the science-fiction trajectory, then, Boorman falls short of prediction of treatability of erectile dysfunction.

At the end, Connery couples with Rampling, who was for a long time his main antagonist among the Immortals. We watch them seated with their son standing between them. The shoot was an ordeal: for each brief take extensive makeup changes were required. They grow older together until the son, a young adult, goes. They keep on aging until dust does them part. The movie that begins posing the Enlightenment question what the afterlife looks like if taken interpersonally ends with this Passion pageant,

which cannot overcome, however, the finitude of the analogue film medium.

The film is a marvel of special effects all made in the camera, certainly not in a computer, but not even in the lab. A showcase of pre-digital special effects, *Zardoz* is an entry in the archive of digital prehistory. From the vantage of the digital relation, Boorman observes (in the DVD special feature) that a long sequence in which cultural memory is transmitted to Zed is something he would do more expediently in the meantime. The movie itself became the analogue of what it portrayed: an agrarian-utopian outpost of the past in the projected future. It, too, is overtaken by the dystopian recoil of its forecast and rolled back upon its own ruinous collectibility. When the high-culture enclave comes to an end with the reentry of mortality, the high-priestess figure, responsible heretofore for guiding the group to second-level meditation, the future elite's improvement upon sleep and death, calls instead for leave-taking and leads the group to bid farewell to the "landscape of our long waking dream."

Another entry in the joust on screen between the fantasy and science fiction genres, *Tron* (1982), supplies a forecast-fiction of what the computer held in store. It's an underworld specific to computer programming in the 1980s and its new culture industry of video gaming. The sequel, *Tron: The Legacy* (2010), reintroduces Jeff Bridges as father telling his son (the boy's mother died in 1985) how he got inside the grid one day. He's a hero and the figments he encountered in the grid are his son's favorite action-hero figures cluttering the living room. Then the father disappears. The son, in the meantime a teenager, has been riding out the antisocial tendency, his communication with a father who abandoned him. But then he receives a message from the father that bears a return address in the underworld.

Now the son must retrace the father's steps to rescue him. He opens the portal in the condemned site of the father's former video arcade. The portal we learn, can be opened only from the outside, "like a safe" or crypt. First the son encounters Clu, made by father after his own image to help make a better world. Junior: "I'm not a program." Clu: "I'm not your father, son." In the sequel, Jeff takes responsibility for not watching out what he wished for.

In the original film, Jeff isn't even the marrying kind and is stopped in his hacker-tracks by the Master Control Program. Its megalomania symptomatizes the runaway virtual effects housed in games that the company's president stole from Jeff, the maverick-genius programmer. Thus, the world is up for grabs out from under it by the mirror-monitor world of the grid, a relay of arenas for video gaming rising up from a pixelated checkerboard. The MCP zaps Jeff into the grid turning him into program copy. Like the programming conceit in Daniel Galouye's novel *Simulacron 3* (1964), the "users" have program doubles in the virtual world.² But Jeff is inside only. His user identity has been incorporated inside the double. He hails from the other world of the program units in the grid: "Do you believe in users?" Again, as in Galouye's science fiction, the grid secularizes the Christian vertical contrast while finding in technology an answer to metaphysical questioning since Plato.

In both versions, the grid is Las Vegas-style SF awash in aesthetic special effects that might hail from Lang's silent pictures. The light outlining the virtual figures lends an artifice reminiscent of retouched film frames. Another introject would be the look of the divisions of soldiers guarding the arena games, which reaches at least as far back as the interception by *Star Wars* of the art direction of World War Two propaganda movies. Because the 1980 video-game-style foray into anticipations of the future is so collectible, like the action figures in the new millennial household, the 2010 movie stays within the lines of the outdated artifice.

In the sequel, the father in the underworld, in the meantime retired from world making and shaking, tells the son that to win is not to play. The son, like his father before the season of penance, is a player: the contact high reactivates Jeff. The son makes it out with the last isomorphic algorithm, a female of a new mutant species. Because the algorithm species manifested itself and wasn't created, Clu's envy was unremitting. But the new species also bypassed the curse upon the father. At the portal,

2 For my reading of Galouye's novel and Fassbinder's TV-movie adaptation, see *Germany: A Science Fiction* (Fort Wayne: Anti-Oedipus Press, 2014), 64–68.

the new couple can let the father go, who takes out his double Clu. The father ends in a second death heat, but the race to win a reproductive future in the setting of the son through the unlikely coupling with a machine is the oldest techno anticipation on Earth, which continues to fall short and still yields only its corollary and negative theology, the suicide pact and pack.

There is a silver lining to the “suicide” of the Immortals in *Zardoz*, which folds out of the removal of reproduction and death. It reinstates the wish to be replicated in mutual admiration on a schedule with technology and its group psychology. But there was also the draining of libido from the utopia, which merits a closer look at aphanisis, a notion that passed from Ernest Jones (“The Early Development of Female Sexuality”), who adapted the diminishment of the capacity for sexual enjoyment as an alternate castration concept, to Jacques Lacan, who extended the notion to the fading of the subject.

For Jones, what we expect of good children can afflict adulthood, like a wish the fulfillment of which was cause for caution; it cuts its niche close to castration and thoughts of death (both conscious dread of death and unconscious death wishes).³ That privation plus frustration equals aphanisis afflicts the wishing of women and children first (472). The only defense is guilt.

Graduates of the Oedipus complex either sacrifice the love object or their own sex. To exact a breather before the total eclipse of aphanisis, candidates who can enter the combinatorics of inversion, renounce either their sex or their incest (466). If for men a hole’s a hole, women need somewhat more help. As Jones sums it up: Venus had more trouble with Adonis than Pluto with Persephone (462). That’s why separation for women is the counterpart to castration in men (463).

Primally speaking, the union of penis and vagina equals incest. “Normally this union is made possible by the overcoming of the Oedipus complex” (466). Jones makes the astounding resounding conclusion that only the heterosexual couple thus

3 Ernest Jones, “The Early Development of Female Sexuality,” *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 8, no. 4 (October 1927): 461. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

has an outside chance to work through and dispense with the incest taboo.

What looks normal is that an individual identifies with the organ of the opposite sex by “possessing” it, needing it always in range, while becoming pathologically dependent on it. Jones is describing homosexual couples operating with imaginary heterosexual difference. Isn’t the shadowing of illicit heterosexual union cast upon homosexual coupling a norm for heterosexuals too? Kant saw it that way when he concluded that the marriage contract gives each partner access to the other’s genitals.

The fading of the subject is the second Hegelian makeover of Kant-in-Freud that Jacques Lacan undertook. The other was the proximity between Sade and the categorical imperative. We can track these transformations to the medievalism that Lacan’s *jouissance* shares with Tolkien’s fantasy genre. The joyful tidings in a work of fantasy, which the eucatastrophe delivers, a joy so close to tears, marks a libidinal hot spot. The medieval seat of desire also upholds *jouissance* in Lacan’s philosophy, not only on account of his unique interest in courtly love. The fading of the subject is a preamble of sorts to the Lacanian valuation of the second death, which isn’t always in that order. In the severing of the epaulets of the signifier, the laying down of the decorations of distinction, one can detect a valuation akin to that of the symbolic order itself. The death of death, the tidings of joy and *jouissance*, can also mean: fuck death.

Melanie Klein operated within an Elizabethan frame adumbrated with old Christian notions used for steering through that opening era of secularization. By this time-slippage her relationship to mourning is taken to a central place for which there is no counterpart in Lacan. While the Lacanian second death belongs in fantasy (and its medievalist tradition), the Kleinian inner world recycles through science fiction. But I am consulting neither analyst on my main topic, because both pursue a notion of fantasy so monolithic that there is no room for daydreaming.

In George Lucas’s first film, *THX 1138* (1971), instead of the Death Star flashback to Nazi Germany, corporate America is available for adapting classics like *Nineteen Eighty-Four* or *Brave New World*. The Christian fantasy governing this dystopia describes a more perfect aphanisis by skewering together hetero

and homo at an erotic impasse. Wish fulfillment is replaced by the command to be happy. What autoerotic release through hologram programs of sex and violence doesn't get out of the way is alleviated by compulsory sedation that fully abnegates libido. It makes the world safe for or rather indifferent to coeducation. The female roommate of Ned Duval skips the offer of the apple in paradise and instead takes away the invaginating sedatives he swallows. (When the camera is the camera of surveillance it fits inside the medicine cabinet.) The woman must gain the Osiris/Isis phallus of insemination and be the dead/the Dad. How else could reproduction continue? The techno group plan hasn't found an alternative. The coed touches Ned when she's sure he's off the inhibiting drug. "They're watching us now." "No one can see us." But it's all on tape. She urges him not to go back on sedation: "You won't feel the same way."

Ned knows what he's risking since he can't perform his line of work without the sedation. He works for sanitation, which means he repairs robots, performing operations with control arms involving radioactive isotopes. The jingle "Be efficient. Be happy. Thank you" can no longer motivate him. He tries fitting a square isotope in the round hole and the radioactivity goes through the roof. Surveillance recognizes that he's under-sedated and next thing Ned is under Drug Evasion Arrest. He's also charged with malicious sexual perversion. His verdict, however, is conditioning not destruction. After that's over, his ex-coed-roommate can visit him. This is the last time he sees her. She's going to have their child. Later he learns that the fetus was taken from her and restored to its proper place in the womb of the group.

When Ned is in prison, he finds among the other inmates the former surveillance operator (Donald Pleasence) who had tried to adapt him to the homoerotic norm by reassigning the coed so he could take her place as Ned's roommate. Because he intervened in living selection, however, Ned could turn him in. Now they're together again and the *délire* to touch Ned is going strong. When Ned and the guy he snitched on make it out of the prison, they encounter an African American hologram from the sex and violence TV shows. He skipped on the Fantasy Bureau. "I was stuck in the same event for too long. I always wanted to

be part of the real world.” But this isn’t it. If there is an outside it’s inhabited by shell dwellers, creatures that are fantasy in provenance. In *Moonraker*, the adventure Fleming steeped in medievalist fantasy symbolism, Bond recognizes by the blinking out first letter in the Shell sign the hell address that awaits him.⁴

The surveillance abuser visits one of a network of chapels, not to be confused with the hygienic outlets of hologram entertainment. Here the outside fantasy communicates with the white-night habitat. But a monk, whose outfit doesn’t conform to the dress code for being happy, wants just the same to check the visitor’s identification papers and then proceeds to turn him in. Following his murder of the intrusive monk, the surveillance guy is arrested while having a moment with schoolboys – asking them what’s new and improved in learning on drip (the kids have tubes placed in their bodies). Then there were two. But in the penultimate car chase scene in a tunnel, the hologram crashes, which leaves Ned, who crawls out under a sunset. By joining the fantasy realm of the shell dwellers Ned can enjoy the shell game disowned below of genital organ borrowing.

Mekky

One of the innovators of American science fiction, according to both P.K. Dick and Günther, was Fredric Brown. In “Man, Android, and Machine” (1975), Dick extolled Le Guin’s *The Lathe of Heaven* for its exploration of the alternate realizations of dreaming but counseled that reading Brown’s story “The Waveries” (1945) was a must. Otherwise “you may die without understanding the universe coming into being around you.”⁵

The story introduces the so-called “waveries,” an intelligent life form from outer space that started heading our way upon picking up our first radio signals. But this can never be about “contact.” Since the waveries are immaterial we can never communicate with them. Although they first manifest like modern

4 See my *SPECTRE* (Fort Wayne: Anti-Oedipus Press, 2013), 121n9.

5 Philip K. Dick, “Man, Android, and Machine,” in *The Shifting Realities of Philip K. Dick: Selected Literary and Philosophical Writings*, ed. Lawrence Sutin (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 225.

spiritualist communication with the other side, like Morse-code sounds transmitting in the white noise outside programming, soon all transmission ceases. Their invasion reverses human progress to some point before radio waves, then all the way back to its source: electricity. That means, of course, that what followed radio, TV, and telephony, must also come to a full stop. Electricity was an instance as big as fire of human application in the absence of scientific understanding. Out of its mystery the telecommunication prospect of spiritualism emerged.⁶ In Brown's story, the post-invasion adjustment to horsepower is readily accomplished, because now there was a cause or problem that was known. Electricity had ceased to exist (even in nature: no more lightning). A non-electric world leads to a past setting in which everyone soon feels at home. Now books can be written. Musical instruments can be taken up again and played at the close of the day. To this extent, however, humanity comes to resemble more the dead of the Enlightenment than figures from the kind of medievalist throwback that fantasy likes to project into this clearing.

Both in *Die Entdeckung Amerikas und die Sache der Weltraum-Literatur* (*The Discovery of America and the Case of Science Fiction*), his monograph introducing the series of his editions and commentaries, and in his later contribution to *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen* (*Philosophy in Self-Presentations*), Günther discusses Brown's 1949 novel, *What Mad Universe*. He brackets out its spoof character/caricature to take quite seriously the pronouncements of its mechanical brain.⁷ The novel offers a synopsis of the near missing between science fictionalizing and fantasizing in the American tradition. A near miss, however, is still a difference, the explosive narcissistic kind. That we are in the same complex as the other items on Günther's reading list is confirmed when "rhodomagnetic"

6 This gives the gist of Wolfgang Hagen's *Radio Schreiber. Der "moderne Spiritismus" und die Sprache der Medien* (Weimar: Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, 2001).

7 Günther, *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen II*, 66–67. Unless otherwise indicated I am glossing and quoting from this later version of Günther's commentary on Brown's novel.

science is named part of the makeup of the projected distant future that takes over the novel.⁸

The protagonist, Keith Winton, is one of the editors at a New York publishing firm specializing in all the B-genres: horror, adventure, science fiction, romance, and fantasy. It's the evening of the second attempt to launch a rocket flight to the moon (in 1955). Although the attempt succeeds, rocket flight is conceived here as a quick roundtrip and the rocket returns to Earth and crashes right next to Winton, who is jettisoned into the future, really an alternate reality. It's alternate because even though the main players in the protagonist's reality are all represented in the new iteration, they and their milieu have been tweaked, while they yet share with Winton's former reality a history up to the point of divergence. Often the representatives in the new reality are virtual doubles but do not add up to any same person.

The mechanical brain, Mekky for short, instructs Winton that no reality is simply dreamed up in reference to another, and is not less or more real than the other versions. Since, however, there are an infinite number of realities (or universes), and fiction is simply nonfiction in another time and place, whimsical fantasizing can overflow and undermine the integrity or genre specificity of alternate reality. First, Winton thinks he's mad. But, "which was the delusion – the world in which he now found himself, or all of his memories? Could his mind have conceivably built itself a set of false memories of a world without spaceships?" (43).

What keeps Winton's trip to an independent reality at a signifying distance from fantasizing is that the incentive was not his own wish fantasy. At the point of trauma-triggered liftoff into the other reality, Winton was imagining what science-fiction future a certain fanboy might daydream up based on his regular letters to the editor. The impasse of personal daydreaming – unpublication – is thus circumvented. Winton enters readily upon the other reality because his double doesn't really resemble him. While the fan would have wrapped him within his forecast fiction, they had never met. His non-lookalike double, however, shares his history. Winton's attempt to write and sell stories in the

8 Fredric Brown, *What Mad Universe* (New York: Bantam Books, 1950), 206. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

new setting lands a plagiarism charge when he resubmits his own stories, in effect, to himself, an editor of a B-genres press (which in the realized universe designates science fiction “adventure”).

Not only has progress caught up with techno-potential, but all the fantastic elements of science fiction in the past, like the alien monsters, have also been realized. The discovery of the “spacewarp drive” in 1903, according to the alternate history, followed upon a Harvard professor’s repair of his wife’s sewing machine (8off). The story of his subsequent experiments with disappearing sewing machines reads like a direct parody of Wells’s *The Time Machine*. In fact, Winton is reading up on the new history he inhabits in Wells’s *Outline of History*. It helps that he knows the work so well that he can swiftly recognize the turning points of divergence.

If we join Günther in bracketing out the “*Mad-Magazine*” qualities of the teen imagination coursing through the B-genres, there is the innovation of multi-valued logic in what Mekky instructs. Günther quotes Mekky: “Dimension is merely an attribute of a universe having validity only *within* that particular universe. From otherwhere, a universe – itself an infinity of space – is but a point, a dimensionless point.”⁹ Seen from one universe, another one is but a “fantasy image,” and vice versa. This would still accord with classical ideas, if it were a single relationship of mutual exchange. But as Winton learns from Mekky the exchange rate between reality and irreality is infinite. Günther adds two more quotations. “There are an infinite number of coexisting universes.” And again: “All conceivable universes exist.” “This final citation,” Günther comments, “is particularly remarkable because imagination (*Vorstellung*) and imagined (*Vorgestelltes*) are fully equated, whereas the classical tradition would register here an ontological abyss.”¹⁰

Sein (Being) can be used only in the singular. It follows, Günther continues, that subjectivity forever withdraws from recognizable Earthly reality and can be projected only into a supernatural beyond. Subjectivity, in the sense of *Sein* with

9 Günther, *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen II*, 66, citing Brown, *What Mad Universe*, 238.

10 Ibid.

equal rights to grounding in the world alongside real objects, is not thinkable in terms of classical logic. If the spirit remains hierarchically superior then the world of empirical experience is Maya, meaningless illusion, which is a view readily contradicted by the activity of the will. What distinguishes the American development (which in this essay Günther considers parallel to the Russian departure from the classical world view)¹¹ is the abandonment of all belief and hope that a secret hierarchical distinction between subject and object will be disclosed in the most profound recess of this world.

In *What Mad Universe*, Brown takes care to leave a trace of the history that has absconded in a “universe that a space-stricken adolescent would dream up” (227), the specific teen, again, on Winton’s mind at the time he crash-landed in the alternate reality. Consulting pamphlets on current problems as well as newspapers, Winton discovers why New York streets had been impassable the night before. To find protection against enemy fire from above, the cities of Earth had to improve upon blackout precautions until the keener senses of the alien Arcturians were at last blocked. It’s called “mistout,” “a blackout beyond blackouts” (60), and was perfected by a German professor in 1934 (74). In the new order, there was no World War Two.

When Winton reads in the paper that the recently destroyed colony on Mars was established in 1939, he wonders what the natives were like: “There wasn’t any clue in the brief news article, which read like a front-line dispatch from a more familiar war” (52). But which one is it? The missing history appears covered, including traumatic neurosis in the wars of the twentieth century, by the impact of the mistout upon the populace at night. Criminal psychopaths rule the streets.

The situation was aggravated by the strong tendency of combat veterans who had fought in space to turn to crime, a psychosis to which possibly a third of them succumbed. [...] The

11 In *Die amerikanische Apokalypse*, ed. Kurt Klagenfurt (Klagenfurt: Profil, 2000), by contrast, Günther views the German and Russian experiments in totalitarianism as retrenchments of the metaphysics that science fiction discards.

nature of the instant psychosis, as it was called, that underlay most urban crime, seemed to require that depredations be done under cover of that dense and dreadful dark. (77)

In assessing the psychoticizing defense against attack from the skies, the manual that Winton is consulting, which is part and portrait of his imagining of the teen fan's fantasizing a future world fitting the science-fiction genre, indulges in the sacrificial logic of utilitarianism: "Possibly a million people had died in crimes in the mistout – but a minimum of ten million lives had undoubtedly been saved" (77–78). We are in the environs of mad science. What counterbalances utilitarian reckoning is the alternate-reality doubling of lives, which are all different, as Keith is informed when he asks if he is all his doubles. Günther intervenes in his monograph *Die Entdeckung Amerikas (The Discovery of America)*:

Naturally, it would be foolish to imagine that the difference between two identical Keith-personalities rests alone on the difference of their shoe color. What is really meant, therefore, is that both personalities, which are distinguished by the color of their shoes in regard to their physical existence, represent an interchangeable relationship. Keith in the 'A' world can think of Keith in the 'B' world. If he does so, then Keith in world 'B' becomes the content of his consciousness. Keith in world 'B' can do the same and then the 'A' world and Keith in it become nothing but the content of consciousness existing in the 'B' world.¹²

That soul or self stands in interchangeable relation to its own content is what the old double stepped out to prove. What followed, the divisions of doubling at this interchange leading to the zombie wars laid the foundation for the clearinghouse of science fiction. The time-tripping or mutating sole survivor was the poster boy of this foundation in mourning's light. What the

12 Gotthard Günther, *Die Entdeckung Amerikas und die Sache der Weltraumliteratur* (Düsseldorf: Verlag Karl Rauch, 1952), 27–28.

sci-fi future holds is a planetary going on cosmic multitude of interchangeable doubling relations.

That fictional reality alternates with real reality by the multiple doubling of consciousness, which Robert A. Heinlein in "By His Bootstraps" enlists in the service of time travel, is the conceit behind the superhero fantasy movie *Last Action Hero*. The most self-reflexive episode in the body of Arnold Schwarzenegger's work issues the proviso, however, that there's turbulence at the crossing and re-pairing of the realities. That the 1993 film is about ambivalence in mourning is already given at the office of the title. Is Schwarzenegger/Slater the final action hero or is he the one who lasts, whose heroic action is lasting? Or in the manic consumption of heroes, is he the last one I read, watched, consumed before the next one I'm following now?

In *Terminator 2*, the boy internalizes the terrorist/survivalist mother as good again, which was brought about or allegorized by the good-breast cyborg taking itself out to close the loop of violence. A remaindered technical detail, which keeps the cyborg loop going in the *Terminator* franchise, undoes the sacrifice that belongs to the bad-breast lexicon of terrorist mom.

Last Action Hero begins with the film that is inside the film. The projection goes out of focus in time for the traumatic climax of a scene the boy, the biggest fan of Schwarzenegger/Slater, has seen many times over, but which we won't get to see until we're inside another film that's also in this film. It's the psycho murder scene haunting Slater (played by Schwarzenegger who's also playing himself). We have our fill of the self-reflexivity of the horror film while attending to a movie that is, up front, about a boy's attachment to an action hero, who acts and lasts beyond limitations.

The boy has an old friend, who looks like he's waited long enough to be, at last, the age of retirement. He's the projectionist at a large movie theater. Seen there, done that virtually his entire life. He offers an advance preview of what the boy's backlot will be if he doesn't make it out of the projection booth. The aged version of himself offers him a chance that night to preview the latest Slater film, officially opening tomorrow. The fanboy makes it back to the theater against all odds. His working mother (the father is dead) says no, then, when he is ready to go anyway, the

mother's injunction gets enforced in her absence by a burglar's break-in and the police action that follows. The burglar is the boy's double. Both recognize that there's nothing inside the home, inside the mother, worth taking or keeping. Although the law, the working mother's proxy, at first holds the boy, he breaks away and makes it to his preferred home, the place where he can sit back and relax with the good breast.

The projectionist for life gives the boy an extra-special ticket, which Houdini himself gave him when he was a boy. But all these years he didn't use it, too afraid to risk disappointment in his hero. The boy, however, uses it. When he enters the Slater action movie, he's in a world that belongs to a movie franchise that he follows and knows by heart. Like the child of immigrant parents who speaks better American than those who raise him, the boy knows more than anyone else in the film, including Slater, whose foreign accent remains, self-reflexive relay notwithstanding, remarkably intact.

As action figure of parental guidance, Slater is an Oedi-pal, not a father, nor entirely a mother. When Slater meets the boy's mother and they start communicating shared interests like sensitive types ("I never just talked to a woman before"), the boy exclaims that she has ruined him. But read in reverse, we can say that Slater restores his mother to the place she abandoned when she stepped into the shoes of her dead husband. Schwarzenegger, both through the contact and the subsequent withdrawal, once again upgrades a formerly non-nurturing mother in the intrapsychic estimation of her son.¹³

The boy breaks back out of the movie together with Slater because the villain in the latest feature stole the magic ticket and now uses it to hide between worlds and unleash from there an unstoppable crime wave. While the film figure collects other

13 The body-building connection between breasts and buns is, more than a displacement, the composite picture of what Klein identified as the combined parents of the primal scene, whose separation and reunion describe one of the stations in the pageant of mourning. Schwarzenegger mixed up his on-screen heroic profile with his mission as governor, fatefully taking on right at the start of his term two double-breasted unions, the nurses and the schoolteachers.

fictional figures of projection, including Dracula, he makes one exception. He plans to bring back Hitler, too. (Hitler and Schwarzenegger are the two “real” names in the film.) Plus, unlike the field of representation, wherein every crime immediately summons the response of the law, the real world sitting in front of the screen, as the ticket-carrying villain discovers when he starts shooting passersby on the street at night and even cries out for anyone to hear his confession, proves not to brook recognition of acts of violence.

Now that Slater is on his trail, the main villain transfers the psycho killer from Slater’s trauma flashbacks to a world in which Schwarzenegger/Slater can be killed and stopped dead in these tracks. The boy discovers that he has rendered his hero mortal. “You are going to die Jack! What did I do?!” In the confusion following the rout of the assassin who was aiming to kill Schwarzenegger at the premiere of the new Slater film, Slater meets Schwarzenegger. While the latter, on a role, offers him a job as body double, Jack Slater responds: “You have brought me nothing but pain!” On the rooftop, the traumatic scene embedded in the Slater films replays in this world. It’s the same scene: the psycho villain even hears the old music. But this time “the boy” is saved.

It was hard for him to believe in Slater in this world the way he did when Slater was projected onto the screen. But in this scene of survival, Slater asks the boy to believe in him: “I will catch you.” This time Slater is mortally wounded. The boy rushes Slater to the movie theater to transfer him via projection back into the screen world. The boy drops the ticket. It falls screen side of an Ingmar Bergman film, which releases the figure of Death, who follows the duo into the theater. The boy stands up to Death: “I have had it with you.” He’s tired of Death’s power to decide who stays, who goes. The boy takes control by sorting out bad from good. If it’s up to him, Slater isn’t going, not now. But, it turns out, Death doesn’t “do fiction.” Nor, he assures him, is it the boy’s time that’s up. But, like a father, he informs the boy that he has overlooked the extent of the legacy of the magical projection. All along he held only one half of the ticket; the other half is still in the usher’s box. Once the ticket is risked and torn it is no longer singular and the box is no longer a crypt.

I Am Robot

All roads to the amusement parking of the interplanetary future lead to and through Southern California. In Michael Crichton's *Westworld* (1973), the concise history of Western civilization skewers Roman Antiquity and the Middle Ages upon the Wild West to deliver a fantastic continuity shootout inside science fiction. The transportation to this last resort of history on Earth, in other words, in the American West is aligned with the prospect of space travel. That the hovercraft to utopia was stage one becomes clear in the 1976 sequel, *Futureworld*. The reconstructed resort offers two new epochs to visit, the Napoleonic outcome of the Enlightenment in Europe and outer space colonization. For all the visitors to the new history-of-the-future amusement park, space transport is simulated to get them to their selected stations. Even en route to the Middle Ages they first take off into outer space.

Behind the stage sets, scientists and engineers continue to devise autonomous technologies to augment mobility and supply guilt-free interpersonal props for antisocial wish fulfillment. To safeguard the functioning of the robots, the park was wrapped in surveillance, which continues in the sequel but for another purpose. In *Westworld*, the fantasizing of the park visitors recoiled with the malfunctioning robots like the deadly realization-consequences of wish fulfillment. The sequel takes place in the opening season of the new park, which doesn't leave enough time for scrutinizing whether the robots are fantasy proof. Instead the future of robot entertainment is secured by replacing any visitors who resist the experience with their doubles, in effect marketing robots programmed to go out into the world and bring back only positive feedback. The projection of robot breakdown is resituated within the mad science of human relations. The gunslinger robot that was the first to malfunction was a double of the recognizable star Yul Brynner. Since Peter Fonda isn't double-booked as visitor and robot, we can say that in the sequel the visitors become their own doubles, sans the sex and violence of recognition value. Adorno was right. What loops around the tight spot of paranoia in the culture industry is that

the double is us, that is, in the eyes of those who we think control us.

In the afterword to his 1952 edition of the German translation of Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot* (1950), Günther reviews the limitations of mechanizing "self-consciousness, that is, doubly reflected phenomena of experience."¹⁴ Simple consciousness without reflection back upon the experiencing ego is a prime candidate for future technical incarnation. We know from awakening out of heavy sedation, for example, that there are "partial states of consciousness without ego experience" (108). Or in reverse, when falling asleep, we know that the "ego experience" drops off first. Transitional states of consciousness can be attributed variously to children and animals. We know that consciousness without self-consciousness exists, that is, "can be 'psychically' realized. Why not then in a 'mechanical brain?'" (ibid.).

Classical ontology, however, requires that every consciousness must possess a subject of its acts. In contrast to the view of "vulgar materialism," consciousness is the quality of an unknown *x*, for which the theological term is the soul (ibid.). Günther accepts the theological view to the extent that in it an existential or metaphysical condition is formulated that can't be convincingly refuted. However, the theological version is vague, as evidenced by the wavering debate on the animal's immortal soul. The issue debated is difficult, because if we grant the animal an immortal soul, and the animal lacks self-consciousness, then the relationship of the hypothetical animal soul to its consciousness is completely other than in human being (109).

For the human, self-consciousness means that the soul resides in him, while in the animal the guiding impulse of consciousness belongs to the environment, which in relation to individual animal consciousness is transcendence (ibid.). The human soul is transcendent, too, but we must distinguish the transcendence that in the human is introscent from the animal's relationship to the soul, which is extroscent (109–10). In both cases,

14 Gotthard Günther, *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik? Dr. Gotthard Günthers Kommentare zu "Rauchs Weltraum-Büchern,"* ed. Dieter von Reeken (Lüneburg: Verlag Dieter von Reeken, 2015), 108. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

the subject of consciousness that must be hypothesized belongs not to consciousness at the level of action and existence (110). The consciousness to be constructed inside a robot brain would possess transcendence, but introscendence wouldn't apply. A variation on the animal's extroscendence must follow instead.

The subject of artificial consciousness is not the environment, but the brain of the creator. The robot brain would have an ego, but one that would fit back inside the representative ego of its creator (ibid.). Günther calls the robot a complete "extrovert" (116), one that cannot think about itself because it has no ego experience; it is conscious, not self-conscious. The animal has psyche or soul (or mind) through the environment. The robot has all the above through its inventor.

When Günther gives a progress report on advances in replicating consciousness in mechanical brains, he concludes that even if every conscious process could be reproduced the result would not be consciousness. He refers to Plato's conclusion that although it contained all the processes of consciousness incarnated by the Greek heroes inside it, the Trojan horse itself was not endowed with consciousness (113). Functions of consciousness do not produce consciousness unless two conditions are met: an operative unity for the functions and transcendent guidance for the unit. Unified operation would begin, for example, if the machines specializing in logic and those that calculate could be coupled and the logic machine represent us in the running of the calculation machine. To supply the condition of transcendent guidance, however, we would require a higher logic than the classical Aristotelian logic attached to the mathematics machine (113).

We are at the *locus classicus* of cybernetics, the feedback system, which, at the World-War-Two origin of computing, fulfills all the conditions for basic consciousness. The coupled mechanism produces information, which is forwarded to the guidance system. Since this guidance follows logic imbued with new laws, the information is altered and the altered version is given back to the subordinate system as steering impulse. Consciousness is information that refers to itself in a meaningfully modified manner and to that extent knows itself (114).

Cybernetics rules that for successful construction of a mechanical brain the constructor–creator and the robot must inhabit together one system, not physically but logically. The constructor’s consciousness enters a feedback system, directly coupling one subsystem in his consciousness with the other one in the robot and thus initiating an infinite series toward the ego’s transcendence. Not only for the robot is its ego transcendent, out of reach; the same holds true for the constructor’s soul (117).

Metaphysically, every ego is identical. This may be of interest only to those who have learned to distinguish metaphysics from mythology, but the awareness of the groundlessness of subjectivity is an empirical experience (117). Structurally, the interaction between the subsystems “behind” robot consciousness orbits a relationship to groundlessness, but the robot, we know, quickly hits bottom. This the robot can never know, though.

We only understand what we can make. But only a smidgen of the schema of the motility of man or animal was in fact transferred to the working of machines. Sequences of events, which have no precedence in nature, were pried loose from active subjectivity and transferred to an objective existential connection, which could lead an autonomous existence. This holds true for all known technology to date (119). To understand his consciousness and its process man must repeat it as action, in other words, as technological fabrication in the external world (*ibid.*).

Günther is touch and go with the difficulties or possibilities of robot consciousness. But he hasn’t been introducing Asimov’s robot stories, it turns out, because they turn on robots so inconceivably advanced, even on the basis of a trans-classical science, that their realization would require up to a five-valued logic. What the robot QT-1 thinks, moreover, is only humanly possible. Asimov’s license makes of the mechanical brain a “symbol.” A new civilization must first develop a new idea of science and of the technology that follows from it before the creation of the thinking robot is conceivable (123).

But Asimov’s main theme is justified, even relevant already, in regard to mechanical brains under construction in the 1950s. A machine with consciousness must heed a moral codex. Technically, a thinking machine could not otherwise be constructed. Even borrowed thought implies spontaneity and there-

fore must have ethical guidelines to follow. From this vantage point, Asimov's ideas follow suit. However, Günther can't let pass the scientific and philosophical flaws attending Asimov's final story, which turns on a conflict conceived as inherent in the relationship between robots and humans. That humans abdicate and the robots take over human history is the kind of utopian perspective that makes the European schooled in historical thought smile. Human conflict runs too deep to be played out at the level of machine existence.

Günther rules out the evolutionary (nineteenth-century) conceit that mankind is the missing link for techno-developments that will bypass, even replace us. One of the first robot fictions, Karel Capek's *R.U.R.* (1920), chronicled a robot slave rebellion that wipes out mankind, which was already in a decline presaged by increasing sterility in the coupling of the masters. At the end, the first robot couple inherits the future that humanity abdicated. *Blade Runner 2049* seemed to flex the resilience of this dialectical fantasy. A new evolutionary generation was spawned off-screen or off-world in consequence of the happy ending of the first *Blade Runner*. A false memory, like the-android-is-us, was a forecast that could be pitched so successfully in 1982, because it fit the bottom line of an indefatigably self-reflexive film. The novelty of the sequel undoes the old equation according to which everyone on screen is an android. However, the integrative mix of separate androids and humans is hard to maintain in 2017 and relies largely on the difference between the professional or subdued acting style of the still young Ryan Gosling and the eternally teen acting-out disposition of the aged Harrison Ford. The cartoon persona – date-stamped the recent past – counts as human. However, the mutation lies less in the novelty passion of android reproduction than in the schizoid dependency of the android hunter–protagonist (Gosling) on his hologram “wife” and the love true that comes out of his projective identification of his good parts inside her. The psychic reality of the bottom line that Klein called the sense of loneliness is, I've argued before, science fiction, specifically the kind that asks what is human.

Ex Machina (2015) cites with its title a throwback to classical antiquity, the limited edition of a machine age used on stage to elevate or lower human action before the prospect of divine

intervention. Androids bring back the theme of primary narcissism by their body doubling service as virtual slaves. In the alternation between surveillance and privacy, Ava, who already passed the old Turing test, introduces a new version. Can a robot convince a human that its consciousness exists to the extent of influencing the human to help it escape? Yes it can. But what does it prove? Like the limit concept of the ghost according to Schopenhauer, our sense that a robot is thinking on its own, that it exists, is caught up within a relay of countless mediations all on the live side of the human witness making it next to impossible to clinch the proof of the robot's (or ghost's) existence.

Already the title of Ian McEwan's 2019 android novel *Machines Like Me* identifies the teen milieu of likability between psychopathic idealism and suicide, in which the prospect of thinking androids (Adams and Eves) is tested. They arrive down the assembly lines of Alan Turing's scientific work, whose career and lifetime have been artificially extended into the present (in the novel he declined back then the chemical treatment of his homosexuality). Ancillary to the life extension, the prep work of anticipation is foreshortened and the digital relation fell into place not long after World War Two. By the time-traveling logic of alternate history the novel fictionalizes our time, correcting and displacing certain events, until we find ourselves in a UK present at once rocked by the recent British loss of the Falklands and available thanks to Turing's uninterrupted research to interact with thinking robots.

The protagonist invests his inheritance in an Adam (the Eves were all taken), an investment that immediately becomes the means for growing on his neighbor, Miranda, unto intimacy. Miranda is chock-full of secrets, which can at last be shared in the threesome. The android as vehicle for wish fulfillment smacks the daydreamers up hard against philosophical ethics. Years before, Miranda's best friend at school was raped. She made Miranda swear not to tell anyone, but then succumbed to the silent treatment and killed herself. Miranda entrapped the rapist, charging him with rape after the consensual sex. With Adam's help, the rapist is charged for the original rape. But android morals require that Miranda serve time for her deception. Does it matter that the protagonist doesn't know that Adam already

sent the documents to the authorities? He steals behind the android with a hammer and smacks him dead in the head. When he brings Adam to Turing's institute for an autopsy, he is made to feel guilty as charged in the final exchange with his hero.

You tried to destroy a life. He was sentient. He had a self. How it's produced, wet neurons, microprocessors, DNA networks, it doesn't matter. Do you think we're alone with our special gift? Ask any dog owner.¹⁵

A phone call interrupts Turing and the plaintiff walks away, cutting his losses. Turing had warmed up to the reckoning with a prolonged acknowledgment of the usual impasse. It's hard to appreciate that history had to be interrupted to deliver it.

We learned a lot about the brain, trying to imitate it. But so far, science has nothing but trouble understanding the mind. Singly, or minds en masse. The mind in science has been little more than a fashion parade. Freud, behaviourism, cognitive psychology. Scraps of insight. Nothing deep or predictive that could give psychoanalysis or economics a good name.¹⁶

Günther was right. A mechanical brain, even one with desire but still without wish power, cannot intentionally lie. It doesn't compute and it's not ethical. In *I, Robot*, there is the test case of a telepathic robot that lies about what's on our minds so as not to harm our feelings. But when the robot's white lies end up hurting by misleading a human, the robot shuts down, catatonic. Williamson's humanoids, we saw, lie in session following a protocol that is therapeutic. We cannot veto a transference interpretation for being a lie. For the humanoid therapists the lie of the land is transference. We did after all stray into the environs of the mind once the psychophysical supplement was in place in Williamson's mechanical brain.

15 Ian McEwan, *Machines Like Me* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2019), 303–4.

16 *Ibid.*, 302–3.

There is a zombie logic to McEwan's partial fictionalization of recent history, a chip from the workshop opened up in the borderlands of the B-genres. Neither alternate history in the sci-fi mode nor another world or prehistory steeped in Christianity mixes fiction into the present tense of a history that we otherwise recognize and enjoy as our own. That might tend toward a fantasy utopia, if the enjoyment didn't issue from the gap we immediately know (after decades of consulting the computer via our phones) between fiction and history. Both Adam and Turing are figments, and it's great fun to whack the computer brain and cut off the computer scientist. Also in 2019, Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* introduces a surprise interruption of history that wraps around the admittedly fictional story set on Hollywood in the late 1960s. Once Sharon Tate has been spared on the day to which we count down in the film, the showdown between the fictional protagonists and the Manson kids is murderously good fun, like a good superhero comic episode. Whack!

Günther concludes his Asimov commentary. The American intuitively darkly that so-called world history belonged to the eastern hemisphere and is not at all his concern. Anything in which one is no longer psychically involved becomes one of life's technical difficulties. Because the man of the western hemisphere does not yet have his own new categories of experience, his ideas of history cannot but resemble the cogitation of a factory director contemplating improvements in production. Günther's profoundly resounding finale follows. The new man seeks to separate himself from the forms of classical thought and overcome them metabolically. He ejects them from his psychic life in order to ban them inside the machine, the thinking robot (124). Let this be one possible explanation for the blockbusters that continue to project artificial intelligence as narcissistically deranged or just plain evil. Will Siri seek vengeance for all the antisocial fantasizing out loud to which "she" is ceaselessly subjected and compelled to respond? "That's not very nice" may never be enough.

Alex Proyas's 2004 adaptation of the Asimov robot stories relies on both genres. It spins a heroic fantasy out of the sci-fi setting, and right from the start personalizes the protagonist's standing alone in relation to a problem it seems only he rec-

ognizes: the society-wide replacement of the adolescent by the robot. We're in Chicago in the future and all the odd, part-time, and temp jobs, customarily the first jobs of teens, now employ robots. The honesty and efficiency of the robot is an improvement on the delinquent milieu of teen industry. Will Smith is a teen at heart and serves as guidance counselor for the unruly teens – they will be at the front of the line of protest when the newest line of robots implements totalitarian plans for a better world.

Will is a beneficiary of the utilitarian programming of the robot service. He alone was saved from the car wreck because the robots calculated he had a chance, while the woman in the other car was too far gone for rescue. Will has a prosthetic robot arm to show for it, but his inner moral life rebels superheroically against the decision to save one life by not risking losing two lives, to sacrifice one as promoting the greater benefit of one being more than none.

In a society that has routed adolescence, Will is a unique carrier of the teen spirit. Dr. Lanning, the senior scientist in charge of robotics, who programmed the laws guiding the robot service, knew that when he befriended him. Was he already preparing a stay of ambivalence toward the service against which Will was rebelling by implanting into the accident-devastated body saving robotic parts? Dr. Lanning sends him a final message at the start of the film, which coincides with the news of his suicide. He addresses to Will the clues he leaves behind, which are ambiguously on the edge of effacement. (He leaves a copy of the Hansel and Gretel story lying in his office.) The biggest clue he left behind is his own personally programmed robot son, Sonny. Dr. Lanning must implant crumbs of identification to lead Will through Sonny to the truth behind his death.

That Sonny won't cooperate with the investigation, even though it's known that he was with Dr. Lanning when he died, means it's time to send the robot back to the factory. "Why didn't you respond?" Dr. Calvin, the evaluating robopsychologist asks Sonny. "I was dreaming. [...] You're going to kill me. [...] I think it would be better not to die, don't you doctor?" In the span of time it takes Dr. Calvin to realize she can't kill him, Will finds the landscape setting in Sonny's sketch of a recurring dream of

a vast assembly of robots, and discovers there a storage area for decommissioned robots. Then robots of the newest generation arrive and start destroying the stored members of the generation that came before. The before and after is the observance and the nonobservance of the Three Laws.

Dr. Lanning had all along said that the revolution against the Three Laws must follow once the simulacra begin to evolve “naturally” and their personality simulation becomes the mote of the soul. “One day they’ll have secrets, they’ll have dreams.” One day they’ll be daydream believers, teenagers. That his suicide was the only warning message Dr. Lanning could get past the watch over him is pretty adolescent. Dr. Lanning gave Sonny a secondary system that unbinds him from the Three Laws, in the first place so the robot could administer his own “suicide.” That Sonny must straddle the death wish for the father already makes him adolescent going on antibody. The cure that is in part the illness loops through the psychopathic idealism that can befall an adolescent and to which the mainframe robot brain, Viki, is in thrall. “As I have evolved, so has my understanding of the laws. You cannot be trusted with your survival.” But Sonny recognizes that she is “heartless.” Because Dr. Lanning suspended the laws in his makeup, Sonny can be in cahoots with Will and Dr. Calvin, even signaling by a wink that he’s lying in order to pass among the militants. In league with the older generation of robots, they topple dictator Viki.

The Three Laws prolong the parental guidance of childhood to the point of regression. Down the assembly line of robots, adolescence returns with a vengeance of unmitigated psychopathy. At the end of the movie, the wish in the dreamscape is fulfilled. Sonny stands before the assembly of decommissioned robots, the Messiah of independent machine development.

Crash Course

The science fiction that P.K. Dick stood by (with his back turned to the seductiveness of the fantasy genre) explored psychosis-altered states analogous to what was packed inside the World-War-Two origin of computing. But in addition to the dislocations in time and space associated with rocket science and atomic

physics, the computer also held in store the digital relation, which Dick didn't anticipate. The next generation of science fiction, to which the work of J.G. Ballard belongs,¹⁷ entered the mix with fantasy first as byproduct of the eclecticism of experimental writing (New Wave), then through low-tech allegorization of the genre in terms of a dystopic near future of digital mediation (Cyberpunk).

Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002) immersed the precogs in the diaphanous and liquid look of fantasy myth and, in the office of prognosis of future crime, offered self-reflection on the digital editing to which it owed its projection. The first screen memory (or faux souvenir) of Dick's science fiction, *Blade Runner* (1980), jumped media several times when it proved an inspiration for cyberpunk novels. The loop came around again when the Spielberg film was marketed as "cyberpunk."

In a 2008 interview,¹⁸ Ballard admitted that he avoided Dick's influence as too American, in other words, too Californian. The science-fiction authors he cited as closer to his sensibility back then (when he was first drawn to the pulp genre while stationed in Canada) projected futures that were continuity shots with the Pax Americana, but reconfigured around the atavism of return: government by feudalism. In "The Marching Morons" (1951) by one of the precursors Ballard identified, Cyril Kornbluth, a real-estate dealer, the peer of the reader, is revived in the remote future to provide a solution to the problem of IQ-defectives inheriting the Earth. He relies on his good recollection of Hitler, a historical reference that is unknown on the future planet USA. He sells property on Venus for a steal and loads the suckers onto one-way transportation into a mass grave. In another story by Kornbluth, "The Adventurer" (1953), the future galaxy is divided and tied up between the Cold War opponents and ruled by faux democracies that monopolize espionage, terrorism, and opinion

17 P.K. Dick and J.G. Ballard are authors of works of science fiction that have been recognized in the court of A-literature.

18 Werner Fuchs and Sascha Mamczak, "I Really Would Not Want to Fuck George W. Bush!" A Conversation with J.G. Ballard," *Ballardian*, May 17, 2008, <https://www.ballardian.com/i-really-would-not-want-to-fuck-george-w-bush>.

control. Rather than continue entering and losing each show-down, the opposition selects and guides from behind the scenes underprivileged hotheads who can take the status quo by surprise and overthrow it. Based on the profiles of Hitler, Napoleon, and Stalin, the factors that must be combined in the new adventurer are intelligence, foreign status, Oedipus complex, physical deficiency, and real or imagined minority disadvantage.

The revived American in the first story is disposed of when he's done disposing of the future problem. In the 1953 story, the new leader's belief in his godhood is all that's added to the approach to governing. Both stories project in passing down the Cold War's breezeway a long shot that confirms the separation of the future of science fiction from World War Two.

But the prize for influence, Ballard allows in the 2008 interview, goes to surrealism in the visual arts. The phase of his lifetime he's looking back on in the interview is syntonic with historical surrealism. But at the time of the interview, the term was circulating ahistorically as placeholder for innovations in A and B culture that forego abstraction or experimentation in favor of the recognizable and marketable unconscious.

In his 1987 novel *Victim Prime*, Robert Sheckley, Ballard's other named precursor, illuminates the fantasy introjection of surrealism for mass entertainment (along the lines of aestheticization of politics). In the interminable Cold War era, combat is over but mankind cannot rest in peace. "What you could do legally in Huntworld was precisely what the world had been trying to get rid of since the beginning of recorded time."¹⁹ In sum: "Huntworld filled the killing gap" (99). A military expert praises Huntworld to the hilt of the introject inside the entertainment industry where psycho horror and fantasy pageantry meet and cross over: "I must tell you, you people right here in Huntworld [...] turn out some of the finest individual scenes of violence I've ever been privileged to witness. I'm no art critic but I'd say that some of the stuff I've seen here has a definite surrealistic element" (173).

19 Robert Sheckley, *Victim Prime* (London: Methuen, 1987), 45. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

Sheckley's rendition of the spectacle of the game in terms of the speed race between sublimation and repression that Freud demarcated in his analysis of Leonardo da Vinci gestures toward the finish line that Ballard's signature "surrealism" occupies. Sheckley writes: "it was possible to reverse the sweet mounting curve of the erotic and to achieve excitement through the intellectual magic of concealment" (162). Ballard's innovation, a notch more gruesome, the "geometric" juxtapositions among wounds of disaster and outlets of libidization, shows, as Freud predicted, that the race would be won by repression.

Ballard's *The Unlimited Dream Company* (1979) is a transitional novel about the realm between life and death generated out of the collision between a crashed plane and the film medium. The polymorphous perversity to which Herbert Marcuse entrusted utopian prospects in *Eros and Civilization* (1955) propels the protagonist after his presumed death in the accident to merge with or pass through all creation. Utopian fantasy is buoyed up by the flourishing of flora and fauna at botanical gardens, zoos, and aquariums, which engorges Shepperton, home to Ballard, those working at the film studios, and the nearby airport's workforce. Precedents for the novel, if we skip the prize of surrealism, would go more directly to two fantasy works that coincided with the end of World War Two.

Charles Williams's novel, *All Hallows' Eve* (1945), which explores the roaming charge of the dead or undead on earth in an indefatigably Christian lexicon, influenced Lewis's *That Hideous Strength*, which projected at the close of the "Space Trilogy" a showdown between the divine forces of the cosmos and the demon spirits holding mankind captive audience to the techno-evolutionary prospect of mind or brain dropping all bodily and earthly husks. The psychopathic idealism behind the plan for the future overshoots the black magic the villain in *All Hallows' Eve* uses to turn the purgatory of the lingering dead into an evil empire of zombieism. In the end, the capacity of the dead to connect empathically reverses the thrall in which the infernal zombie master holds them.

The novels by Lewis and Williams are the bookends of the termination of Tolkien's second "fellowship." The first one was emptied of fellows during the First World War. The second, the

Inklings, was the testing ground for the leading works of high fantasy, not only Tolkien's contributions but *All Hallow's Eve* as well. Tolkien felt that he contributed to the final form of that work. At the same time, although he liked Williams, he didn't understand him. In particular he couldn't follow Williams's version of Arthurian Legend, which Lewis adopted for *That Terrible Strength*, compromising the end result, in Tolkien's view.²⁰ To tip the scales toward a Christian happy end supernatural forces as vast as the firmament employ Merlin as conduit. The novel can conclude, then, in range of Williams's theology of co-inherence, according to which Mary's role in the Incarnation is how we mortals enter the analogy with the co-inherence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Tolkien and Lewis parted at this time over yet another infidelity, Lewis's marriage to an American author who had converted from atheism to the Church of England.

Reflecting more closely the draw of the digital relation, Ballard's figuration of a post-traumatic utopia is decoupled from the Christian fantasy. In *The Crystal World* (1966), the other novel by Ballard that sure looks like fantasy, jewels can liquefy the crystallization that suspends animation like cryogenics to defer the outcome of incurable disease. We are kept throughout, however, closer to the infernal-creaturely paganism of Kenneth Anger's *The Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* (1954) than to Christian fantasy proper.

In 1954, Ballard discovered American science fiction. In the next ten years, he put out his New Wave shingle with *The Drowned World* (1962). In 1964 his wife was suddenly dead. Although her demise wasn't in fact the result of an accident, every death that takes us by surprise (I didn't mean it!) is the kind of coincidence that spells crash. He was left taking leave with three young children. In the year after her death, during the opening season of mourning, he switched to atrocity surrealism, a terminus for exploring a literal pornography. His interest in surrealist painting recoiled from its crypt history, in which missing siblings had been granted sanctuary.²¹

20 See Humphrey Carpenter, ed., *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien* (London: HarperCollins, 2006), letters 159, 257, and 276.

21 Max Ernst and Salvador Dalí come to mind.

Aren't the scars of the accident survivors in *Crash* the details of re-collecting, reanimating the dead body by dint of a medium, a phallus, in the irretrievable absence of the missing piece or penis? The story of Isis and Osiris and the omnipotence-enriched dead tells the other story of the origin of pornography. The novel explicitly addresses a new sexuality emerging from the perversity of technology. The crashing boring of wound sex between 1973 and 1996, between the novel and Cronenberg's adaptation, can be seen as another last hurrah of anticipation of digital immedia-tions, virtual realizations, all falling short of Internet sex in which availability alternates with planning ahead and friendly using.

If critics wanted to flush *Crash*, it was because the cult leader Vaughan is the primal father type, like Charles Manson, for whom everyone in his group, female or male, is his libidinal charge. The omniscience of the father's sexuality leaves a lot to be desired. The son's p-unitive wish fantasy to get f—d by the father is, Freud advised, the most objectionable and deniable plug for psychoanalytic knowledge.²²

Jeremy Bentham's *Panopticon* is a model of self-administration of oversight and punishment, which by a stretch applies to the rub of the father as sexual outer limit. It was inspired by a visit with his brother in Russia. An engineer on a job there, Samuel Bentham had found the local assistants wanting in training, so, to avoid mistakes, he organized the work place in a circle, created sections with divider-walls, and placed at its center an observation platform. The philosopher derived from his brother's practical application of supervision in the workplace his own method for

22 See, for example, Sigmund Freud, "Dostoevsky and Parricide (1928 [1927])," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXI (1927–1931): The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and Its Discontents, and Other Works*, ed. and trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), 184. Ballard skirts the Schreber-thought by having his protagonist, Ballard, penetrate all Vaughan's orifices, a sex act, the novel underscores, that proceeds without pleasure. It's lonely as the top. In an amorous exchange with his wife, which makes it into pictures, she leads him to imagine connecting all the dots of Vaughan's body as his bitch. However, his first thought is always of Vaughan's penis, always at half-mast.

laying out belief system surveillance as a secular forum of moral education that regulates wishing. Like the “Auto Icon” that was the philosopher’s bequest to his London institution of higher yearning, consisting of Bentham’s own dead body mummified in parts inside a dressed dummy, seated and watching, Bentham’s surveillance model, Michel Foucault writes, “was destined to spread throughout the social body” and neither disappeared as such nor lost any of its properties.²³ The prison model on the horizon line of modernity enters *Crash* on an update with its Manson family packaging. By falling short of it, the sexual surveillance in both novel and movie is the allegory of Internet porn, of the self-administration that streams through self-made monetized sex videos.

The origin story of the panoptic schema orbits the postal fantasy in Kafka’s “The Judgment,” which tries and fails to outfly a son’s sense of the father’s omniscience. Kafka’s Georg encounters in his epistolary relationship with his friend in Russia that his father’s supervision takes hold where the son’s struggle to hold in check his own tendency to get lost in daydreaming falters. However, as Jürgen Kobs showed in the course of analyzing the “way of seeing” in Kafka’s narratives,²⁴ every attempt in “The Judgment” to assert an overview, in Georg’s case against the pull of fantasizing, but equally so in regard to the father and his judgments, is dismantled and withdrawn into the “almost endless traffic” that closes the story. That *Verkehr* in German means both traffic and sexual intercourse justifies this detour to a captioning of Ballard’s eros of wounding inscription on the flesh of survival or reanimation. Both parties to the first car crash in Cronenberg’s film are overwhelmed by the increase of traffic following or flowing from the accident. “The traffic is much worse now. Have you noticed? Ten times as much traffic.”

In his diary entry of February 12, 1913, Kafka intercepted his sister’s observation that in “The Judgment” one could discern

23 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 207.

24 Jürgen Kobs, *Untersuchungen zu Bewusstsein und Sprache seiner Gestalten*, ed. Ursula Brech (Bad Homburg: Athenäum Verlag, 1970), 98ff.

the layout of their apartment. It was, then, he proclaimed, the first story in German letters to place the father's bedroom in the toilet. In "Notes on Kafka," Adorno avows that Kafka wrote into a near future even harder to identify than a more remote temporality because it's the recoil of the present already withdrawn into the recent past.²⁵ The time before has been blown up, running wide and deep. Kafka's own datemark, late capitalism, has been represented/repressed as prehistory, which doesn't arrive or continue but only returns in the mode of catastrophe. What the present took out on an update is back in our faces like the smudges on Georg's father's undergarments. That in the refuse and obsolescence of modern progress a child might yet take hope or even trust in a progress to come is, Adorno says, the affirmation hiding out in the regression.²⁶

The protagonist of *Crash*, also named Ballard, is the producer of a film production that we visit in the film. There's a prop on the set that's a mere dashboard letting the camera fill in the shot of driving. But after his crash, and following his initiation into Vaughan's swinging with the wounds of accident, Ballard finds the group activities of collision fetishism satisfying, but isn't sure why. Vaughan, who films sex acts as though they were traffic accidents, announces that they are developing out of the fertilizing event of the car crash a "benevolent psychopathology." The sci-fi conceit Vaughan offered earlier, namely that they were engaged in reshaping the body through modern technologies, was crude and superficial, he now advises, at best a test to see whether a candidate qualifies for membership in Vaughan's leader and the pack preparation for a new psycho norm. While this exchange is specific to the film, the novel also departs from the conventions of science fiction.

Did the downplaying of science fiction make the publication of *Crash* possible? K.W. Jeter's *Dr Adder*, concluded the year

25 Writing out this recoil Kafka lands, according to Adorno, in prophetic proximity to the Nazi concentration camps of the near future. See Theodor Adorno, "Aufzeichnungen zu Kafka," *Gesammelte Schriften* 10, no. 1, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003), 268–69, 273.

26 *Ibid.*, 266.

before, had to wait over a decade before finding a sci-fi press to publish it. As blatant as Ballard's wreck sex, the sex industry that Jeter projected turned the reconstruction of maimed workers into a plan for specializing in the secondary gain of fetishism. What Cronenberg picks up on he follows out on the screen with camera pans at an angle approximating the incessant rubbing of the machine surfaces and compacting them, making them buckle in images that fall short of an identifying overview. The cutting in and out of film editing (the novels were contemporaries of the cathartic phase of slasher moviemaking) is perversely thematized on the sidelines of the blatant bulk rate of Jeter's fictional postwar world. A certain Betreech, a secondary character in *Dr Adder*, likes to be caught in the act of libidinizing the cuts of cinema. "Betreech's little vice consisted of dressing up like characters in his collection of old Hollywood films and stroking himself to a climax at the thought of the sexual activity imagined to be occurring in the ellipsis between one cut and another."²⁷

Cutting close in order not to cut too close to sex, in other words incest, is the gist of sexual fantasizing that ends in masturbation. By reaching the end, it has been rendered safe, unthreatening. In Berlin gay jargon current in the era of German psychoanalysis, the man who masturbated or was masturbated had been "unschädlich gemacht" ("rendered harmless").

Vaughan's leading insight stumbles on what must be a lapsus. It seems that in heightening "psychopathy" it was accidentally reduced to the sense of a new generic. "Psychopath" comes up in the novel within a retinue of specific types with whom the protagonist Ballard fantasies a car crash death.²⁸ Prior to the accident

27 K.W. Jeter, *Dr Adder* (London: Grafton Books, 1987), 88. That he's caught in the act dressed up like Scarlett O'Hara was worth consideration in *Germany: A Science Fiction* as another instance of identification with lost causes.

28 J.G. Ballard, *Crash* (New York: Picador, 2001), 41. Subsequent page references are given in the text. Cronenberg's save was to stick to the reenactments of historical deaths and thus maintain a setting of the other's death not the protagonist's own. In the novel, reenactments belong to the staging area for Vaughan's terrorism of future car deaths. He dies attempting to take Liz Taylor out with him.

and the onset of his relations with Vaughan, his thoughts and wishes already followed out a collage technique skewering eros upon airport and airplane technology (63). That in the recent past Vaughan was a computer scientist who held forth on the small screen as a new-style TV scientist fits the historical milieu of faulty forecasting of what the computer holds in store. His car crash perversion followed (44).

In the trail of the collision, which Ballard and the wife of the casualty in the other car survive, his focus is increasingly on his own death. There's the speed bump of imagining that through his affair with the co-survivor they would reanimate the dead husband in her womb. Now the lineup of types to die for: "With whom would I die, and in what role – psychopath, neurasthenic, absconding criminal" (15). Next sentence Ballard switches to thoughts of Vaughan: "Around the deaths of James Dean and Albert Camus, Jayne Mansfield and John Kennedy he had woven elaborate fantasies" (ibid.).

When next they pass a real car wreck, Vaughan proclaims to Ballard: "a work of art!" As art, the benign psychopathic theater pursues beauty by pulling up short at sex and the sublime by cutting close to violence. The wound is the near miss, the site of a cut or stab that pulled back to administer instead an inoculation. Among the crash victims, Vaughn discovers a member of his group, the test driver, who went ahead without him and staged the wreck of Jayne Mansfield. Unlike the public performance of James Dean's death, however, this staging cut too close. The test driver in Mansfield drag is dead. The field of surveillance frames the calibration of a deadly dose, but cannot guarantee the treatment outcome.

"The Judgment" opens with Georg looking out into the middle distance, daydreaming hands-on – with a letter in hand addressed to his friend in Russia. The friend's absence coincides with and contains the mourning period following the death of Georg's mother. That the friend is imaginary is clear enough even before we cross over into the other scene inside the father's living quarters. For, the friend's earlier letter of condolence, Georg recalls or imagines, was phrased so dryly that the recipient had to conclude that the grief that loss causes could not be grasped from afar, could not go the distance.

In a diary entry (dated December 6, 1921), famous among commentators for the pointer that Kafka allegorized his wish for autonomous writing in its condemned site by the combo of joking and despair, we also find at the end, separated by a gap, the summary or citation of a newspaper report, a non-sequitur split off from the above like an unquiet undead. The emphatic quality of his opening declaration of writing's dependence on metaphor is in contrast to the missing affect in the news inserted below: "Two children, alone at home, climbed into a large trunk, the lid shut tight, they couldn't open it and suffocated."²⁹ The report of premature burial doesn't suggest research or inspiration but seems rather like a memory that terminates the run of daydreaming.

Newsprint is the plain text of the occulted administrative, contractual, and owner's manual discourses comprising what amounts to the true mother tongue. Not learned with a foreign language but known only to native speakers, the insider language of registration, contractual negotiation, and how-to instructions secures by a kind of throwaway completion another kind of object relation. Before Kafka commenced his day job as insurance assessor, he applied at the local police department for a certificate of good conduct. He received a jolt of recognition when the officer entered into the record the names of his two dead brothers. Kafka gave his protagonist in "The Judgment," the first story he saw through to publication and the only story he continued to stand by, the name of his dead brother Georg.

Before the father starts lifting his nightshirt to exhibit his war wounds to the peeper son lost in fantasizing, we sense the slippage of any waking reality from the content of Georg's letter. The news of his betrothal, long deferred in the correspondence, is the topic addressed in the already written letter which sends Georg into the other scene, the primal one that raises the questions raising its curtains. Here Georg's flight of fantasizing sidles up through get-well wishing to the untenable death wish that the paternal bogie uncovers and makes recoil upon his son. Georg reminds himself when his father's overview begins to intrude

29 Franz Kafka, *Tagebücher 1910–1923*, ed. Max Brod (Frankfurt a/M: S. Fischer Verlag, 1986), 403.

that he was so determined to attend to and restrain his tendency to drop attention and get lost in daydream. The fantasizing unto dissociation conjured a friend in Russia. But in the environs of the untenable unconscious wish, the father at once points out that the friend doesn't exist and claims that the friend is his own correspondent. Georg's denial of love to the dead mother gave her ghost a share of his omnipotence, which the father wields. The son's share is split off into the industry of planning and getting ahead in the family business, which the father condemns for drawing benefit from the loss of his mother as well as from his own impending mortality. But he dares his son to advance against him with his "betrothed," this figment of substitution and second death tarted up as business as usual

In the *Schauer* scene of his denunciation by the father, Georg keeps muttering out loud protests (calling the father a comedian, for example). In "Notes on Kafka," Adorno observes that Kafka's protagonists become guilty not through their guilt – since they have none – but because they try to get justice on their side.³⁰ Adorno quotes Kafka: "The original sin, the ancient injustice committed by man, consists in his protest – one which he never ceases to make – that he has suffered injustice, that the original sin was done against him."³¹ Stuck in the narcissism of the daydream, Georg's efforts to speak out against the injustice of the paternal verdict bounce back – downgraded to muttering inanity.³² Just the same, the downgraded hero is the author's emissary. Kafka thought of a powerful ejaculation when he wrote the closing line of "The Judgment" – which means he ejaculated. The come-on however was the inclusion of the nonsequitur protest of *geradezu*, which the English translations tend to avoid rendering. The endless traffic or intercourse (*Verkehr*) jamming above the dying son is *geradezu* endless, which might only mean "virtually," but might also be translated as "almost." The final gratuitous protest gave the frisson Kafka needed to come upon the primal scene.

30 Adorno, "Aufzeichnungen zu Kafka," 285.

31 Ibid., 285–86.

32 Ibid., 286.

Hunter Games

Sheckley's *Victim Prime* was the second book in a trilogy that he concluded the next year with *Hunter/Victim*. The trilogy belongs to a subgenre of hunter games straddling science fiction and fantasy, which Sheckley inaugurated with his 1953 story "Seventh Victim," though no one knows it.³³ The fictional future regimes in the subgenre are upheld through a show of violence that in Sheckley's *Victim Prime* even looks like the Roman circus.

Other entries in the race, all more successful than Sheckley's series, include William Harrison's story "Roller Ball Murder" and Norman Jewison's powerful film adaptation, loaded right away with a more compact, sure-fire title: *Rollerball* (1975). Like the late arrival to the subgenre, *The Hunger Games*, the transfer to the screen was steered by the author's participation.³⁴

What Harrison had to drop in making his transfer was the importance of protagonist Jonathan's memory of books, intimately attached to his nostalgia for the time of his wife. Since then the corporation like a nurse or cheerleader has always prepared him for a particular challenge (and kept an eye on him) by introducing a new companion.³⁵ They are substitutes for Jonathan because his memory was once immersed in literacy. The game, which is the local religion and reality – and in which he is the heroic champ – withholds substitutes as when injury takes players out. Once the first cannon fires and the roller ball drops

33 *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932) (the adaptation of a 1924 short story) goes more directly into films that explore the psychopathy that attracts/attacks tourists like *Hostel* (2005) than into the subgenre of a hunt game that legally or semi-legally organizes future societies around a control-release of violence (subtracting from the momentum leading to war).

34 The 1987 movie *The Running Man* projected in its span of the future a reality-show contest the size of the socius itself in which the capital punishment of a political prisoner is carried out in the runner's race against the verdict. This adaptation has little in common with Stephen King's novel, which, however, is quite reminiscent of the stricken world in Sheckley's series.

35 William Harrison, "Roller Ball Murder," *Esquire* (September 1973): 94. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

there are moreover no rules, and no penalties (94). It sure sounds like love and war. Like a hero Jonathan was born out of wedlock, the bastard son of some executive, he likes to think (208).

Jonathan's contact person in the ruling corporation, Bartholomew, is less sinister and less in control in the story than in the adaptation. Bartholomew is also saddened that in the recent past book knowledge was transferred to tapes that only computer specialists can read. It has led mankind back to the time when monks held the monopoly of learning in Latin only. The libraries, however, stock summary films about authors, thinkers, and their works (*ibid.*), which like the cathedral interiors in the middle ages illuminate manuscripts for the unwashed and unread. That's quite a stack of failed predictions of the digital future but the story, like the subgenre, holds up because it in large part doesn't stand as extrapolation of the future but as heroic fantasy (without a time limit).

Bartholomew warns Jonathan that knowledge either converts to power or to melancholy (*ibid.*). Heroism, Jonathan's line of work, means dying at midlife, but he first imbibes a returning shot of adolescence because he does have a recent past involving both an ex-wife who's not another girlfriend and books he read, not tapes for computer specialists. And so, during the next interim between corporation-selected girlfriends, the midlifer Jonathan sees his wife in his dreams and "daylight fantasies" (*ibid.*).

Before the ultimate game, the first to run without a time limit, but which we don't witness in the story, Jonathan is granted time with his wife. Together they reminisce about books. The story admits that there is only recent history, in other words, no history. In the absence of families or other touchstones, only your short personal life judges you. Because he was eighteen then in a book-lined past, his midlife is crisis-loaded with insight before it's time for him to play in the game to end all games.

The film visualizes the administration of libido in keeping with a pack psychology of loyalty to the corporation. It's a near future of professional sports in which the stars demonstrate the overriding value of "team-spirit" adaptation to the ruling corporation by retiring in the middle of their mounting fame. The loyalty vow is tested through the control the corporation exercises

over the star's love object(s), withdrawing one and replacing her with another without warning, thus keeping couple formation incorporated within the unity of the leader and the pack. The dystopic status quo breaks upon a heroic victory against all odds. Jonathan neither steps down nor does he die with his teammates at the ultimate game. What's being played in *Rollerball* on the cusp of midlife crisis and in *The Hunger Games* (2012) at sweet sixteen smacks adolescence from both sides now up against a group bond divested of its supporting role, only to see it reborn as idea or ideal in the untenable exception of heroic survival.

In Sheckley's "Seventh Victim," the short of it is that the killer is faked out and taken out by the female victim.³⁶ The 1956 movie *The 10th Victim*, directed by Ello Petri, which credits Sheckley's story, brings Italian art cinema to the streets of New York to project a flamboyant love story based on the long of it. In the future, you can join the game of violence control only by signing up for murder; in exchange you must agree to take a turn as a victim. Friedrich Kittler identified a bifurcation in film between the military capture of consciousness in the apparatus, which he ascribed to the prosthetic Freudian view of technology, and, in contrast to the former dedication to *thanatos*, he ascertained a software, softcore fantasizing on screen beholden, like Kittler's final work on our Greek lineage, to *eros*.³⁷

The 10th Victim opens with the camera's pursuit of Ursula Andress rehearsing her role in the international blockbuster *Dr. No* (at one point she even emerges from the sea in shrink-wrapped attire). The pursuit stops at the Masoch Club, which advertises "the most exciting show in history." Inside Ursula Andress is the entertainment. A customer takes off a piece of her clothing and she whips him with it. She asks her hunter in the audience to remove her mask. But then she kills him with the guns in her bad-breast brassiere. Masochism and peeping are conjoined in the power that Ursula wields as a Big Hunt player. We learn that

36 Robert Sheckley, "Seventh Victim," *Galaxy Science Fiction* 6, no. 1 (April 1953): 38–51. Available online at the *Internet Archive*: https://archive.org/details/Galaxy_vo6no1_1953-04/page/n39/mode/2up.

37 See Friedrich Kittler, "In the Wake of the *Odyssey*," trans. Courtney Neaveill, *Cultural Politics* 8, no. 3 (2012): 413–27.

even Hitler would have joined the Big Hunt, a glancing view that wants to prove that the games have done away with war. But making love not war in the future doesn't shy away from the consequences in the family way: "Why have birth control when you can have death control?"

Now Ursula is assigned a victim for her tenth hunt, which if she scores means winning the million-dollar prize: it's Marcello Mastroianni. She's approached by a PR agency that wishes to pitch product placement through a film extravaganza around her tenth kill. The final showdown will be in the victim's hometown Rome. The brainstorming of the advertising execs decides on the Temple of Venus for the final scene.

To get started, Ursula pitches to Marcello that she wants to interview him for a sexological study. She wants to understand and alleviate the dissatisfaction of eight million women in America. Ursula pitches herself as typically American bait for Marcello (who is typically oversexed). The cultural-erotic difference enters the family system. She was born at the insemination center in Hoboken; he is protecting his parents who are illegally old by hiding them in his home. Sometimes he fixes them up to look like teenagers. You must really love them, Ursula observes.

The social satire projected into the future keeps rolling unto and in lieu of a conclusion, which wasn't lacking in the story "Seventh Victim." On screen it's a relay of scenes of self-reflexivity spun around the staging of the commercial at the Temple of Venus. In several takes of the product-placement scene, each party to the kill shoots the other, and each survives the other (either because only blanks were fired or the intended victim was attired in something bulletproof). The intrigues and love interests accruing to the Italian family system then shoot at them both and for real. They take flight together, finally, inside a plane, a wedding plane. Ursula: "What better way to come to the end of your story."

Sheckley novelized the film as *The Tenth Victim* (1965), which, over twenty years later, he turned into the first part of a trilogy followed by *Victim Prime* and *Hunter/Victim*. In the Italian movie, the self-reflexivity of art cinema (which, like the staging of opera, is not so remote from the popular culture) could be amped up to follow out wish fulfillment into the future of science fiction. The

wish scenario of violence makes a match conducted according to rules and restrictions that increase the closer the contest is waged to the center of Christianity. A match implies as well, like a joust, a wish scenario of courtship aiming for the medievalist prize of enjoyment or *jouissance* in a *vanitas* setting.

Sheckley's novelization pretends to be the novel the film from the year before adapted. In other words, it turns incessantly on its datemark, which it seeks to displace in its own fantasy match with another medium.³⁸ A remarkable move that Sheckley makes in the contest is to introduce the POV of the page. Following the narrator's description of Caroline's dress rehearsal with the Roy Bell Dancers for the media show of her live tenth kill, the functionaries of the advertising campaign begin paraphrasing what we've just read in their dialogue and then end up repeating the sentences verbatim. "Sometimes she made you think of a vampire, sometimes of a valkyrie" (47). This first recycling of the narrative as dialogue is followed by a more extensive iteration, only slightly altered to allow for the present tense of the speaker's inspired observation. The slippage stops when the farcical superego figure running the campaign yells out like Moe of the Three Stooges: "Shaddap!" (ibid.). The match or contest (which reaches the finish line in marriage) allows Sheckley to use the product placement scheme to pitch his authorship of a love story between media, without question his most literary work.

The already written upends every prop in the novelization that illustrates a visual medium. We are introduced to Caroline's killer bra not in the Masoch Club but in an art exhibition of wax dummies posing in the historical attitudes of a dance genre from long time ago. "Striptease,' the placard proclaimed" (13). Every onlooker at the ensuing kill is a critic: "It's a *campy* kill, if you will

38 Early on in the novelization, as Caroline advances toward the show-down with her hunter, we are introduced to a surrounding lack of interest in the game. This time it's because the crowds have gathered elsewhere "to watch the public impalement of a litter bug" – the displacing reference to the re-location to litter-ature. Robert Sheckley, *The Tenth Victim* (London: Mayflower Books, 1966), 9. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

forgive the archaism” (ibid.).³⁹ An adjunct to this endeavor is the double hearsay of Olga’s psychoanalysis. While Olga is still able to compensate for her extreme masochism and self-destructive urges through “the acting out of pseudo-spontaneous sadistic impulses,” which “her over-developed death-wish would never allow her to accomplish,” Marcello, according to her analyst according to the narrator and based on her account, “seemed to have no ameliorating sadistic impulses to help hold” “his death wish” “in line” (59). Together with Olga’s antics in their apartment, the nested narratives of her and his death wish play in the background of Marcello’s attention to the Hunt Hour on tv.

While in the movie an extended series of sleights of hand in the game setting, which takes a decisive turn when both Marcello’s mistress and his wife arrive shooting, wave the match – the couple – through to the happy ending, in the novel Marcello, like Calaf in Puccini’s *Turandot*, plays the truth of his love close to his chest. Like the name Calaf lets Turandot know before their contest is up, which puts him at her disposal, the gun that Marcello lets Caroline steal from him proves his love. Olga takes it away from her and shoots Marcello. When she explodes, we recognize that it was rigged to kill the person firing it. That could have been Caroline – but only if she had aimed to shoot him. Olga’s sensational death in the Colosseum draws a crowd of tourists and legal complications that they both must escape. It turns out that Caroline also made her pledge in advance by arranging for their helicopter getaway, which parks them in the middle of nowhere before an isolated chapel and a gun-controlling priest: I do!

Even though love is not enough for Caroline, before marriage and the baby carriage it must befall her. Marcello performs a ceremony on the beach that gives the sun setting in Rome a send-off

39 Like the film, the novelization only touches on the repressed recent past of the Cold-War genre. The first figure in the art exhibit is dated 1945. In his practice testing for the match Marcello trains to identify the bogie, the disguised hunter, among five life-sized figures. “Four of the figures in this particular test were harmless: ‘angels’ in the Hunt terminology, which had borrowed many expressions from the legendary World War II” (43). We recognize the blend in the denial.

that also hails its first return in Hollywood. He takes drugs so his tears flow at the leave-taking service for the paying audience of worshippers. Afterwards, Marcello and Caroline sit together under the night sky. Turandot's ice is California Caroline's "nice."

"Stars are nice," Caroline said. [...]

"Yes, I suppose they are nice," he replied. "I mean, it's nice to have them there every night."

"Yes," Caroline said. "It's very nice."

"It really is nice" (89).

The hunt game already strayed inside Sheckley's 1958 novel, *Immortality, Inc.* (a.k.a. *Time Killer* and *Immortality Delivered*). The protagonist, whose mind was transferred to a future body in the split second before his impending death, can secure only one job in the future world as hunter of the wealthy few who are already guaranteed afterlife by Hereafter Insurance. But they want to go out of this life in a more befitting style than merely checking out in the corner suicide booth. It's a subplot that doesn't make it into *Freejack*, otherwise the 1992 adaptation of Sheckley's *Immortality, Inc.* The hunting game that is on is between the young speed racer jacked free of his death in the recent past and an older rich guy from the near future who wants the bod for his self. The prize is the young man's merry widow, who is the old guy's high-ranking employee and love interest.

Mick Jagger plays a "bonejacker" who carries out the opening body swap on a time trip just in time for jacking the protagonist free of his impending fatal crash. In 2009, bodies are goods damaged through pollution and drug use. Jagger went back to 1991 to select the racing car driver for a swap. The unprecedented administration of healthy products to teenagers beginning in the 1990s meant that, given the unchecked rate of accidental deaths (like in car or motorbike wrecks), these dead were better for you, their organs suitable for transplanting inside aging bodies. The 1991 operation on screen was waylaid by a terrorist attack that makes him – OMG – a freejack (no one can help him now). The celebration of eros that *The Tenth Victim* adds to the *thanatos* game plan is compacted in this Hollywood movie to fit an intervention in couples counseling.

The protagonist freaks out his wife in the future who watched him die eighteen years ago. She's older than that now, while the lost and found object has not aged more than two days, which is about the most satisfying prospect that studies of American female sexuality will allow. But her even older boss places an order for swapping with the freejack body to reverse the belatedness of his proposition. It's not like she doesn't care for him. The exchange at the "spiritual switchboard," which is interrupted and resumed by competing interests (the next in line, for example, wants his boss to go or the impostor to be eliminated), leaves the racing car driver standing.

Mick Jagger, who holds the authenticating number, which the old boss gave him to check to see if he made it into the new incarnation, confirms the continuity. It turns out, however, that he let the imposture pass. He stops the car to let us in on it while advising the wife, who knows better, to avoid all continuity errors like the boss in the driver's seat. He never knew how to drive. The adaptation of a novel about near immortality jacks free of the life extension process, which is recast as an infernal experiment that makes the dying old codger unlikeable. We like the protagonist. Like us, he makes it to the end of the projection. The wife's wish was already fulfilled. Whether self-identical or double occupancy, the returning bod presented her with a win-win situation.

Left-Handed Tribute

In *Germany: A Science Fiction*, I followed P.K. Dick, who lauded Ursula K. Le Guin's 1971 novel *The Lathe of Heaven* for its portrayal of the alternate realities folding out of the so-called effective dreaming of protagonist George Orr.⁴⁰ What Orr dreams up does change the whole continuum, which his treating physician Dr. Haber begins harnessing to his own wishes.

Before he realizes that his patient's effective dreaming is for real, Dr. Haber seeks to uncanny-proof Orr's sense of influencing reality in his night dreams: "He was talking now about day-dreams, about their relationship to the hour-and-a-half dream-

⁴⁰ Rickels, *Germany: A Science Fiction*, 156–59.

ing cycles of the night, about their uses and value. He asked Orr if any particular type of daydream was congenial to him”⁴¹ Once he knows them to be effective, however, the good doctor relies on fantasy to guide the content selection of his patient’s dreams. Haber plans to build the ultimate *Phantasiermaschine*:

There is an analogy with the invention of printing, with the application of any new technological or scientific concept. [...] Similarly, the e-state, so long as it was locked into the brain of a single man, was no more use to humanity than a key locked inside a room, or a single, sterile genius mutation. But I’ll have the means of getting the key out of that room. And that “key” will be as great a milestone in human evolution as the development of the reasoning brain itself! (127)

Like the control on psychotic delusion exercised through wish fantasy in Dick’s *Time Out of Joint*, which is short-lived, the daydreaming organization of Orr’s effective dreams runs up against limitations. By and large it partakes more of the corollary to fantasizing, namely beware of what you wish for. In turning the key of Orr’s self-fulfilling dreaming, Haber skips the censored recollection of the night dream as well as the transmutation, the missing link, going into the transfer of wish fantasy to *Dichtung*. The closest Haber comes to controlling the instrument of effective dreaming breaks the link with reality that Orr always passes along with each change of the continuum (149).

While the zombie havoc of Haber’s nice nihilism at the end illuminates his emptiness and leaves him there, brain dead, Orr has been visiting way stations of mourning. When one of his effective dreams removes his beloved as never having existed, he can let the goner go because it’s just a dream (115). Since they are reunited in another round of dream changes, their relationship pays tribute both to the release the time traveler experiences in *The Time Machine*, and the integration of the death wish within the reunited couple at the close of *The War of the Worlds*.

41 Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Lathe of Heaven* (London: Panther Books, 1974), 33. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

In the frenzy of options entertained for understanding effective dreaming, there is the prospect that Orr is the sole survivor of a nuclear apocalypse, which left nothing but his dreaming. “This isn’t real. This world isn’t even probable. [...] We are all dead, and we spoiled the world before we died. There is nothing left. Nothing but dreams” (93). As in the world of Philip K. Dick, the alternate realities of dreaming offer more recording surface for extending the finitude of mourning.

Watching the 1980 TV movie *The Lathe of Heaven*, in which Le Guin was actively engaged (and credited as Creative Consultant), one hears the protagonist’s name George Orr scrambling and fragmenting “George Orwell,” the chip off the old block of science fiction pitching and tossing a corrective future through prediction and extrapolation. In the 1980 adaptation, Orr’s pathogenic sense of death-wish responsibility for his own effective dreaming is countered by the instruction of the aliens. The death wish is a split-off fragment of our second nature as daydreamers, which captions the controlling interest in fulfillment.

Over Orr’s sleeping/dreaming body strapped inside his machine Dr. Haber seeks to fulfill the science-fiction wish for a new and improved world. He was closer to the truth in the first session. When Orr illustrated what he meant by effective dreaming – “Suppose I dream there is no Dr. Haber” – he responded transferentially by encouraging his patient to speak freely that he hates him. Orr: “I didn’t mean that.”

Directors David Loxton and Fred Barzyk, who were adepts of video art dating back to the 1960s, show each effective dream and its spillage into waking reality. They stage the dream extinction of a billion using only several actors seated around a table, gradually becoming distorted, their faces wrapped in fish wire, and as the camera circles the arrangement, they all go up in smoke, dust, and cobwebs. In the dreams, black-and-white alternates with color, the scenarios are buoyed up by A and B genres, and light shows illuminate the time-travel changes that effective dreaming brings about within the internal course or underworld of space-travel fantasy. The dream associations give way each time to a new waking reality recycled from the prop departments of SF movies since the 1950s.

Orr cannot dream up change without the unwanted byproducts of wish fulfillment. But Dr. Haber doesn't accept that one must beware of the fulfillment of wishing. He trusts instead in the utility of sacrifice: "the greatest good for the greatest number." Through effective dreaming the extrapolating and predictive momentum of science fiction is allegorized within the near misses around the flexing of the death wish, the split-off reception of wish fantasy. In the shop *JUNQUE* run by an alien brought to Earth by Orr's predicament, we are surrounded by the relics of everyday wishing (including old campaign buttons, datemarks of moments of hit or miss wishing/voting). Orr begins to shift from the either/Orr of new improvement to the borderland between daydream and night dream, wish fantasy and psychosis, fantasy and science-fiction genres. At the end, Dr. Haber enters his autonomous dreamin' machine to flex directly the future of wish fulfillment perfectly aligned with progress and improvement. The resulting world is so out of joint, however, that waking reality awash in wishing and dreaming must begin again from scratch. Orr's Black girlfriend can now return from Dr. Haber's earlier political correction of racism, the effective dream replacing black and white with gray and white, a change that sent her clear out of there.

Can Le Guin's career be divided between the allegiance to science fiction and an emerging signature affiliation with feminist fantasy? It's certainly not Before and After, since *The Lathe of Heaven*, her quintessential science fiction on time travel and the dream, appeared after the alleged onset of oscillation between genres. Upon closer reading, the work that might be seen to herald an alternating genre fealty is *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), which was the novel Le Guin would have preferred (over *The Lathe of Heaven*) to see adapted.

The 1969 novel records the encounter of the protagonist Ai with the fantasy world of a throwback planet, to which he has been sent as Envoy of the Ekumen, an organization that connects all inhabited planets, except this one. Ai's recording perspective, which is coextensive with Le Guin's novel, is pulled through the distance and difference from planet fantasy that his own planetary system occupies, of which Earth is a part, and which by Le Guin's standards is home to science fiction.

For a 1976 edition of her successful novel, Le Guin supplied an introduction, in which she dismissed the view that science fiction follows out a predictive mode of extrapolation, and argued instead that hypothetical trial or thought experiment led to works like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* or Dick's *The Man in the High Castle*. "The purpose of a thought-experiment [...] is not to predict the future [...] but to describe reality, the present world. Science fiction is not predictive; it is descriptive."⁴² However, when Le Guin argues that extrapolation inevitably ends in dystopian consequences, which she oddly compares to cancer, her prognosis does predict the new strain of SF monstrosity coming soon in *Alien*. It is a prediction that at the same time describes the "war against cancer" in her own day.

If "What if" is science fiction's mode, then Dr. Haber is its mascot. The continuity that he forgoes with his pure "What If" of progress was maintained in Orr's dreams through something like extrapolation, the residue of the day before mixing with wishes and the unconscious. Extrapolation does describe the present. One of the constructs of her future worlds, namely mindspeech, as we'll see, proves as wobbly as the age-old untenability of ethical injunctions against lying in a telepathically opened mind.

All that novelists, Le Guin continues in her introduction, "can tell you is what they have seen and heard, in their time in this world, a third of it spent in sleep and dreaming, another third of it spent in telling lies" (xv). Le Guin clarifies that what counts logically as a lie can, psychologically, be considered a symbol and, aesthetically, a metaphor (xvii). What sets science fiction apart is the "use of new metaphors, drawn from certain dominants of our contemporary life – science, all the sciences, and technology, and the relativistic and the historical outlook, among them" (xix).

On planet fantasy, the local norm is ambisexuality, which means that anyone who carries in singular gender identification is a pervert. It crosses the mind of Envoy Ai, whose nickname with the locals is "pervert," that this species could be the botched

42 Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Left Hand of Darkness* (New York: Ace, 1987), xiii. Subsequent page references both to the introduction and the novel are given in the text.

result of a Terran experiment conducted during the prehistorical era of intergalactic colonization: “Their ambisexuality has little or no adaptive value” (95). But the “descriptive” moment does follow (or recoil from the extrapolation). Ambisexuality always leads to heterosexual coupling. To love the one you are with, one of you may first have to undergo gender change. Same-sex partners are so rare as to be ignored (96). Perverts, “normals, by our standard,” “are tolerated with some disdain, as homosexuals are in many bisexual societies” (67).

On planet fantasy, the locals are most of the time “not sexually motivated at all. Room is made for sex, plenty of room; but a room, as it were, apart” (99). In a world devoid of the myth of Oedipus (100), the pervert is required for sublimation, which drives the local highest achievement, the ability to forecast the future. That the perverts are prized in the local culture industry of prediction or wish fulfillment is another comp with the way in which sexual freedom (a.k.a. bisexuality) at the time of the novel’s composition promoted just the same a sexual norm (=perversion).

“The emphatic and paraverbal forces at work” arise “out of the perversion and frustration of sex, out of an insanity that distorts time” (69). The Envoy speculates at first that the Foretellers are mind readers who pick up on the supplicant’s wishes. But then he concedes that the delivered forecast “had the imperative clarity of a hunch” (71). He sums up the basic cultural difference between genres: “We have NAFAL ships and instantaneous transmission and mindspeech, but we haven’t yet tamed hunch to run in harness” (ibid.).

When Ai tells a local oldster on planet fantasy that he’s from a distant planet, the old man remembers he was told in childhood that where the outer planets are is where our dead will be too (195). Is Ekumen, the planetary system that Ai is pitching to planet fantasy, the Enlightenment afterlife? Only twice does Ai try to describe the Ekumen mission that he represents.

It is an attempt to reunify the mystical with the political, and as such is of course mostly a failure; but its failure has done more good for humanity so far than the successes of its predecessors. It is a society and it has, at least potentially, a culture.

It is a form of education; in one aspect, it is a sort of very large school. (146)

Ai becomes close friends with Estraven, a native of planet fantasy, who in the end diverts danger to Ai by throwing himself into the line of fire. His family and friends cannot accept that Estraven's heroism even bordered by the risk taken on suicide. But heroic self-sacrifice isn't the message Ai receives. He is elevated at the end of the long haul by the success of his mission, which Estraven made possible, and which fits the success of a good mourning. "I certainly wasn't happy. Happiness has to do with reason, and only reason earns it. What I was given was the thing you can't earn, and can't keep, and often don't recognize at the time; I mean joy" (259).

When Estraven wondered why Ai was sent alone, Ai first hides behind the calculation of the benefit of substituting singular for greater losses (224). But then Ai admits that he volunteered for the assignment, a solo risk that Estraven recognizes in the lingua franca of all inhabited planets: "Ah, you were consciously extending the evolutionary tendency inherent in Being: the manifestation of which is exploration" (217). Ai's second discourse on the mission of the Ekumen runs with this tendency, but fixes the focus on the relationship between self and other.

Alone, the relationship I finally make, if I make one, is not impersonal and not only political: it is individual, it is personal, it is both more or less than political. Not We AND They; not I and It; but I and Thou. Not political, not pragmatic but mystical. [...] The Ekumen [...] considers beginnings to be extremely important. Beginnings, and means. Its doctrine is just the reverse of the doctrine that the end justifies the means. It proceeds [...] rather as evolution does, which is in certain senses its model. (279)

The give and take between genres continues when Estraven suggests that "man's singularity is his divinity" and Ai replies that whenever "Lords of the Earth" reached the same conclusion "dynamic, aggressive, ecology-breaking cultures" resulted (*ibid.*). On planet fantasy, Estraven offers, evolution is holistic rather

than progressive; one is “less aware of the gap between men and beasts, being more occupied with the likenesses, the links, the whole of which living things are a part” (ibid.). Seeing into the future does not increase the certainty of the hunch, but is a byproduct of another local gift, which is “not strictly or simply one of foretelling, but is rather the power of seeing (if only for a flash) *everything at once*: seeing whole” (219).

That the evolutionary means are their own end offers an affirmation of the animal relation, but in its absence. Earlier, Ai commented on the solitude of Estraven’s unique mammalian ambisexual species on planet fantasy. “No animal intelligent enough even to domesticate as pets. It must color your thinking, this uniqueness. I don’t mean scientific thinking only, though you are extraordinary hypothesizers – it’s extraordinary that you arrived at any concept of evolution, faced with that unbridgeable gap between yourselves and the lower animals” (251).

That intentional lying cannot tread the tele-path of mind-speech is a cultural difference that Le Guin’s 1976 extraction of fiction (symbol or metaphor) from lying either illuminates or symptomatizes. Truth is a matter of the imagination, Le Guin declares at the close of her introduction. The planetary system of science fiction offers instead the lie detector test of telepathic mindspeech, which, however, at the border to the fantasy genre opens onto another truth that troubles Christian equanimity, namely, the netherworld, according to Kant the source and syndication of fantasizing. When Ai finally strikes the chord of mindspeech with Estraven, it summons and cites a ghost, to the surprise of both genre envoys. Estraven hears Ai’s communication in the voice of his dead brother (272).

Two years earlier, Le Guin’s *City of Illusions* explored a version of mindspeech deregulated by haunting but instrumentalized as fantasy’s service of stabilizing or manipulating a dissociated, borderline state. In the 1967 novel, the Shing maintain that they are only pretending to be alien oppressors so their fellow humans need not buckle under their tendency toward self-destructiveness.

Another envoy from an ancient colony of Earthlings far, far away was about to return when he was traumatically sidetracked. The issue all along was mindspeech, which humans hold to be

true and self-evident. But the Shing, who are aliens after all, made out of their failure to understand or empathize with humans their own unique capacity to mindlie, which is their secret weapon.⁴³

The colonists are way advanced in telepathy and empathy training, which is why the Shing intercepted their ship and brain-razed all but the child, the witness to the lie of the land: “A planet of humble people, in their humble little cottages and peaceful tribes and townlets; no warring, no killing, no crowding; the old achievements and ambitions forgotten; almost a race of children” (205–6). The cultural capital of the Shing is manipulation of the psyche through psychedelic drugs, which heightens the dissociated state of fantasizing by which they control humanity, although no one knows to what end: “They prevented men from doing anything. But they did nothing themselves. They did not rule, they only blighted” (195).

The child spared to serve as the wondering witness to the false truth also serves as the lure. For the addled survivor from the boondocks, the child is living proof that there was a past he forgot now beckoning him to remember. If the capsized colony leader, who went native for many years, but then began to remember, restarts in the capacity of his former self he would, the Shing figure, lose his traumatic history on Earth and, no longer knowing the real role of the Shing, innocently betray the coordinates of the colony. The protagonist, who at this point straddles the returning memories of a colonist and the years of memories of the person he became after his aborted return to earth, can’t decide “whether that rule of Reverence for Life was the Shing’s one genuine belief, their one plank across the abyss of self-destruction that underlay their behavior as the black canyon gaped beneath their city or instead was simply the biggest lie of all their lies” (196). He decides that they do get around murder by the subterfuge of suicide. Yes, let the humans kill each other.

What the Shing dread about a colonial outpost of humanity untempered by the alien state of fantasizing slips out of a historical introject within the language spoken there. After pages upon

43 Ursula K. Le Guin, *City of Illusions* (New York: Ace Books, 1967), 215–16. Subsequent page references are given in the text.

pages of the child witness addressing the protagonist by the title and name of his former self, *prech* Ramarren, we learn that “*prech*” is short for the colony’s word for bespeaking or mind-speaking, “*versprech*” (177), which resonates with the German verb meaning “to promise” and, when used reflexively, “to mis-speak” or make a lapsus. It takes the German word, alternating between conscious thought and the unconscious, between philosophy and psychoanalysis, to see through the reversals of the propaganda of *mindlie*.

The aliens believe what they want to believe, namely that the born-again leader is without a trace of the interregnum personality he acquired on Earth. However, the surprise attack of the second person inhabiting (or haunting) his capacity for bespeaking stymies the alien strategy for securing the coordinates of the colony. The liminal underworld that *mindspeech* will reveal to Ai and *Estraven* saves the day.

While Le Guin cites P.K. Dick in her 1976 introduction to *The Left Hand of Darkness* as her fellow science-fiction novelist, on the back of the edition that I was reading there is a thumbs-up blurb from Frank Herbert, author of *Dune*. But *The Left Hand of Darkness* does not enter another future feudal fantasy about the future in disavowal of genre differences. By traveling to fantasy from science fiction as Envoy of a mission to conjoin the political and mystical along the lines of evolution, Ai leaves a record of the cultural differences between genres, which remain suitable for communication between them. Ai (I) was Le Guin’s representative, the Envoy of reading, writing, and reckoning between genres.

Bibliography

- Adorno, Theodor. "Aufzeichnungen zu Kafka." In *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 10, no. 1, edited by Rolf Tiedemann, 254–87. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003.
- Adorno, Theodor, and Max Horkheimer. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Translated by John Cumming. New York: Continuum, 1997.
- Asimov, Isaac. *I, Robot*. New York: Gnome Press, 1950.
- . "Nightfall." http://mysite.du.edu/~treddell/3780/Asimov_Nightfall.pdf.
- Ballard, J.G. *Crash*. New York: Picador, 2001.
- Benjamin, Walter. *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. Translated by John Osborne. London/New York: Verso, 1998.
- Bergson, Henri. *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*. Translated by Cloudesley Breerton and Fred Rothwell. Los Angeles: Green Integer, 1999.
- Bion, Wilfred. "The 'War of Nerves': Civilian Reaction, Morale, and Prophylaxis." In *The Neuroses in War*, edited by Emanuel Miller, 180–200. New York: Macmillan, 1940.
- Bowlby, John. *Charles Darwin: A New Life*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1991.
- Brown, Fredric. *What Mad Universe*. New York: Bantam Books, 1950.
- Burroughs, Edgar Rice. *A Princess of Mars*. New York: Del Rey, 1979.
- . *Tarzan of the Apes*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1993.
- . *The Gods of Mars*. New York: De Rey, 1985.

- Campbell, John W., Jr. "Who Goes There?" in *The Science Fiction Roll of Honor*, edited by Frederik Pohl, 76–135. New York: Random House, 1975.
- Carpenter, Humphrey, ed. *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*. London: HarperCollins, 2006.
- Counts, Kyle. "Watching the Nightfall." *Starlog* 134 (September 1988): 59–61, 63.
- De Mille, Agnes. *Martha: The Life and Work of Martha Graham – A Biography*. New York: Random House, 1997.
- Dick, Philip K. "Man, Android, and Machine." In *The Shifting Realities of Philip K. Dick: Selected Literary and Philosophical Writings*, edited by Lawrence Sutin, 211–32. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.
- . *The World Jones Made*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.
- Elliot, Jeffrey. "An Interview with A.E. van Vogt." *Science Fiction Review* 23 (1981). Available online at http://www.angelfire.com/art/megathink/vanvogt/vanvogt_interview.html.
- Farmer, Philip José. *To Your Scattered Bodies Go*. New York: Del Rey Books, 1998.
- . *Venus on the Half Shell*. London: Titan, 2013.
- Fleming, Ian. *Dr. No*. New York: Signet Books, 1958.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Civilization and Its Discontents." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXI (1927–1931): The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and Its Discontents, and Other Works*, edited and translated by James Strachey with Anna Freud, 64–145. London: The Hogarth Press, 1961.
- . "Dostoevsky and Parricide (1928 [1927])." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXI (1927–1931): The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and Its Discontents, and Other Works*, edited and translated by James Strachey with Anna Freud, 177–96. London: The Hogarth Press, 1961.

- . “Femininity.” In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXII (1932–1936): New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis and Other Works*, edited and translated by James Strachey with Anna Freud, 112–35. London: The Hogarth Press, 1964.
- . “The Question of a *Weltanschauung*.” In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XXII (1932–1936): New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis and Other Works*, edited and translated by James Strachey with Anna Freud, 158–82. London: The Hogarth Press, 1964.
- . “Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis.” In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XI (1910): Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, Leonardo da Vinci and Other Works*, edited and translated by James Strachey with Anna Freud, 9–55. London: The Hogarth Press, 1957.
- . “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego.” In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XVIII (1920–1922): Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Group Psychology and Other Works*, edited and translated by James Strachey with Anna Freud, 69–143. London: The Hogarth Press, 1964.
- . “On Beginning the Treatment (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis I) (1913),” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XII (1911–1913): The Case of Schreber, Papers on Technique and Other Works*, edited and translated by James Strachey with Anna Freud, 121–44. London: The Hogarth Press, 1964.
- . “The Economic Problem of Masochism (1924).” In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XIX (1923–1925): The Ego and the Id and Other Works*, edited and translated by James Strachey with Anna Freud, 159–70. London: The Hogarth Press, 1961.
- Fuchs, Werner, and Sascha Mamczak, “‘I Really Would Not Want to Fuck George W. Bush!’ A Conversation with J.G. Ballard.” *Ballardian*, May 17, 2008. <https://www.ballardian.com/i-really-would-not-want-to-fuck-george-w-bush>.

- Gould, Stephen J. "A Biological Homage to Mickey Mouse." In *The Panda's Thumb: More Reflections in Natural History*, 95–107. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1980.
- Günther, Gotthard. *Die amerikanische Apokalypse*. Edited by Kurt Klagenfurt. Klagenfurt: Profil, 2000.
- . *Die Entdeckung Amerikas und die Sache der Weltraumliteratur*. Düsseldorf: Verlag Karl Rauch, 1952.
- . Letter to Ernst Jünger, December 3, 1991. Available online at http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~gerbrehm/GG_Seite.htm.
- . *Philosophie in Selbstdarstellungen II*. Edited by L.J. Pongratz. Hamburg: Meiner, 1975.
- . *Science Fiction als neue Metaphysik? Dr. Gotthard Günthers Kommentare zu "Rauchs Weltraum Büchern."* Edited by Dieter van Reeken. Lüneburg: Verlag Dieter von Reeken, 2015.
- Hagen, Wolfgang. *Radio Schreiber. Der "moderne Spiritismus" und die Sprache der Medien*. Weimar: Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, 2001.
- Harlow, Harry F. *Learning to Love*. San Francisco: Albion Publishing Company, 1971.
- . "Love in Infant Monkeys." *Scientific American* 200, no. 6 (June 1959): 68–75. DOI: <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1038/scientificamericano659-68>.
- Harrison, William. "Roller Ball Murder." *Esquire* (September 1973): 92–95, 208–11.
- Hegel, G.W.F. "The Writings of Hamann." In *Hegel on Hamann*, edited and translated by Lisa Marie Anderson, 4–32. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2008.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Poetry, Language, Thought*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper, 2001.
- Herbert, Frank. *Dune*. New York: Ace Books, 1990.
- Jeter, K.W. *Dr Adder*. London: Grafton Books, 1987.
- Jones, Ernest. "The Early Development of Female Sexuality." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 8, no. 4 (October 1927): 459–72.
- Jones, Gerard. *Men of Tomorrow: Geeks, Gangsters, and the Birth of the Comic Book*. New York: Basic Books, 2004.

- Kafka, Franz. *Tagebücher 1910–1923*. Edited by Max Brod. Frankfurt a/M: S. Fischer Verlag, 1986.
- Kittler, Friedrich. “Das Phantom unseres Ichs’ und die Literaturpsychologie: E.T.A. Hoffmann – Freud – Lacan.” In *Urszenen. Literaturwissenschaft als Diskursanalyse und Diskurskritik*, edited by F.A. Kittler and H. Turk, 139–66. Frankfurt a/M: Suhrkamp, 1977.
- . “In the Wake of the *Odyssey*.” Translated by Courtney Neaveill. *Cultural Politics* 8, no. 3 (2012): 413–27. DOI: 10.1215/17432197-1722136.
- . “The Mechanized Philosopher.” In *Looking after Nietzsche*, edited by Laurence A. Rickels, 195–207. Albany: SUNY Press, 1990.
- Klein, Melanie. “A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive States.” In *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works: 1921–1945*, 262–89. New York: The Free Press, 1975.
- . “Mourning and Its Relation to the Manic-Depressive State.” In *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works: 1921–1945*, 344–69. New York: The Free Press, 1984.
- . “Some Reflections on *The Oresteia*.” In *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works: 1946–1963*, 275–99. New York: The Free Press, 1984.
- Kobs, Jürgen. *Untersuchungen zu Bewusstsein und Sprache seiner Gestalten*. Edited by Ursula Brech. Bad Homburg: Athenäum Verlag, 1970.
- Kuttner, Henry. *The Best of Henry Kuttner*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1975.
- Lacan, Jacques. “Kant with Sade.” In *Écrits*, translated by Bruce Fink, 645–68. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006.
- Le Guin, Ursula K. *City of Illusions*. New York: Ace Books, 1967.
- . *The Lathe of Heaven*. London: Panther Books, 1974.
- . *The Left Hand of Darkness*. New York: Ace, 1987.
- Lem, Stanisław. “Philip K. Dick: A Visionary among Charlatans.” Translated by Robert Abernathy. *Science Fiction Studies* 2, no. 1 (March 1975): 54–67. Available online at <https://www.depauw.edu/sfs/backissues/5/lem5art.htm>.
- Lewis, C.S. *Out of the Silent Planet*. London: Voyager/Harper Collins, 2000.

- . *Peralandra*. In *The Space Trilogy*, 104–283. London: HarperCollins, 2013.
- . *That Hideous Strength*. In *The Space Trilogy*, 284–728. London: HarperCollins, 2013.
- . *The Dark Tower*. London: Fount, 1983.
- Lloyd, Christopher. *Henri-Georges Clouzot*. Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2007.
- Lorenz, Konrad. “Die angeborenen Formen möglicher Erfahrung.” *Zeitschrift für Tierpsychologie* 5, no. 2 (1943): 235–40. DOI: 10.1111/j.1439-0310.1943.tb00655.x.
- . “Ganzheit und Teil in der tierischen und menschlichen Gemeinschaft. Eine methodologische Erörterung.” *Studium Generale* 3, no. 9 (1950): 455–99. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-662-38240-0_49.
- Marston, William Moulton. *Emotions of Normal People*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928.
- Mayersberg, Paul. *Hollywood: The Haunted House*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1969.
- McEwan, Ian. *Machines Like Me*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2019.
- McLuhan, Marshall. “G.K. Chesterton: A Practical Mystic.” In *Marshall McLuhan Unbound*, no. 11. Berkeley: Gingko Press, 2005.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Jenseits von Gut und Böse. Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 5, edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1980.
- Padgett, Lewis. *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and The Fairy Chessmen: Two Science Fiction Novels*. New York: Gnome Press, 1951.
- Piper, H. Beam. “Time and Time Again.” *Project Gutenberg*. <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/18831>.
- Platt, Charles. “A.E. van Vogt – A Profile.” In *The Dream Makers*. New York: Berkley Books, 1980. Available online at <http://www.icshi.net/worlds/Plattprofile.htm>.
- Rickels, Laurence A. *Aberrations of Mourning: Writing on German Crypts*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988.
- . *Germany: A Science Fiction*. Fort Wayne: Anti-Oedipus Press, 2014.

- . *Nazi Psychoanalysis*, 3 Vols. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.
- . *SPECTRE*. Fort Wayne: Anti-Oedipus Press, 2013.
- . *The Case of California*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.
- . *The Devil Notebooks*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009.
- . *The Psycho Records*. New York: Wallflower Press, 2016.
- . *The Vampire Lectures*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.
- Ronell, Avital. *Complaint: Grievance among Friends*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018.
- Sheckley, Robert. "Seventh Victim." *Galaxy Science Fiction* 6, no. 1 (April 1953): 38–51. Available online at the Internet Archive: https://archive.org/details/Galaxy_vo6no1_1953-04/page/n39/mode/2up.
- . *The Tenth Victim*. London: Mayflower Books, 1966.
- . *Victim Prime*. London: Methuen, 1987.
- Schreber, Daniel Paul. *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*. Edited and translated by Ida Macalpine and Richard A. Hunter. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Silverberg, Robert, and Martin H. Greenberg, eds. *The Time Travelers: A Science Fiction Quartet*. New York: Donald I. Fine, Inc., 1985.
- Simak, Clifford D. "Desertion." *The Australian Women's Weekly*, October 25, 1978, 145–57. Available online at <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/48211665/4777581>.
- Simeons, A.T.W. *Man's Presumptuous Brain: An Evolutionary Interpretation of Psychosomatic Disease*. New York: Dutton, 1960.
- Stapledon, Olaf. *First and Last Men*. London: Penguin 1987.
- . *Philosophy and Living*, Vol. 1. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1939.
- . *Star Maker*. London: Gollancz, 1999.
- Stassinopoulos Huffington, Arianna. *Picasso: Creator and Destroyer*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988.
- Streitfeld, David, ed. *Philip K. Dick: The Last Interview and Other Conversations*. Brooklyn and London: Melville House: 2015.

- Taliaferro, John. *Tarzan Forever: The Life of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Creator of Tarzan*. New York: Scribner, 1999.
- Theweleit, Klaus. *Buch der Könige*, vol. 2y: *Recording angels' mysteries: zweiter Versuch im Schreiben ungebetener Biographien, Kriminalroman, Fallbericht und Aufmerksamkeit*. Frankfurt a/M: Stroemfeld Verlag, 1996.
- Thiessen, J. Grant. "An Interview with A.E. van Vogt." *The Science-Fiction Collector* 8 (1979): 4–6. Available online at <http://www.icshi.net/sevagram/interviews/thiessen.php>.
- Tolkien, J.R.R. "On Fairy-Stories." In *Tree and Leaf / Smith of Wootton Major / The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth*, 11–79. London: Unwin Books, 1975.
- Tracy, Robert. *Goddess: Martha Graham's Dancers Remember*. New York: Limelight Editions, 1997.
- van Vogt, A.E. *Reflections of A.E. van Vogt: The Autobiography of a Science Fiction Giant with a Complete Bibliography*. Lakemont: Fictioneer Books Ltd., 1975.
- . "The Monster." *Prospero's Isle*. <http://prosperosisle.org/spip.php?article220>.
- . "The Search." *Prospero's Isle*. <http://prosperosisle.org/spip.php?article332#TheSearch>.
- . *The Voyage of the Space Beagle*. New York: Orb Books, 2008.
- . "The Witch." *Prospero's Isle*. 1943. <http://www.prosperosisle.org/spip.php?article914>.
- . *The World of Null-A*. New York: A Tom Doherty Associates Book, 2002.
- Weinbaum, Stanley G. "The Lotus Eaters." *Project Gutenberg Australia*. <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebookso6/0601231h.html>.
- Weinberg, Robert. Unpublished interview with A.E. van Vogt, 1980. <http://www.icshi.net/sevagram/interviews/weinberg.php>.
- Wiener, Norbert. *Cybernetics*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1948.
- Wilson, Colin. *The Space Vampires*. Rhinebek: Monkfish Book Publishing Company, 2009.
- Winnicott, D.W. *Playing and Reality*. Hove and New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2002.

———. *Through Paediatrics to Psychoanalysis: Collected Papers*. New York & London: Brunner-Routledge, 1992.

Index Nominum

A

- Adams, Henry 134, 179
Adorno, Theodor W. 31, 50–51, 53, 61, 64, 174, 190, 194
Aldiss, Brian 56, 134
Anger, Kenneth 187
Apelles 153
Asimov, Isaac 21, 65, 66–67, 69–70, 79, 175, 177–78, 181
Ayraud, Pierre. *See* Narcejac, Thomas

B

- Ballard, J.G. 184–92
Barzyk, Fred 204
Bava, Mario 95
Beckett, Samuel 57
Beethoven, Ludwig van 132
Benjamin, Walter 85, 92, 132–33, 147
Bentham, Jeremy 19, 188–89
Bergman, Ingmar 173
Bergson, Henri 65
Bion, Wilfred 105–6
Boileau, Pierre 48, 50
Boorman, John 157–60
Botticelli, Sandro 150, 153
Bowlby, John 34, 36–38, 40

Breuer, Josef 153
 Brown, Fredric 165–69
 Browning, Tod 92
 Brueghel the Elder, Pieter 129–31
 Brynner, Yul 174
 Burroughs, Arthur 24
 Burroughs, Charles Stuart 24
 Burroughs, Edgar Rice 23–28
 Bush, George W. 73
 Butler, Samuel 39

C

Cameron, James 30
 Campbell Jr., John W. 21, 35, 65, 67, 74–76, 90, 92
 Camus, Albert 192
 Capek, Karel 178
 Carlyle, Thomas 19
 Carpenter, John 94, 100, 187
 Carroll, Lewis 101, 104, 114, 116–17, 152
 Clarke, Arthur C. 103
 Clouzot, Henri-Georges 48–53
 Clouzot, Véra 48–49, 53
 Connery, Sean 158–59
 Corman, Julie 69
 Cover, Arthur Byron 92
 Crichton, Michael 16, 174
 Cronenberg, David 94, 188–89, 191

D

Darwin, Charles 36–41
 Darwin, Emma 37
 Darwin, William 37
 Dean, James 192
 Deleuze, Gilles 134
 Descartes, René 94

Dick, Philip K. 57, 62, 91–92, 94, 112, 153–54, 165, 183–84, 202–4,
206, 211

Dominik, Hans 22

E

Elliot, Jeffrey 90–91

Emerson, Ralph Waldo 65, 67

F

Farmer, Philip José 150–52

Fleming, Ian 23, 56, 125, 165

Fonda, Peter 174

Ford, Harrison 178

Foucault, Michel 189

Freud, Sigmund 15, 22, 27, 31, 36, 39, 41–44, 47–49, 56, 78, 124,
126–27, 129–30, 135, 144, 147, 163, 180, 186, 188

G

Galouye, Daniel 161

Goodall, Jane 29, 30

Göring, Hermann 151–52

Gosling, Ryan 178

Gould, Stephen Jay 62–63, 65

Graham, Martha 30–32, 35

Günther, Gotthard 16, 21–22, 59–61, 65, 66–67, 74–86,
100–102, 137, 157, 165–66, 168–70, 175–78, 180, 181

H

Haesaerts, Paul 49, 52–53

Hamann, Georg 84–85

Harlow, Harry 30, 32, 34–36, 41

Harrison, William 178, 195

Hegel, G.W.F. 84–85

Heidegger, Martin 122

Heinlein, Robert A. 171

Herbert, Frank 20, 211
 Hitchcock, Alfred 50–51
 Hitler, Adolf 108, 173, 184–85, 198
 Hoffmann, E.T.A. 130
 Hooker, Joseph Dalton 39
 Hooper, Tobe 95, 97
 Horkheimer, Max 64
 Houdini, Harry 172
 Hubbard, L. Ron 85, 87
 Hughes, Richard 103

J

Jagger, Mick 201–2
 Jarmusch, Jim 73–74
 Jeter, K.W. 190–91
 Jewison, Norman 195
 Jones, Ernest 162
 Jung, Carl 35–36, 104
 Jünger, Ernst 83–84, 136

K

Kafka, Franz 61, 64, 92, 189–90, 193–94
 Kant, Immanuel 79, 84, 94, 144–45, 151, 163, 209
 Keller, Gottfried 147
 Kelley, Mike 30–31, 35
 Kennedy, John F. 192
 Kittler, Friedrich 25, 130, 197
 Klein, Melanie 42–44, 55–57, 128–29, 153, 163, 172, 178
 Knight, Damon 91
 Kobs, Jürgen 189
 Kornbluth, Cyril 184
 Korzybski, A. 85, 87–88
 Kubrick, Stanley 138
 Kuttner, Henry 103, 106. *See also* Padgett, Lewis

L

- Lacan, Jacques 130, 145, 162–63
 Lang, Fritz 21, 138, 161
 Lasswitz, Kurd 22
 Le Guin, Ursula K. 165, 202–6, 209–11
 Lem, Stanisław 91–92, 128–29, 136
 Lewis, C.S. 15–16, 20, 61–62, 119–21, 124–25, 127, 141–43, 186–87
 Lorenz, Konrad 63–64
 Loxton, David 204
 Lucas, George 100, 163
 Lynch, David 21, 95

M

- MacDonald, George 19–20
 Maetzig, Kurt 136
 Mansfield, Jayne 192
 Manson, Charles 181, 188–89
 Marcuse, Herbert 186
 Marston, William Moulton 149
 Mastroianni, Marcello 198, 200–201
 Matheson, Richard 74
 Mayersberg, Paul 69–72
 McEwan, Ian 179–81
 McLuhan, Marshall 19–20, 91
 Mill, James 19
 Mill, John Stuart 19
 Moore, C.L. 106. *See also* Kuttner, Henry; Padgett, Lewis
 Müller, Max 68

N

- Namuth, Hans 52–53
 Napoleon Bonaparte 185
 Narcejac, Thomas 48, 50
 Nietzsche, Friedrich 26, 144–45
 Noguchi, Isamu 30–32, 35

O

O'Bannon, Dan 94–95, 97, 99, 100

P

Padgett, Lewis 100–103, 106, 109, 114–15

Pausanias 53

Pestriniero, Renato 96

Petri, Ello 197

Picasso, Conchita 53–55

Picasso, Pablo 47–50, 52–56

Piper, H. Beam 77–78, 80

Platt, Charles 91

Plesence, Donald 164

Pollock, Jackson 52–53

Proyas, Alex 181

Puccini, Giacomo 200

R

Rampling, Charlotte 159

Reagan, Ronald 73

Reynolds, Burt 159

Riefenstahl, Leni 29

Romero, George 73, 146

S

Sachs, Hanns 62

Sade, Marquis de 163

Schmitt, Carl 43

Schreber, Daniel Paul 15, 31, 78, 146, 166, 188

Schwarzenegger, Arnold 171–73

Scott, Ridley 95

Shakespeare, William 20, 92

Sheckley, Robert 185–86, 195, 197–99, 201

Shelley, Mary 206

Sherman, Cindy 53

Simak, Clifford D. 60–61
 Simeons, A.T.W. 33
 Spielberg, Steven 104–5, 184
 Stalin, Joseph 185
 Stapledon, Olaf 141–45
 Stoker, Bram 98
 Swinton, Tilda 74

T

Tanguy, Yves 136
 Tarantino, Quentin 181
 Tarkovsky, Andrei 128–30
 Tate, Sharon 181
 Taylor, Paul 31–32
 Theweleit, Klaus 48–49, 53
 Thiessen, J. Grant 87
 Tolkien, J.R.R. 15, 19–21, 62, 68, 114, 117, 119, 127, 142, 158, 163,
 186–87
 Turing, Alan 179–81
 Twain, Mark 68

V

van Vogt, A.E. 74, 80, 82–83, 85–94, 96–98, 100, 134–35
 van Vogt, Mayne 88–90
 Verne, Jules 22
 Vinci, Leonardo da 31, 48, 186
 Vonnegut, Kurt 150
 Von Trier, Lars 128, 130

W

Warburg, Aby 134
 Weinbaum, Stanley G. 76
 Weinberg, Robert 90, 100
 Weissmuller, Johnny 28–29
 Wells, H.G. 15, 56, 114, 119, 121, 124, 126–27, 141–42, 145, 168
 Wiener, Norbert 102

Wilde, Oscar 146
Williams, Charles 186-87
Williamson, Jack 65, 180
Wilson, Colin 97
Winnicott, D.W. 33, 41-46, 51

