Darko Suvin (2005, 24,200 + 2,390 words)

OF STARSHIP TROOPERS AND REFUSENIKS: WAR AND MILITARISM IN US SCIENCE FICTION (OVERVIEW IN LIEU OF INTRODUCTION)*

For John and Judith Clute, 30 years of memories of Camden Town

To be whole is to be part.
Ursula K. Le Guin, inscription on Odo's grave in *The Dispossessed*
"Do we get to win this time?"
Rocky's query in one of Stallone's movies

1. To Begin with: Some Generalities (Notions and Delimitations)

...autopsies are the place in which new lessons about anatomy are learned.
Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism*

1.0. Why bother with Science Fiction[1] that deals centrally with war and/or militarism, and even devote to it a whole volume of *Fictions: Studi sulla narratività*? For one thing, because we live in a world increasingly determined by the unholy feedback between politico-economic militarization and war: war as Clausewitz's continuation of politics by other means is giving pride of place to war as the substitute for politics and unacknowledged pillar of the dominant system. For another thing, because SF has as its best always been a very interesting early warning system carrying cognitions and understanding otherwise accessible only in very specialized ways; and furthermore, even in its middle reaches, SF--read in the USA both by schoolboys and airforce generals, and by now (as shall be seen in this volume) also by many young women--is often a very good indicator of its readers' intimate preoccupations.

My favourite (alas) anecdote at this historical juncture is the following apocryphal one: Shklovsky said to Trotsky, "As a literary critic, I'm not interested in war." Trotsky responded, "But war is interested in you."

Thus, when we intellectuals from the richer world area shy away from understanding the immensely menacing context of our dwindling privileges, the pleasures of reading SF may be yoked to cognition.

1.1. About Science Fiction

Now, in good logic, when faced with such complex terms and notions as SF, War, and Militarism, not accessible by common sense or intuition, one should begin by devoting a lot of effort to define and delimit each of them. I can do so only partly, for a book would be required for each.

As concerns SF, however, I have written several books (*Metamorphoses, Positions, Victorian*) and subsequent considerations, and must respectfully ask the reader to look them up. I shall only mention that if one holds the definition (as I roughly still do) that SF is a literary (etc.) genre defined by the interaction of estrangement and historical cognition, and whose main formal device is a narrative chronotope and/or agents alternative to the author's empirical world, then Hero Fantasy of the Tolkien et Co. type and Horror Fantasy of the Poe-through-Lovecraft-to-Stephen-King type each is another beast, which is not dealt with in this volume or introduction (for the record, I attempted to discuss their a- historical worlds in "Considering").

1.2. Some Words on War

My definition of war is taken from the article by Mesnard y Mendez (in which detailed discussions and references can be found) as: a coherent sequence of conflicts, involving physical combats between large organized groups of people that include the armed forces of at least one State, which aim to exercise political and economic control over a given territory. This includes both wars between State-like entities and within one. However, one or more fights or skirmishes, even between groups of people such as mafia gangs, do not qualify. Though to my mind antagonistic competition regardless of human lives is the heartbeat of capitalism, for the present analytical purposes war does not include metaphoric oppositions (for example Hobbes's everyday civil war, "where every man is enemy of every man") without the factors mentioned above. The aim of war was originally the forcible expropriation in favour of a given social class (sometimes tribal or ethnic group) of booty, land, and/or labour power from the vanquished. However, in developed ("civilized") class societies war has also always been *ultima ratio regum*, a means to evade inner revolutionary tension by outer conquest, while in a multi-State system other indirect and intermediary (but crucial) aims may be added, such as securing advantages for coming tensions and conflicts--e.g. dominion over sea lanes or oil resources--and the destruction of commodities and people.

Continuous warfare has never ceased under capitalism. Definitions of war differ, but counting conservatively, at least 160 wars have raged between 1945 and 1993, and in them more people were killed than in World War 2. The frantic search of the US corporate-military class for enemies that might justify further hundreds of billions out of the pockets of taxpayers shows the USA-USSR competition was largely a welcome excuse for "a permanent war economy" (phrase by Charles Wilson of General Electric in 1944--in Lens 14). We are already within the most terrible Hundred Years' War in human history. Just as capitalism came about in plunder wars, there is no evidence it could climb out of economic depressions without huge military spending, a "war mega-dividend" (best examples: the 1930s and the 1990s--cf. Kalecki, Amin, and Keegan). This was always understood in the workers' and socialist movement: Jean Jaurès phrased it as "le capitalisme porte la guerre comme la nuée porte l'orage" (capitalism brings war as the cloud brings the tempest). Much before Lenin, who took Russia out of World War 1, the socialists' slogan was "war upon war" (cf. Angenot, *Antimilitarisme*).

Finally, some words on the paradoxical relationship of war to political economy and production of goods. On the one hand, "A simple definition of a warrior might be a person who survives by taking what others have or have produced" (Love and Shanklin 283); yet on another, from the inception of the modern State and market, wars have always been "the greatest and the most profitable of investments" (Lefebvre, *Production* 275). Since the 1930s, the war industry on our planet has been engaged in unprecedentedly enormous production, circulation, and consumption-by-annihilation of commodities. In the 80s-90s, official military spendings oscillated between 2.5% and 5% of world GNP but some estimates place the share of production due to the war industry at four times as much, while the share of research and its financing devoted to military R&D is believed to have surpassed 50% worldwide: both are growing rapidly, most notably in major powers such as the USA. In any case, research and procurements for war are indispensable for the economic and political system stability. A huge part of these trillions goes to the superprofits of "Northern" corporations, and a smaller but appreciable part for the maintenance of practically all the ruling mafias and classes in the world. As Gowan summed it up: "for the US to play the role of guardian and manager of the entire core [of capitalist powers after the Second World War] required militarizing the American state on a permanent basis. But that in turn looked as if it might help resolve tricky problems of the domestic political economy." ("US" 25) The war economy palpably marks the divorce between capitalism and civic responsibility for other people and for the planet. But the stakes are even higher: if "the enduring, primary symbiosis between capitalism and war" (Kolko 474) means that wars are indeed

necessary for the survival of this social formation, then the capitalist social formation has truly, as McMurtry argues, entered a "*Cancer Stage."*

Material production impinges directly on SF that deals with war: either overtly, in a few best cases (some Vonnegut and the borderline SF example of Pynchon seem to me untranscended) or, as a rule, by excision into the *non-dit* which however limns what is told in the narration as the ocean limns an island. It is a peculiar instance of Jameson's "effacement of the traces of production" which is a part of the tabu-field of repressing thinking about a possible role of classes within production as mega-groups with different and often conflicting interests within the same society (*Postmodernism* 314-15). No doubt, this disregard of production comes naturally to the armed forces whose task is destructive consumption (clearing the ground for new and more murderous production and profits), even though they are saturated with the newest devices for faster and larger mass killing lovingly described and extolled in all militarist SF from Heinlein on. Such production is simply considered a *deus ex machina* called "technology" (or today, more properly, technoscience). This reality of contemporary war machines is not far from the discourse of and on SF, which has in the USA since its mass coming about (that began with Gernsbackian science popularization) been enmeshed with what Joanna Russ has with angry perceptivity seen as "SF and Technology as Mystification" (*To Write* 26ff.), and indeed as the addiction of US capitalism--Russ would say patriarchy, and I'd say both are correct--to the technological fix. The mystification of and addiction to technoscience "has allowed a lot of folks to go through the motions of thought and scholarship without ever touching such unpleasant and disturbing matters as what we all have to do to make a living," Russ observed about academic work: but that would hold in spades for the effacement of who produces and appropriates what under which conditions in the military-industrial complex setting up armed forces of all countries. Such repression and removal of production is then faithfully recorded, without making of it a problem, in the narrative depiction of an only slightly estranged war machine by surface realism in most SF under discussion (in better cases, when we're not in thinly veiled fairy tale or Western).

1.3. Even Fewer Words on Militarism

The military-industrial establishments of corporate capitalism, primarily in the USA, which produce "life-killing commodities" as the most profitable part of global trade (cf. McMurtry, *Understanding*), are not only the strongest factor of organized international violence, but also possibly the strongest factor enforcing a world cultural revolution for the total colonization of human life-worlds and eco-systems by commodity economy.

The strictly political fall-out of militarization is, so far as I can see, only beginning to be properly assessed (but cf. beside the classic Mills *Power* now Burk ed., Busch, Caplow-Vennesson, van Creveld, Dal Lago, Herberg-Rothe, Joxe, Klare, Lyon). To maintain its power and profits, the Never-Ending Warfare needs, first, to constantly stress dangerous enemies, with or without a real basis. Second, it needs to efface the divide between peace and war, as well as between external and internal enemies. With the excuse of security, democracy can be suspended at will for all but a minority of the privileged, and citizen armies are jettisoned in favour of professional soldiers and mercenaries (that line too has grown ever thinner). If war is a police action, then it does not need democratic debate and approval; and obversely, a navy can be employed to prevent illicit immigration (say in the Mediterranean, cf. Busch). Militarization is suspension of central civil liberties and subordination of all aspects of civil society to "security" imperatives even in times of official peace. Before colonial liberation movements, dictatorships enforced by bayonet and gun muzzle were the rule in all imperial possessions; in the 20th century they have become more common in nominally independent States than at any time since the rise of the bourgeoisie, marking well its degeneration. This is technically facilitated by the enormous elaboration of armaments, accessible only to large economic systems, and it is underpinned by the spread of both organizational complexity and of the

brainwashing industries such as the mass press and media. As a result, "the new balance of forces has eroded rights won in earlier periods. The extraction of surplus value meets less resistance, and capital loses what civilizing effects it might have had." (Schwarz 32) This explains how come we can be returning, as Eco's pioneering essay found, "Towards a New Middle Ages," with huge insecurity palliated by private armies and drugs, with nomads, mystics, and (I'd add) the neo-medieval genre of SF!

Thus we have to fall back on some understanding from the more civilized and hopeful time of Enlightenment, and I can today do no better than give you my two favourite citations, which were sent me by friends careless of proper bibliographical sources:

> "...Anyone can understand that war and conquest without and the encroachment of despotism within mutually support each other; that money and people are habitually taken at will from a people of slaves to bring others beneath the same yoke; and that conversely war furnishes a pretext for exactions of money and... for keeping large armies constantly afoot.... In a word, anyone can see that aggressive rulers wage war at least as much on their subjects as on their enemies, and that the conquering nation is left no better off than the conquered." (Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Abstract and Judgment of Saint-Pierre's Project for Perpetual Peace*, 1761)
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> "Of all the enemies to public liberty war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes. And armies, and debts, and taxes are the known instruments for bringing the many under the domination of the few.... No nation could preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare." (James Madison, 1795)

And we should always remember the great slogans of the Anglo-American dictatorship from *1984*, "WAR IS PEACE. IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH. FREEDOM IS SLAVERY": as Rousseau and Madison--and the whole anti-militarist tradition, from Enlightenment to the early 20th-Century socialists--knew, war, militarist subjection to an entrenched power clique, and brainwashing are aspects of the same depth process.[2]

Militarism necessarily implies the horizons of war as its justification. Obversely however, warmongering did not, before modern mass and total societies, necessarily imply militarism--Social-Darwinist or Hobbesian warfare sufficed.

1.4. Corpus

Having set up a few orienting beacons, how is one to get a handle on the sprawling SF texts dealing with War and/or Militarism? One has to start with a series of enforced manoeuvers for limiting this huge corpus. The first delimitation is to focus on the last 60 years--in which we today inevitably read premonitions of, and sometimes resistances to, a not only discursive putting into place of Never-Ending Holy Warfare in the era of the Bush Dynasty, the unhappy reason for all our dealings with such a matter in the first place. The second delimitation is to focus, in this introductory essay, on literary fictions rather than on TV, movies, comics, videos, and computer games (for more variety the reader is referred to the contributions in this volume)--which may be sociopolitically more important as immediate shapers of people's minds. Indeed, following Jameson's startling analyses, perhaps we ought to talk about architecture or more generally about command of space consubstantial with war and militarization, with its "dialectics of privilege and shelter" (*Postmodernism* 289) shaping social power, evident for example in long distance killings.

The third delimitation is to focus on US SF, as befits not only an annual dealing with the cultural artefacts of English-speaking entities but also the hugely dominant position of US-based warfare and military, but also analyses of either: Gramsci's concepts of hegemony and historical alliance, but also of Fordism (which then leads to Post-Fordism), as continued in the post-60s' analyses, come immediately to mind as indispensable tools for approaching such a discussion.

Finally, it is both impossible and unnecessary to deal exhaustively with any mention of war (and/or militarism) in SF; obversely also, the mere presence of a marginal SF invention, discovery or trope in a non-SF story about war is not enough. It is enough to make a few exemplary choices among narratives in which war (and/or militarism) are either the dominant theme or at least one of the central foci--though to my mind if a marginal treatment of it has some specially interesting features, that is, if it is articulated especially well, then one should not be dogmatic and use whatever helps one's argument. But the stress has to fall on SF that deals with war/militarism as its central theme, and in such a way as to either articulate that theme seriously beyond the cliches current in the author's locus; and/or present and articulate a take on, or stance toward, the theme that is not usually found. (Either would be what I consider at least in part a novum.)

These delimitations enclose an area for putative large-scale research. From it, I shall in this introduction have to mention vast segments only to say I shall not be focussing on them. This holds most of all for what has for good reasons constituted probably the bulk of both SF and SF criticism about war from the 40s to the 80s: nuclear warfare, the militarization of society needed for it, the ensuing holocaust, and the probable dark age of breakdown in technoscientific civilization and reversion to Hobbesian warring for survival. True, nuclear warfare is, all experts know, quite possible again in the form of tactical mini-nukes used by the US--and possibly Israeli--armed forces under the post-Vietnam doctrine that "our" casualties must be very small so as not to upset short-range electoral politics, while casualties of the Enemy (whoever may be proclaimed as such) must be as huge as possible in as short a time as possible; in a few years, non-State groups may well join this proliferating "club." To my mind, in a somewhat longer perspective"normal" strength or Hiroshima-and-larger nuclear strikes are not at all impossible either: the end of 2004 brought reports of a renewed nuclear bombs' race between the USA and Russia, there are simmering conflicts which involve other nuclear powers (such as Pakistan and India, or Israel and Iran), while the mega-war between USA and China, openly envisaged in the US neo-cons' plans, looms in a still longer perspective. Yet this balance of MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction), apt to affect the whole planet, is at the moment--and in the whole period from, say, Reagan's times on--not the focus of either military reality or SF written under its goad. If it does re-enter the focus, we shall have to rethink matters. In the meantime, the interested reader can be referred to the work of Bruce Franklin, including the 1984 anthology he edited, and the bibliography in this volume, containing items Dr. Proietti and I culled from a much vaster critical literature and readily supplemented for ex. from the overviews of Brains and Burns.

One hopes all of this will not be too rigid, so that for example UK-based writings will lurk in the background to contrast with the US-based ones, that there will be no ban on mentioning SF movies or fiction between Chesney and Heinlein,[3] and so on. But even after such maneuvers, the field remains huge; more than usually, any approach or set of approaches will have to acknowledge from the start its premises and its nature of a bet justified by possible cognitive results.

2. Singularities I: Historical Texts 1959-74, an Ambiguous Ascent

> The old order is not yet dead, the new order cannot be born. In the half-light monsters arise.
>
> Antonio Gramsci

2.0. The Two Souls of US SF

For the purpose of orientation at this uncommonly endangered point of history, I am proposing a hypothesis (homologous to the discussion of intellectuals at the end) that there are two souls or stances within US SF. As any attempt at encompassing hundreds of texts in several generations, this

digital hypothesis is more simplified than would be a full analogical spread, accounting for the ifs and buts and grey zones, which would however need a research institute with the budget of, say, one fiftieth of an atomic submarine. At one extreme is, then, the stance that mass slaughters, with all weapons imaginable and regardless of the military-civilian divide, and a concomitant militarization of society are inevitable for the salvation of the commonwealth, and should therefore be envisaged in a spread between sad necessity and cynical glee. Its characteristic seems to be that it refuses to even envisage possible causes making for war and militarization, which would therefore be avoidable by uprooting such causes. At the other extreme is the stance that while dangers and lures of mass warfare and militarization are real and have deep systemic roots, they ought to be resisted in all possible ways because the commonwealth would thereby either not be saved and/or corrupted into something not worth saving. Its characteristic is that it attempts to understand war and militarism by establishing a feedback between them and the social and historical currents inducing them: which then issues either in forebodings of doom or in possible and better alternatives. This hypothesis will be picked up in the final Section 4.

The two stances can be more or less overt or hidden; I do not believe this feature is an indication either of esthetic success, especially in an estranged and allegorical genre, or of political affiliation (see the discussion of Heinlein's, Dick's, and Le Guin's novels in this section). However, I believe it is much healthier for a culture when splits within it are brought to the surface, where they can be openly discussed with a chance for understanding as a precondition to resolution. And in fact, open polarization coincided with sociopolitically liberatory periods, such as 1940-50 and 1960-74 (when the two souls came openly out in the famous double ad in *Galaxy Science Fiction* of June 1968, listing SF writers for and against the VietnamWar), whereas social taboos and sometimes penalties against dissent from warmongering and militarism characterize the regressive periods of the 1950s and from the 1980s to the present.

2.1. From Twain to Heinlein

The two souls can be followed from the inception of the US writing that eventually constituted itself as the SF genre. Bruce Franklin has shown (*War Stars*, esp. ch. 3) how in the latter part of the 19th Century the immense prestige of Edison, among other things the pioneer of technologized warfare and government consultant, was opposed by the grim forebodings of Mark Twain's *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, in which the high technology party is buried beneath the rubble of the final battle together with the vanquished. Twain's "philosophical fable" of progress is in bitter contrast to that genre's usual cheer; its "theory of capitalism and... interpretation of the historical process that has brought it into being" (H.N. Smith 39) issues into radical pessimism. As in much foregoing 19th-Century SF, from Mary Shelley through Hawthorne to Jules Verne, the only sustainable novelties are destructive ones (I argue this at length in *Metamorphoses*, ch. 8).

The dichotomy might be called one between the believers in "Onward and Upward to Conquest by High Technology" and the doubters, from pessimism to alternate vision. Changing what needs to be changed, it obtains again between the two World Wars and with especial force after 1945 between the war-exalting SF wing of, say, Jenkins ("Murray Leinster"), who picked up the genocide torch from Williamson and Hamilton, and the much better narratives by refuseniks, from Fredric Brown and Chan Davis to Tenn or Bradbury (see on all Franklin *War*, ch. 13). Judith Merril's story "That Only a Mother" and her novel *Shadow on the Hearth*, bring the cost of an atomic war literally home, as seen there by a woman; Fritz Leiber's "Foxholes of Mars" are a remarkable brief sketch of the coming about of a galactic Hitler out of the rage of warfare; while the refusal of global-scale slaughtering is perhaps most explicit in Theodore Sturgeon's prescient plea in "Thunder and Roses" (1947)--more or less simultaneous with Heinlein's ambiguous early stories about the nuclear menace--that allegiance to survival of mankind is superior to any national allegiance or even to "western civilization." The US Congressional repression of dissent from 1947 on and the ensuing Cold War

hysteria meant that the balance, especially in the strictly watched movies, shifted in the 50s either toward the warmongers or toward coded events in the other spacetimes of the "new maps of hell." Overt anti-war or anti-militarist artefacts will emerge again only around 1959: the movies from *On the Beach* and *Fail-Safe* on, culminating in Kubrick's gallows-humour masterpiece *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), and a larger spate of literary fictions beginning with the two 1959 anti-nuclear-war classics, Walter M. Miller, Jr.'s *A Canticle for Leibowitz* and Mordecai Roshwald's *Level 7*, and going on to the works of Dick, Disch, Spinrad, and others in the golden SF age after 1960.

But despite growing anti-war sentiment, the dominant context of the time was one of frantic Cold War rearmament, with multiple overkill capacities geared to titanic corporate profits (hundreds of billions of dollars, it seems) and to economic, and therefore political, stability of the status quo. Within it, Robert A. Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* (1959) became the ancestral text of US SF militarism, that inflected and to an important degree shaped the implicit and explicit debate ever since. I propose to read it here as a paradigm of US classical republicanism gone sour in the age of imperial expansion. The tenets of classical republicanism have been summarized by Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, writing about the 1790s, as follows:

> Courage, self-reliance, and love of liberty were essential for the practice of civic virtue: modernity--commerce, consumerism, and fashionable life--would corrupt aspiring republicans and plunge their republics into tyranny (Pocock, ch. 13). Yet it was the modernizing world of commerce, consumerism, and fashion that America's urban classes seemed bent on embracing.... (1331)[4]

Heinlein's story begins, alternating slam-bang action and didactic explanations, as a routine "drop" combat mission of a space marines' group on a supposedly enemy planet seen through our first-person protagonist, but then immediately flashes back to a conflict between him and his rich businessman father, which leads him to a snap decision to enlist. So much for "commerce, consumerism, and fashionable life," about which we practically hear no more in this unsubtle though powerful black-and-white paean to combat life. (The father too joins the armed forces after the war has been brought home to the Terran Federation and eventually becomes the officer son's trusty top sergeant, in a variant of the Heinlein *topos* where the hero becomes his own father.) Through all kinds of self-doubts and tests from boot camp to officer career, our protagonist grows in the courage and self-reliance needed to protect liberty. The armed forces, spearheaded by the space marines or "starship troopers" (this is either Heinlein's deliberately provocative reference to Hitler's "storm troopers" or alternatively a Freudian slip), are the only full citizens entitled to vote in the brave new world of the future that came about after the collapse of the soft USA and a third World War. They are the only locus of belonging and spiritual safety for "a real man" (8/89), far superior to the tolerated market or money economy. The central conflict of the novel is therefore only apparently between Humans and Aliens--the Bugs, extrapolated from the Chinese in the Korean War (11/121), who remain faceless pulp monsters of the anthive-communist stripe fit only for slaughter[5]: the conflict is between consumerist-cum-commercial individualism, the "producing-consuming animal," and "man" (12/36) in the proper hierarchical collective of the military. Even that opposition is after a few exemplary incidents backgrounded in favour of an accomplished agitprop exaltation, the education of our hero into military values and honour, where there can be only emulation between good and better (startlingly parallel to the utopian communist ideal, for example in Yefremov or the early Strugatskis, or Le Guin's anarcho-communist "to be whole is to be part").

The rule by veterans' election is supposed to ensure "plac[ing] the welfare of the group ahead of personal advantage" (12/145). I find this a very worthy goal, especially when faced with the Post-Modern rulers and their cynical greed, but the premise is flawed, as in every static meritocracy: veterans' groups turn as a rule after one or two decades into crusty defenders of the status quo from the last-but-one war. Thus the most welcome, and to my mind right-on stress on the responsibilities of citizenship, on the citizen as the active subject constituting the State or nation, results only in his

(literal) cyborgization into a fighting machine. Such cosmic (or any earlier) politics are for Heinlein impelled by naked Social Darwinism or imperial *Lebensraum*: "Man is... a wild animal"; "All wars arise from population pressure" (12/147). As Franklin points out, though among the generic ancestors of this novel "are those World War 2 movies idealizing the military lives," yet "this is not about a mass conscript army called up in a war to defend democracy" (*Heinlein* 103): Heinlein's twist on the subgenre--and his response to antimilitarism in novels such as Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* (and later those by James Jones, Heller or Pynchon)--is a remarkably prescient forecast of a supertechnological elite army (in his fiction: spaceships plus powered suits), which was to be more and more implemented after Vietnam. In our historical world, while mouthing slogans from republican virtue (which by now only sound Orwellian), the military fused with the "producing-consuming animal" as its executive arm: to enforce capitalism by martial law where market law is not enough. This test by history might explain why Heinlein's last phase is constituted by longwinded escapist novels about immortality, sex, and transferral to younger bodies.

Nonetheless, Heinlein remains (to my mind) overall the most significant SF writer of the 1939-1961 epoch, and certainly one of its two or three most popular and influential ones. His stance in *Starship Troopers* is one of his many ambiguous and radical, but also radically divergent, thought experiments from 1939 on. Franklin calls the story "Logic of Empire" (1941), in which a monopolist Earth company is based on interplanetary slave labour, Heinlein's "most radically 'left' story" (ibidem 22), and in other stories of the somewhat makeshift "Future History" cycle it leads, not without clear echoes from Twain, London, and Orwell, to a replay of the 1776 War of Independence, evoked also in the interplanetary war of *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress* (1965-66). Yet already his early novel *Sixth Column* was a racist paean to the "white" resistance movement against the Pan-Asian horde, a cross between the Red and the Yellow Peril, and its invasion theme was reused in the heyday of the anti-communist hysteria as *The Puppet Master*s (1951), with the enemy allegorized as hive-mind alien slugs who take over US bodies and minds, so that civil liberties must be suspended in favour of loyalty checks. Most important for our purpose are two stories: "Solution Unsatisfactory" (1941), the first US reflection on world politics under atomic weaponry , where in the choice between a global US empire and a Wellsian elite world dictatorship, the New-Deal Era Heinlein surprisingly opts for the latter; and "The Long Watch" (1949), where a military putsch to take over the world by means of atomic bombs is foiled by the sacrifice of a democratic junior officer. The tension between the two souls of republican virtue and elitist (or indeed quasi-Calvinistically predestined) meritocracy will remain a constant feature of all good Heinlein narrations--his best novels, those that opt for inclusiveness and liberation, being to my mind some juveniles and *Double Star*.

Heinlein's strength is a hard-nosed preoccupation with precisely observed power and authority, and indeed with the place of the father (cf. Aldiss 229). "In a style which exuded assurance and savvy, [his] early writing blended slang, folk aphorism, technical jargon, clever understatement, apparent casualness, a concentration on people rather than gadgets, and a sense that the world described was real.... His characters were competent men of action, equally at home with their fists and a slide-rule and actively involved in the processes and procedures (political, legal, military, industrial, etc.) which make the world turn." However, such strength is achieved at a very high cost. As of this novel, Heinlein's "dialogue and action become traps in which any opposing versions of reality were hamstrung by the author's aggrieved partiality" (both quotes from Pringle and Clute). And Franklin remarks how in Heinlein "Earth is beautiful only when viewed from a distance, where people and their civilization cannot be seen" (*Heinlein* 20). I would expand these two observations to the thesis that the major strength and flaw in *Starship Troopers* is world-excision.[6] Not only is there no civilian life in it, but any and all "animality" outside of fighting, that is, the normal bodily life of producing and consuming, is also excised. It may be secondary, and in view of Heinlein writing from *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961) on, mostly due to publishers' taboos that there is no sex or erotics in *Starship Troopers* (except for warm but rigidly asexual affection between battle comrades).

However, the excision not only of love but of the female element as such is surely of central significance. True, women too can join the armed forces but they are confined to the as it were housing sphere of the Space Navy and largely unseen, though their protection is the biological reason for war (11/125); and the debilitating female influence of the hero's Mom is expunged by having her die in an atomic bombing... Thus the novel's overall position rests on presuppositions announced at length in well-placed interspersed lectures, but tenable only if rebuttals from reality are disallowed.

Now of course no book can contain even a small part of the author's world, but what type of relationships you systematically exclude will define everything else you can say. In particular, Heinlein's concept of historical time-horizons seems a strange medley of political and technological progress with catastrophes (up to *Stranger*, when miraculous interventions abolish linear time). He wants unbridled individual affirmation but here it can only be achieved in military super-corporativism, which separates itself into an elite super-class. His strength is dealing with catastrophes; but they can only confirm the ups and downs of the linear and quantified time of technological bourgeois civilization. If elite progress is interrupted, the only alternative to slavery of the corporative monopolist or hive-mind type is the anticolonial revolt of 1776 (repressing the fact that after it slavery and extermination of Native Americans went merrily on). No glimpse of a radical difference, the earmark of dissenting SF from London through Sheckley or Le Guin to the alternative histories of K.S. Robinson, is conceivable here, not to speak of the cosmic brotherhood Benjamin glimpsed in Scheerbart's *Lesabéndio*, where technological construction liberates peaceful creativity and, in the vein of Fourier, Percy Shelley or the later Stapledon, fuses people with stars (Benjamin II/2: 630-32 and 618-20, see also his "On the Concept of History," I/2: 691-703).

2.2. The Intertextual Tradition of US SF: Edisonade in lieu of History

How is that huge blind spot, the tunnel-vision allowing all-around vision and precise orientation only in wholesale planetary destruction of the *Starship Troopers* kind, to be explained? It is not an individual failing, for Heinlein was a well-informed, intelligent, and original mind within a given framework, and moreover more consistent than most other SF writers of his heyday. At the beginning of the 20th Century, Henry James explained it in *The American Scene* as the US society's orientation to quantification within not to be doubted limits of technological progress, the "perpetual increase of everything," which will have to be paid for at some point in some way. His shrewd diagnosis, not unworthy of Tocqueville, is that the USA attempts to supply through money what can only be achieved by historical experience--which includes suffering and, one supposes, qualitative wisdom instead of merely quantitative increase.[7] Linear time within quantified history, even when or perhaps especially when the cash nexus is repressed, necessarily leads within Heinlein's relentless logic ("Logic of Empire" is only one example of his superb titling, among the best in SF) to the same maneuver early Christianity had to resort to in order to explain how come that divine descent did not triumph: the invention of the potent and ever-ready Enemy. Progress is the supreme good; in technology it has potent weapons at hand; and yet only an elite minority is committed to it, and it is constantly faced with the majority's indifference, backslidings, even outright defeats. For the Supreme Good to win, therefore, the enemy has to be rooted out by wholesale indiscriminate slaughter, as in the Parable of the Tares.

From Edgar Allan Poe on (the argument may be found in my *Metamorphoses)*, a characteristic of US SF has been its infantile gosh-wow, slam-bang aspect: sensationalism and sentimentality. Now "infantile" is not necessarily a cuss-word, it may have connotations of fresh, naive or innocent, and it is at any rate more promising than "senile"--a symmetrical cuss-word often flung at Europe by US visitors, Twainian innocents abroad, horrified by its post-feudal up-front hierarchies (as his Yankee was by Arthurian slavery and Whitman by Shakespeare). One could argue that the most mature US SF was shaped by the awful suspicion, first adumbrated in the Gothic admixture up to Poe and Hawthorne and then more precisely in Twain's *Connecticut Yankee*, that US

innocence is withering into a premature senility. The most powerful "new maps of hell," culminating beyond the 50s in the horror transmutations of Disch and Dick, and then in Gibson's cyberpunk and Spinrad, belong to this hermeneutics of suspicion. Nonetheless, up to the mid-60s SF remained almost exclusively "white boy's fiction" (cf. Russ 79), and even after the notable influx of first-rate (and then of some not-so-first-rate) women writers and therefore of women readers in the last 40 years, this aspect of SF is probably dominant to this day. Now the main activities of white boys have in the USA, before computers and video-games, traditionally been sports (including gun sports) and science. Sports fans do not read much fiction, which leaves us with science.

At this point I would have to write a whole essay devoted to the co-optation of modern science by capitalist profit and in particular the war industry: at least half of all US scientists and engineers work today for military priorities (cf. C.H. Gray and Tirman ed.), so that “by and large, technoscience is part of a war machine and should be studied as such,” with ca. 80% of US federal obligations for research and development already in 1986 devoted to “defense” (Latour 171-72). This breeds arrogant scientism of inevitable progress, defined by Le Guin as "technological edge mistaken for moral superiority" ("Introduction" 4) and by Wallerstein as a pivot of "[that] truth which reflected the power realities and economic imperatives of historical capitalism" (89). But I can only refer the interested reader to further discussions and the bibliographies in my essays "What May" and "Science Fiction Parables," and concentrate on John Clute's argument in the brilliant article "Edisonade" (from which I take all quotes in these two paragraphs, but cf. also Franklin, *War* 54-77). Edisonades are his most apt neologism for SF narrations focussed on "a young US male inventor hero who uses his ingenuity to extricate himself from tight spots and who, by so doing, saves himself from defeat and corruption and his friends and nation from foreign oppressors"; typically, what he invents is a war weapon plus a means of transport. The name derives from the public image of Edison as potential inventor of fearsome and decisive war gadgets, enthusiastically fostered by him to the edge of charlatanism (and possibly satirized both as Sir Boss in Twain and the Wizard of Oz in Frank Baum) and taken up by much popular early SF from dime novels to Serviss's *Edison's Conquest of Mars*--serialized in a newspaper as counterblast to Wells's pessimism in *War of the Worlds*--where "Thomas Alva heads to Mars, where he commits triumphant genocide before granting the survivors colonial status." The Edisonade was then given a huge boost by space opera, beginning with "E.E. Smith's *Skylark* sequence [which gave it] the Galaxy as playground and estate, provided an infinity of frontiers to penetrate, territories to stumble into and to claim, and entrepreneurial empires to build in all innocence. The Smithian edisonade remains central to entertainment space opera to this day." Especially destructive were between the World Wars the space operas of Jack Williamson and of Edmond Hamilton, who was known as the "world wrecker" and did not disdain genocide either.

Clute's thesis is that when Heinlein and his followers began to make explicit ideological claims for the new Edisons, "innocence fled.... Once looked at with an eye to the main chance, it turns sour, self-serving and entrepreneurial, and we find ourselves in the land of some Hard-SF writers of the 1980s, whose protagonists are never poor, and never lose, and never give; nor would it perhaps be stretching the term too far to find in the ruthless protagonists of much survivalist fiction ghostly and solipsistic echoes of the edisonades of a more innocent time--when the hero did not have to understand the consequences of his triumphs." My reading of history is different here: I think innocence had fled by the time of Mark Twain, as he well knew.[8] At any rate, Heinlein's novel fuses the 30s' everyday realism with a collectivized Edisonade: the inventing both of the capsule and of military education in civics has been done by the space marines, and all that remains for our protagonist is to fill the slot assigned him and thereby save his soul and humanity.

2.3. The Golden Age, 1960-74

The period of ca. 1960-74, the true and untranscended Golden Age of Anglophone--US and UK--SF, is in relation to our theme marked by two factors: first, its main preoccupation was not war and

militarism (Vietnam began to be fictionally digested only toward the end) but envisaging alternate, usually better, possibilities of human relationships; second, to the extent that there were some remarkable instances of concern, they were predominantly anti-war and anti-militaristic.

It could be claimed with some justification that a good part of the most important writings obliquely reflected the Cold War, nuclear arms race, growing involvement in and protest against large-scale slaughterings such as the war in Vietnam, and the growing militarization and alienation this produced in individuals and the fabric of civil society (as again today). This may be most clearly seen in such masterpieces as Ballard's *The Atrocity Exhibition* (1970, US title *Love and Napalm: Export USA*), pulped in its first printing by the US publisher, or the "Daily Life in Late Roman Empire" strand of Disch's *334* (1972). However, I shall keep to overt articulations. What one may call the "Heinlein wing" is built on the axiom of a peculiar "species racism," namely that humans are individuals, and therefore elite specimens better fitted to win wars and occupy the Galaxy. Bad enough by itself, it is as a rule a fig-leaf analogy for "Western" capitalist individualism. This is the common denominator of Poul Anderson (of his "Dominic Flandry" Cold War series begun in the 1950s and of his novel *The Star Fox*, with considerable anti-pacifist acrimony but more subtlety than usual in this wing and an attempt at lyricism) and of appreciations of military virtues in two long-running and somewhat repetitive series begun at that time, Saberhagen's "Berserker" episodes of galactic conflict with ruthless killing machines, and Gordon Dickson's more complex variant of an elite super-individual in the early novels of the "Dorsai" series, where a seemingly quite junior officer, who is however a strategic genius plus physical near-superman, comes to save all humanity in the galaxy and gets the beautiful recalcitrant girl to boot. At the time of the Vietnam War he turned in *Soldier, Ask Not* (1964-67) towards an examination of the protagonist's own destructive impulses, albeit seen only as a matter of individual ethics. As ambiguous as this last novel was Frank Herbert's far more sprawling and heterogeneous *Dune* (1963-65), astutely set in a desert environment with a vital scarce resource (extrapolated from Arabia), which posits a universe of unceasing cynical warfare for that resource as well as a galactic jihad and political Messiah, and was a progenitor not only of much too long continuations but also a trend-setting harbinger of many uncouth blends of all- out war and New Age religiousness intermixed with secret societies, parapsychology, and occult sciences.

The anti-war and sometimes anti-militarist writings of this period were richer, more coherent, and more innovative. Among the most important were one novel each by Disch and Spinrad, some novels by Dick, some black stories by Malzberg, and of course the Tralfamadore strand of Vonnegut's novels, most impressively reactualizing war in his *Slaughterhouse-5*. This current was also reflected in Delany's first trilogy, with vivid episodes of urban conflict, and Harrison's rather inconsequential farce *Bill, the Galactic Hero*. One of the civically most committed writers to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was John Brunner, who wrote the song for its UK protest marches. When in the late 60s his prolific space operas started being reprinted, so that he could for 4-5 years write one instead of three titles per year, he entered upon his plateau period, with more than a nod to Dos Passos's 30s' radicalism. In *The Jagged Orbit* the cool Cubist technique works well, depicting a near-future USA which has segregated blacks in enclaves, gone in for universal private high-tech armament, and become a huge armed madhouse, splitting emotion and reason.

A similar tack is taken by Thomas M. Disch's *Camp Concentration*, which recounts its "conchie" (conscientious objector) narrator Sacchetti's experiences in a near-future, Dantesque US concentration camp for criminals but also for political prisoners who are, during a nuclear, bacteriological, and chemical war in Malaysia, used by the military as guinea-pigs. They come to realize their experimental super-syphilis treatment heightens human intelligence to make them usable as the military's think-tank, but causes death within months. The inmates perform Mann's *Doctor Faustus* as well as a rejuvenation put-on, Sacchetti writes a comedy about Auschwitz, and there is a *deus ex machina* salvation at the end out of pulp SF rather than Dante. Except for this awkward close, which shows it is stronger in describing phenomena than finding causes or suggesting ways out, it is a

fine piece of work, baroquely convincing in its erudition, poetry, and manic-depressive tone, all of them well motivated by the nature of the experiment. The underlying preparations of the US government for such camps--possibly with some echoes from Disch--are also the subject of the splendid movie by Peter Watkins, *Punishment Park*.

Norman Spinrad's grotesque cannibalistic dictatorship and a guerrilla revolution coming from the jungle within a second-rate melodrama in *The Men in the Jungle* was already a far-off echo of Cuba or Vietnam. But in the remarkable *Iron Dream* he achieved the startlingly revealing though uncomfortable blend of the whole US Superman SF trend--from dime-novels and edisonades through comics to the less civic-minded followers of Heinlein's militarism--with the racist ideology and practice of Adolf Hitler, who is in this parallel world the author of the novel (called by him *Lord of the Swastika* and detailing the racial Leader's exultant genocides). This is a two-way street: it points out how Hitler as an immigrant writer in prewar USA would have fitted exceedingly well into its space-opera brand of SF, akin to and indeed crossing over into sword-and sorcery Heroic Fantasy of the Conan or even Tolkien type, with various stinking under-species taking the place of Jews and Soviets, and the Nietzschean Blond Beast hero as the fanatic and always successful defender of racial purity against post-nuclear-war mutations. In other words, the fictional plots of such SF-cum-Fantasy were homologous with the insane super-Wagnerian plots of the actual Third Reich. Obversely, Nazi reality was shaped by kitsch out of the occult sciences of Aryan cosmology, allied to capitalist high technology. However, the tongue-in-cheek impersonation of frenzied genetic superiority and phallic slaughter (no sex and in fact no women are to be found in Hitler's novel) within kitsch stylistic exaltations may be too good, or at least too sophisticated for the typical US SF reader, kept blissfully ignorant of that practice by the mass media and educational system following NATOs reuse of Nazis in the Cold War. Thus, the translation in West Germany ran afoul of the anti-racial-hatred norms and was cited in judgment there...

Parallels between the increasingly militaristic and repressive USA and Nazi Germany, in a "thick" insight into the affinities between politics borne by the same classes of big speculators and small shopkeepers, were frequent in Philip K. Dick. He had already in mid-50s broached the horrors of Cold War paranoia, militarism, mass hysteria organized by politicians, and encroaching government surveillance (for example in "Breakfast at Twilight," "War Veteran" or "Second Variety"), and this was to remain a constant theme of his. *The Man in the High Castle* is the first high point of such dystopianism, situated in a world where the USA has been divided among the occupying Nazis and Japanese, where Africa has been wiped out, and a world war between the victors is brewing. The novel's startling insights into Fascist psychology, and the insight into political manipulation by totally pervasive media enclosing people into an underworld (as already in one of his best short stories, "Foster, You Are Dead") in *The Penultimate Truth*, are offset, with typical Dickian erraticalness, by the blithe use of a post-holocaust setting as a Berkeley pastoral in *Dr Bloodmoney*. The political edge is further blunted by Dick's shift in the latter 1960s from epistemology to ontology, where reality is not veiled by big business and big State but truly changing, yet it returns with a vengeance in *A Scanner Darkly* (see for longer argumentations Suvin, essay 9 in *Positions* which introduced the special issue of *Science-Fiction Studies* on Dick, and "Goodbye"). In Dick's dystopian clear-sightedness, while the rich live offstage "in their fortified huge apartment complexes" (ch. 2), the little people are trapped in a total surveillance State where hologram cameras are routinely used, every pay phone is tapped, supersonic tight beams are used for police assassinations, and the closest friends inform on each other. What I have called Dick's "second plateau" extends to *Radio Free Albemuth*, written in 1976, in which a police State is instituted by a President--a blend of Nixon, McCarthy, and Hitler--come to power in 1969 (a coded SF way of saying that in the author's spacetime freedom has already been lost). The protagonist's resistance group is shot and he survives condemned to perpetual hard labour, with an opening toward brighter perspectives re-established in the novel's coda.

2.4. The Furthest Reaches and Culminations: Refusing the Linear Time

The two undoubted culminations of the Vietnam War and civil protest era SF are works by Le Guin and Haldeman. They are rather dissimilar, but could be seen as two different strategies for refusing or distorting linear time that knows only progress or regress--"development" or "under-development" in our politicians' pernicious lingo.

Joe Haldeman's *Forever War* is divided into four sections, "Private," Sergeant," "Lieutenant," and "Major Mandella," strung out along dozens and then hundreds of years from 1977 to 3143 courtesy of Einsteinian time-dilation in combat jumps between galaxies, so that the initial reluctant draftee aged 22 physiologically grows only to middle age; in a brief coda he has married a conveniently surviving army love and expects a first baby on an Edenic planet. Except for the plentiful drugs and sex in the gender-integrated army (though galactic humanity becomes homosexual, which stabilizes population) and some updated technology, the "Private Mandella" part is flat-out Heinlein-style training and combat stuff--the soldiers are in "fighting suits," each of which is "an investment of over a million dollars" (1.7/25)--with two major differences: no civic propaganda, and no villainous enemies. The Taurans' blood is red, for "all God's children got hemoglobin," and the close-range combat is mass slaughter, ironically called "just following orders" as in Vietnam (1.6/61 and 64), so that our hero has internal debates between his whilom peace-loving self and the "killing machine" programming (2.3/78). In other words, "Vietnam and Sinai" (2.6/97), marijuana, Woodstock, and the anti-war movement have intervened between Heinlein and Haldeman. Earth grows into a fairly horrendous centralized bureaucracy, the initial conscription law gets extended in every section, and understanding with civilians, who are born one or many generations later, is practically impossible, which means that for the needed elite soldiers this becomes a "forever war" and the army is the only home left. But after 11 centuries it is discovered the Human-Tauran war was a misunderstanding and a political necessity: "Earth's economy needed a war, and this one was ideal. It gave a nice hole to throw buckets of money into, but would unify humanity...." (4.8/215). The Taurans are still collectivist clones, but the Humans also turn to cloning and peace is established.

Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Word for World is Forest* is what would in Europe be called a red-green novel, one that combines acute sensitivity to ecology not only with the condemnation of a colonial war but also with a depth search for its psychological equivalents in the macho mentality that wants to tame and rape the environment as well as women. The short novel is structured by the allegorical juxtaposition of the three focal characters, the memorable, and even frightening, "conquistador" career officer Davidson (one of the most acid psychological studies of that type, to be put beside similar portraits by Mailer or Heller), the liberal scientist Lyubov who puts humanity above Terra, and the native leader Selver, easily the most complex of them. The human-derived planet natives, who live in independent forest clans, practice a feedback between "dream time" or The Men's Tongue, in which insight and psychological stability is achieved, and "world time" or The Women's Tongue of empirical reality, in which community and ecological stability is achieved; the double time-horizon also provides an effective "war-barrier" (3/61), although it may make for a static balance with the environment. This feedback and balance they find notably lacking in the psychically poisoned Terran "yumens." Selver becomes one of the rare finders of major collective insight or--non-theistic--"god," a translator between the dream-time and world-time, when he learns war killing from the invaders, defeating them at their game (shades of Ho Chi-minh--but realistically, there's also a final hint of the price to be paid).

The novel is wrought in the combination of textural artistry--for example the colour scheme rooted in vegetation, conveying the delicate beauty of the New Tahiti planet and its ruthless destruction, or the different and complementary stances within both invaders and natives--with very effective composition of cinematic cross-cutting, which is rare not only in SF and marks Le Guin's position at the crossroads of poetry, classical Realism (gender and power psychology), and SF. If there is a cognitive limit to it, it may be found in Le Guin's constant aversion toward political economy, so

that devastated Terra's desperate need for logging the new-found forest planet is easily defeated by insight. But the strong yet delicate delving into the psychic roots of war and domination is what allows such a limit, and the ultimate causal horizons (which are to my mind a blend of politico-economical pressures and type psychology), to be envisaged. It is, so far as I can see, the furthest cognitive outpost to which SF has arrived insofar as the war and militarism theme is concerned.

Le Guin's "plateau period" in SF (omitting her work outside this genre) might be found in the magnificent 1969-75 interval going from *Left Hand of Darkness* to *The Dispossessed*, but extending to my mind also to the story "New Atlantis" (cf. also my essay 10 in *Positions*, which introduced the special issue of *Science-Fiction Studies* on Le Guin). Its yin and yang are two interlocking narrations. The old Atlantis, rushing to its doom, is a near-future "corporative State," a well-identified US variant of admass fascism as an all-embracing bureaucracy, with Gulag-style Rehabilitation Camps and Federal Hospitals for dissidents. When an illegal group invents direct energy conversion which undercuts the need for any centralized State, it is repressed. This militarist repression strand in "New Atlantis" subsumes the real life experiences and warnings of the US Left and English-language SF, from early Heinlein or Chan Davis's "To Still the Drums" and other SF of the 40s, before congressional intimidation clamped down, up to Leo Szilard's--the atom bomb's initiator's--"My Trial as a War Criminal", and writings or movies discussed in 2.3, such as those by Disch and Dick (cf. Franklin, *Vietnam*). The emerging Atlantis is a shimmering undersea creation, just coming into being and self-understanding, a beautiful new genesis of perception and cognition--of time, space, number, and universe--by means of fitful lights. True, the new Genesis is an impure one, its light-bearing creatures are still in the process of swallowing each other, "tiny monsters burning with bright hunger, who brought us back to life." Yet the hungry lights define a city being recreated and raised by immense geological pressures (Le Guin's substitute for history), whose emergence seems at hand. I read this symbolistic New Atlantis, narrated in a collective "we" form, as a new life-form and creation of beauty and cognition symmetrically opposed to the perishing US republic, narrated in the "I" form. Nonetheless, at the end the new creation is also a "yearning music" that asks the US one "Where have you gone?"--a lament for our lost potentialities, for all the lives gone under in our wars, diseases, and starvations.

A comparison of Le Guin's and Haldeman's final horizons might be of use here. Haldeman's novel is generally thought to be an anti-*Starship-Troopers* text, and in many way this is correct. But though war is no longer either just or necessary, it is for our focus group unavoidable (except for the happy ending). And if it is a cynical political ploy-cum-error, no deeper possible causes--such as long-term system stability--are envisaged or thinkable. The US Space-Age Soldier has become disillusioned and left Heinlein's, or any other, civic salvationism behind, but he (now updated to s/he) is still an obedient cog in the senseless killing machine, drugged by pills and misinformation. In Le Guin's novel, the well-meaning Liberal commits the error of playing along with the colonizing Army while sending in his correct reports, not knowing they would never get into the public sphere unless a native uprising happened. But a new allegorical type appears in it and in the story "New Atlantis" (poetically and facelessly in the latter): a radical, other Insurgent who refuses the rules of the powerful but vulnerable Oppressor. This is entirely lacking in Haldeman, where the best our hero can hope for is an oasis outside of time and space, not too dissimilar from the Tralfamadorian zoo of Vonnegut's where Billy Pilgrim ends up with the buxom Hollywood star. In brief, Haldeman is against war but ambiguous about the military (cf. also Gwyneth Jones in this volume); Le Guin is both against war and against militarism.

And yet there is one factor these works by Le Guin and Haldeman have in common: the refusal of a linear time of progress, where knowledge is divorced from responsibility and the furthest frontiers of technological triumphs mean more killing: senseless wars abroad and bureaucratic-cum-militarist oppression at home. This may be the common denominator of the anti-slaughter stance: in Disch's "Daily Life in the Late Roman Empire" sequence from *334* it's evident in the interferences

between that age and the time of a near-future Manhattan; in Spinrad, in the all-pervasive tonal contradiction between "his" and "Hitler's" novel which involves also opposed time-horizons; in Dick's *A Scanner,* in the technologically and politically enforced total split between the two personalities and the two names for the same person of the police spy vs. the spied upon; and it would not be difficult to go on about Vonnegut's "chronoclasm" (time-break) or the other texts. In Le Guin's novel, genocide and rape of women and planet end with the arrival of the ansible, ushering in the "simulsequential," post-Einsteinian time; in Haldeman's, the Forever War is more ambiguously ended by renouncing heterosexual procreation that biologically bore linear human time. In Le Guin, opposition to the murderous "progress" is possible (however ambiguous its consequences might be); in Haldeman, only evasion. While my preference is clearly for the first, both options come from and return into our real world-time, and might in different circumstances be acceptable solutions for different persons.

3. Singularities II: Historical Texts 1975-2001, a Deluge with Exceptions

> Americans have a peculiar chronic blind spot when thinking about war...--they always imagine [it] as taking place somewhere else.
>
> Lois Bujold

3.0. The Coastlines of Atlantis Erode

From the mid-70s on, the lay of the land around and within US SF suffered a sea-change. The US government cut in 1973-75 its losses in Vietnam, leaving that country devastated by more high explosives than were used against the Axis in World War 2 and by chemical warfare (the most believable count of Vietnamese civilians killed is around two millions), and clamped down on any dissent going beyond the peace plank (hence the Le Guin story and the two late Dick novels discussed above). Analogous, only cruder, repression was going on in the Soviet bloc after the 1968 invasion overthrowing the reformists in Czechoslovakia (and had similar, if more heavily coded, echoes in the SF of the Strugatskys). The arms race, huge military procurements, and proxy wars or armed interventions did not at all abate, witness the 1973 US-organized overthrow of the Allende government in Chile, the ongoing clashes in Africa, then in the late 70s the clerical revolution in Iran and the Left revolution in Afghanistan, followed by the alliance of the USA and fundamentalist "islamists" against it and the Soviet intervention with its symmetrical mini-Vietnam. After the defeat of the 60s' movements and all independent Leftism, the US governing classes were on a steady counteroffensive to regain the terrain lost through the Keynesian compromise with labour and the decolonization in the global South, which had culminated in the peace movement and the Vietnamese liberation struggle. The rise of Reaganism and Thatcherism was an abrupt shift to the Right, going on ever since. From communists to liberals, the Left was in a material and moral disarray, which (strangely enough) became terminal after the collapse of USSR in 1989, and savage despoiling of the Welfare State went on full swing. Intellectuals adjusted, at best concluding with Foucault, Deleuze, and Derrida there was nothing outside epistemic power, infinite rhizomes, and micro-differe/ances, at worst denouncing any systematic understanding in favour of "weak" thought. The only politics they deigned to notice was micro-politics of, say, gay rights or "textual politics" (emblematically, in Delany's important *Triton* a "gravity war" between planets is pooh-poohed in order to concentrate on choice of life-styles and genders).[9] Even the feminist movement, within which by far the best modern SF satires (such as Joanna Russ's splendid agitprop novel *The Female Man*, in which one of the strands presents an actual gender war) and open-ended utopias (such as Le Guin's unsurpassed *The Dispossessed*) had been written in the 1960-75 period, was split and then contained along those lines.

The main instrument in the systematic climb to power of the Right in metropolitan capitalism without a human face was the strengthening of the State's repressive, i.e. armed, functions at the expense of its welfare functions, and at the cost of hundreds of billions of dollars going from taxes to armament corporations (see Mesnard). This was centered in the USA, that had become a permanent Warfare State which led a global reorientation of technology and economics toward armaments (cf. Hirsch and Roth 126-28 and passim). As the strategic keystone in the ongoing "commodification of everything" (Wallerstein 90) and in sustaining profit accumulation, spiralling State procurements for the military were the easiest and most lucrative way of keeping the economy going, even when consumer demand stagnated in the assault on permanent employment. By the time of the First Gulf War, a conservative estimate of spending for military purposes was nearly a trillion (one million millions) US$ annually, or between 2 and 2.5 billion dollars daily, and this is now growing by leaps and bounds, so that after 2001 the US military budget was back on Cold War levels. The Pentagon and Department of Defense became thus the US equivalent of the State planning commission, with built-in enormous and omnipresent expense transgressions for key research and technologies (the best portrayal of such procedures in SF may be found in K.S. Robinson's *The Gold Coast*, and of organized warmongering already in the splendid 1967 *Report from Iron Mountain*).

A grim prospect opens up: the deflection of more than half of the world's research and of its financing into profitable commodities for killing makes a sham of democratic control and decision-making. As Wallerstein has repeatedly argued, ideological and economic "liberalism" is incompatible with democracy. Externally, the rise to power of the oil-centered fraction of US corporations under the Bush regimes meant that the post-Cold-War struggle for raw materials was openly entrusted to "gunship diplomacy" and where need be smart bombs. Internally, as mentioned in 2.3, the political fall-out of the Warfare State "is the spread of military rule and militarization that subordinate all other aspects of civil society to its barbarity not only during wars but in times of official 'peace'" (Mesnard 72). This necessarily leads to large powers for the top bureaucracy and the military in relation to civilians and to a corresponding degradation of democratic institutions and practices; the military-industrial complex has also become "the single greatest source of environment destruction in the USA" (McMurtry, *Cancer* 174). The divide between military and police actions and power (and also between the military incarcerated and those subject to normal law) grew more and more permeable even before the welcome excuse of anti-terrorism; it is by now employable at will against all real or supposed, present or future enemies of the US world hegemony, such as the Genua protesters of 2001 (see Dal Lago 71-90).

3.1. The Deluge Begins

In SF, the frenzied drive for not simply profits but "big profits! this year!" intervened first of all with the lure of Hollywood and dumbing down to bestseller level for it. Looking at our radar screens, the editors of *Science-Fiction Studies* in 1979 put it this way (I believe the phrasing was mine):

> It is our impression that the bestseller mentality invading the market is a clear example of how the potentialities of this genre are co-opted and sterilized by economic and ideological forces. This has already resulted in vastly overblown novels, poorly organized and without much else to show for itself except for reducing the level of SF to that of the bestseller reader. ("Editorial" 7-8)

By vastly overblown novels I, at least, was alluding to Pournelle and Niven's *The Mote in God's Eye.* We thought it was an aberrant trend. Maybe so, but it became the dominant trend.

In spite of what we critics usually focus upon, SF is not only a literary genre. It was first widespread in comics--it was "that Buck Rogers (or Flash Gordon) stuff"--and then in both Wells-derived and comics-derived movies, not to mention Frankenstein and King Kong. But after Kubrick's two movies of the 60s, *Dr. Strangelove* and *2001*, after *The Planet of the Apes* and its sequels, and especially after the smash hit of a safely dumbed-down, fairytale and Manichean, kind of fake SF in

Lucas's *Star Wars* from 1977 on--a technospectacular fairy-tale at the level of showdown in the OK Corral--Hollywood had become gung-ho for SF (see Fitting's and La Polla's articles in this volume). Stories of copyright advances in six or seven digits to Heinlein and other SF luminaries began floating around the SF community. Extremely few were chosen (cf. Fitting's filmography in this volume), but very many felt called to write so as to respect Sam Goldwyn's immortal statement "Nobody ever went broke underestimating the great American public." Thus, by the end of the 80s the SF film boom had subsided in "the filmic equivalent of fast food, offering no lasting satisfaction. Also, too much US product seemed to more astringent foreign tastes to be suffused with an oversweet sentimentality..." (Nicholls). Even so, its impact persisted. Many SF writers wrote scenarios or tie-ins for the *Star Trek* series, which has from its semi-liberal beginnings in the 60s oscillated wildly in quality, SF content, and ideological orientation (the 1968 episode "A Private Little War" clearly justifies the US war on Vietnam); other SF on TO was more staggeringly brainless. There is little doubt that military and warmongering SF revived in *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* before they did in SF writing.

Possibly even more important was the impact of computers (the first IBM mass P hit the market in 1981), and the increasingly violent video games cultivating killing lust in the 80s. Both grew exponentially, and their users were disproportionately concentrated in the social stratum that also supplies SF readers. On the highest level, computers and internet supplied the ambience for cyberpunk, the most important SF movement of the 80s which included at least two masters, William Gibson and Pat Cadigan. Within a post-Vietnam revulsion from nationalism, it shrewdly concentrated on the small people caught in the merciless metaphorical, virtual, and real wars of neo-feudal corporativism, using cyberspace as a virtual reality of ambiguous mastery and escape.

A further mega-trend directly splitting or hollowing out SF writers and readers was the rise of Hero Fantasy, following in much inferior ways the success of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and the *Conan* movies, and then of Horror Fantasy culminating in the world's best selling writer, Stephen King. Science was compromised by wars, ecological degradation, and capitalist rationality, so that New Age "spirituality" bloomed in lush old and new variants; alert critics had already in the 60s begun to downgrade SF in favour of "speculative fabulation" which might mean anything on earth that was not suburban realism. My overview concluded that Fantasy's readers are a large group drawn from the presently marginalized intellectuals, the young, and the lower classes, mainly male and precariously or desultorily employed. It is centrally shaped by a refusal of ongoing social history--the technology, urbanization, finances, and human relationships that came about in modern capitalism. But no alternative project of historical self-governance is allowed: "in Horror Fantasy the power of destiny is absolutely superordinated and plot is subordinated to inducing the affect of fear and horror, while in Heroic Fantasy destiny is within the hero's will to power and plot is a serial manifestation of that will which could go indefinitely on"--as it does in the never-ending warfare series both in Fantasy and SF. My hypothesis was that "SF appeals to social groups with confidence that something can at present be done about a collective, historical future--if only as dire warnings.... To the contrary, when the entire life-world has undergone much further tentacular and capillary colonization, Fantasy's appeal is to uncertain social classes or fractions who have been cast adrift and lost that confidence," so that they face their own present and future with a resolve to use vicarious horror or heroism--or both--as a safe thrill before the deluge ("Considering" 235 and 238). The deluge was coming apace, and another way to strike out seemed military imperialism.

True, SF literature was stagnating quantitatively, losing much ground (and also abruptly lowering its quality) because of movies, and even falling behind the number of titles in Hero and Horror Fantasy. Still, SF sales were probably aided by the movies, and readers not wishing to read only (or any) Fantasy were still an ideological and commercial force to be reckoned with. As the Left drooped--including for SF in particular its feminist vanguard--the Right, supported by huge financial and power networks, mobilized. The narrative center of SF was inundated and largely filled--in publication fact rather than in cognitive and formal value--by an organized Right-wing effort to roll

back the anti-war sentiment by a new Cold War literature insisting in numerous ideological tracts first on space exploration and rearmament (see Proietti, "Saving" in this volume, Section 4) and soon thereafter on warfare as measure for Man. This translated into SF as space wars of unbridled Social Darwinism, which differed from the individualist entrepreneurship, in swashbuckling colonialism of the Anderson type or in sword-and-sorcery Fantasy, by resolutely praising space technology, US military imperialism (often--as already in *Star Trek*--tenuously masked as multiracial Earthmen, see the acerbic remark by Jones in this volume), and strict hierarchy. The major new writer of this trend was Larry Niven, in whom the passage from the Soviet to the "Third World" threat may be seen (see Jameson "Science Fiction"), and its major entrepreneur Jerry E. Pournelle.

Niven had started in the mid-60s to introduce his Man-Kzin Wars universe, and in the 1973 novel *The Protector* his tough frontiersman hero becomes a "superman" monster, literally exchanging such human characteristics as sex for brains, lips for beak, hands for claws, and skin for armour in order to save humanity from incoming Aliens, and incidentally wiping out the whole planetful of Martian natives. The mad logic of militarism, "in order to save this town (country, world), we had to destroy it," is fully present here, sparked by vengeful fury at the Vietnam defeat. In several further novels, all coauthored with Pournelle, beautiful space battles wiping out entire armadas are described with juvenile glee (in a pedigree that descends from Italian Futurists and Fascists); the enemies are always cruel and underhanded--in Pournelle the genocide targets are often dark races, or indeed the lowest class as in *Mercenary*--and it is war to the last survivor. Two further collaborations transfer the story overtly to Earth. *Lucifer's Hammer* picks up the torch from Heinlein's survivalist template in *Farnham's Freehold* by repeating the horde of (cannibal!) Blacks that attack the civilized White stronghold, in order to be luckily decimated by poison gas and the remnant enslaved--as near fascism as SF had got by the end of the 70s.[10] In the Californian class war of *The Oath of Fealty*, a rich enclave, ruled by an infallible hierarchy and a brilliant leader, defeats assorted eco-freaks and terrorists. The relatively best but still indigest Niven-Pournelle collaboration is the already mentioned *A Mote in God's Eye*, where the interesting encountered aliens (Niven's best work is the "Ringworld" series where this interest was not yet yoked under militarist ideology) provide a modicum of mystery, only to be explained as dastardry and awful threat. The follow-up novel, *The Moat around Murcheson's Eye*, is to my mind even more interesting, for it abandons head-on conflict for an attempt to differentiate between groups that will and will not co-operate with "us," parallel to evolving US policy toward West Asia. The precondition for co-operating, though, is that it happen on "our" terms, here induced prevention of breeding rate. Alas, the first *Mote* became a paragon for the next decades.

My appended Bibliography of SF Narrations may give an idea (it by no means supplies a full list) of the mushrooming of such militarist SF series. How do these function? Several narrations situated in the same spacetime, a device which economically supplied venues for a series of different, yet connected, events as well as means of reader identification, have been an organizing SF device since the dime-novels and early space-operas in the pulp tradition of E.R. Burroughs and E.E. Smith, mimicking the epic drive of Realistic narrations after Balzac. They were either organized simply around the adventuring hero, a descendant of Ulysses or Aeneas, or more interestingly around a sequence of compatible types in a future history. But the potential breakthrough of SF after the *Star Wars* into financial big time, beyond the up-to-one-cent-per-word stage, set loose a startling avalanche of publishing mutations identified in the new vocabulary of "shared worlds" and various other "ties" or tie-ins (single novels or shared-world anthologies) of a "sharecropping" kind. Shared worlds are narrations by various authors in a preset sociohistorical and planetary spacetime, usually more or less loosely defined by the venue's copyright owner--original author or indeed corporation--in a set of instructions called a "bible," which often accretes beyond its core "genetic code" supplementary backgrounds, including maps, tables, genealogies, etc.; Pournelle's "War World" bible seems to have been one of the larger concentric growths, though the concept was traced back to the late 70s. The bible can be partly or largely derived from earlier SF literature, film, TO, games or cartoons--say from

Star Wars, Star Trek or the genetic warrior-class propaganda of "BattleTech" games--and the tied-in exfoliations, as a rule written for hire, are called sharecrops (cf. Clute, "Tie" and "Shared," also Proietti, "Saving" in this volume, section 5).

Such "ties" are deeply ambiguous: they tie the writers to preset limits, usually for modest money offset by promises of visibility; yet they could potentially be occasions for creative ingenuousness and collective co-operation in what one might call world-thickening. Thus, the ties could be innovative manifestations of a shared collective ethos, which would have been called evil empires had the bible been proposed and enforced by a Communist Party Agitprop section or by a Ministry of Propaganda instead of by market carrots and whips; in reality, I suspect (since financial and other negotiations are secret) they are quite often instances of subaltern drudgery and disempowerment, as exploited sharecroppers have been in agriculture. I found that the "Darkover" tie-ins by M.Z. Bradley and Mercedes Lackey within a feminist ethos, which include interesting variations on Bradley's "Free Amazons," approximate the creative pole. On the opposite pole are the very numerous aggressive, warmongering and/or militarist concoctions by Niven, Pournelle, Saberhagen, and down to David Drake. There may be a few less uniform exceptions here and there, and to my mind the idea of serial collaboration may still in the (rare) right circumstances offer promising possibilities. But on the whole, in them and their authors Heinleinian "species racism" was reborn in the blood of the wars and moved center stage.

3.2. Islands of Higher Ground: From Card to Haldeman II

As Proietti rightly concludes, writings propagating war and military-centered social organization have from the 70s on so inflected SF "as to become one of [its] default images" ("Saving," section 4). By my count from a reliable SF bookstore catalogue in 2004, 30-40% of new US SF titles published were "military SF." The year when the crucial offensive started that resulted in this capture of the SF center may be 1979, when the impetus of Reaganism and of *Star Wars* (the two were in 1983 successfully fused in the public mind by Reagan's "Star Wars" speech) had begun to bear fruit, so that three major warmongering series by Bretnor, Drake, and Pournelle were started by central SF publishers, reinforcing Pournelle's pioneering "Co-Dominium" series of 1971. In the 80s the series multiplied further, and a proper SF pro-military group was constituted lobbying for Star Defense armaments and wars. I cannot add much to the story already well told by Franklin (*War* 200-01, 211, and passim), Proietti ("Saving," esp. section 4), and other critics to be found in the Proietti-Suvin secondary Bibliography. From the early 80s on, SF movies also bettered the *Rocky* series or other mundane hypermasculine warriors in the "hardened" cyborgs of *Terminator, Robocop, Cyborg,* and similar.

Eventually, in the militarist SF the torch began to pass from Pournelle's pioneering zest to the more routine activities of the entrepreneur-writer David Drake, who ranges from heroic planetary mercenaries to rewriting the battles of the Roman Empire with help of Aliens. However, I shall rather as briefly as possible concentrate on some works within the middle (and thus relatively much higher) ground of an SF weighing the pros and cons of war, militarism, and their price for people. The complex but considerable talent of C.J. Cherryh, who started publishing SF in 1977, though she deals much with aliens and conflict and seems to me as interesting as anybody else after that time, stands to my mind aslant to our polarized theme and will regretfully not be dealt with. This holds also for major contemporary UK writers, from James White's thoughtful "Sector General" sequence of novels on medicine and aliens (1962ff.) to Gwyneth Jones and Iain M. Banks from the 80s on and Ken Macleod from the 90s on, who can be rightly opposed to the prevailing black-and-white simplicities hugely preponderant in US SF. Finally, from the middle ground of what Jones rightly identifies as the feminized military SF series after 1985, I shall here discuss only their best writer, L.M. Bujold, and refer the reader to Jones's discussion (in this volume) of what I'd see as the lower forms from the still interesting Elizabeth Moon to David Feintuch and David Weber.

Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* is both one of the most important SF novels of the 80s, though a broken-backed piece in many respects--possibly characteristic in that too. For 296 out of 324 pages, it looks like a remarkable use of kids' spacewar videogames as training for real space warfare with merciless Heinleinian Buggers. Exactly such behaviour by kids was praised at the time by President Reagan (see Fitting's article, note 18) and channelled to the same effect in the movie *The Last Starfighter*, where a teenage videogame champion saves the galaxy; it was at the time also popularized by the furore--and movies, one called *Wargames*--about teenage hackers. In the coda of 28 pages, our genius protagonist is told he and his child helper-friends actually fought and annihilated the whole species of Buggers. Thus the initial 91% look like a Cold War militarist scenario renewed by the point of view of an inmate of a very youthful military academy being dehumanized into a tool (if need be a "despicable" one--4/35) for humankind's survival. This would be an interesting piece of cynicism on its own, but it is suddenly unhinged in the 9% ending by Ender's guilt and horror at what he and the Terrans have wrought. Gwyneth Jones goes incisively to the novel's heart by noting that its basic move is "Ender annihilates rival: sheds crocodile tears; Ender annihilates rival: sheds crocodile tears…" (Section 1)--and I'd add that in Card's well-crafted writing this simultaneously formal and ideological gambit operates both within briefer segments and in the novel as a whole. The only question is, are they really crocodile tears, i.e. hypocritic sorrows?

To my mind they are and aren't: that is, Card attempts to have it both ways. True, when after each near-murderous or fully murderous triumph Ender feels terrible and indulges in moral agonizing, this could be written off as standard Puritan hypocrisy within a power trip. Haldeman has noted how "This childlike, more or less boy-like, fascination with machines is a dominant motif in science fiction, especially the subgenre of military sf.... Like most American boys of my generation and previous ones, I had a childhood dominated by weapons-oriented play." (94) On the one hand, then, the body of Card's novel yokes convincingly such a (slightly extrapolated) psychology of usually defenceless children to the blind needs of the huge war machine: the individual is predisposed towards it but has, in this period which Jones's essay shrewdly identifies as the "pause" (between Vietnam and the Twin Towers), to be persuaded to assume all of its murders, up to Pournellian genocide of a whole alien species and civilization. But on the other hand--and here Card's religious antecedents come into play--the most arresting passages of the novel are Ender's encounters with what seems a kind of own externalized subconscious in the school computer game; and in the ending, after Ender refuses to lead another war, it turns out these were attempts by the Buggers to communicate with him. He finds the cocoon of the last Bugger hive-queen, potential progenitrix of a renewed species, and gathers from telepathic messages the two species had been alike in the inability to understand there could be any thinking (psychozoic) Other. He writes a book detailing "all the good and all the evil" (15/322) of the Bugger hive, and becomes a Speaker for the Dead, a habit that catches on among humans. This unashamedly utopian and pacifist ending is then transferred to Ender's further cosmic travels which in following novels (*Speaker for the Dead* and *Xenocide*) result in finding a planet for the cocoon and averting another potentially genocidal interspecies misunderstanding. Ender's qualms in the first novel remain belated and quite insufficient to balance a genocide, but its ending and the sequels forbid treating them as hypocrisy. They share the blind spots of all religious pacifism: to end war, they define it as due to misunderstandings rather than interest conflicts (no nations or classes exist for Card), and they put their faith in a super-charismatic Saviour to effect the necessary moral contagion; but at least they want to end them.

Gwyneth Jones argues that Card's *Ender's Game* is in a way near to Haldeman's *Forever War*, since both of their authors are working off the influence of the 60s, evident in the horror at the loss of innocence in and because of inescapable war. The point is well taken--both protagonists "light out for the Territory" (far-off planets), working out their personal destiny and leaving Earth to rot on its own--though the divergencies between a Vietnam veteran turned pacifist and a Mormon missionary to Brazil should not be minimized either. The first notes the ravages of irreversible linear time, only partly

stanched by male comradeship and heterosexual erotics; the second uses Einsteinian time-dilation to string on it planets like beads in the earnest (and sexless) Messianic quest among strange tribes. In the interval, something has been gained, mainly in "thicker" description; much has been lost.

Lucius Shepard's *Life during Wartime*, though, is clearly a throwback to the spirit of the 60s--youth culture, drugs, and all: primarily to the feverish beat of its music. Its narrative texture reads like a feverish hijack of Mailer's (or indeed Pynchon's) war absurdities into early Spinrad country. His protagonist is a rock-loving soldier in an interminable Central American jungle war (a melding of Vietnam and the dirty "little wars" the US government was fighting in Latin America before and after it, usually by proxy mercenaries). Its first part describes in vivid vernacular detail the drug-saturated atmosphere and confused decay in and around the army, and Mingolla's[11] eventual ethical revulsion from such dehumanization; but then it founders in an overlong confusion of ESP, love and treachery, and a politically illiterate attribution of global power struggles and protracted wars to an *Illuminatus*-type conspiracy, based yet on two Panamanian families in control of a rare drug source.

A similar problem besets John Shirley's in many ways rich and extraordinary "A Song Called Youth" or "Eclipse" trilogy (*Eclipse*, *Eclipse Penumbra*, and *Eclipse Corona*). Like the politically aware SF of the 60s, and indeed the 40s, but isolated in the latter half of the 80s (when it came out), it is engaged in antifascist resistance, this time against a Rightwing US Christian variant of fascism called SA, which is taking over Europe with the connivance of NATO during a protracted stalemate within a limited nuclear war against the USSR. Various protagonists, notably the rock musician Rickenharp (who composes the Song Called Youth) meet, fight, and die under the leadership of a maverick Israeli in an unequal underground struggle, mainly in Paris but ranging widely over the Old World, and there is a parallel subplot on an orbital colony. Impressive accounts of technical advances in warfare and communication, including cyberpunk-type jacking in, and of political skulduggery on both sides are intercut to form a broad global overview, within which an antifascist coalition ranging from punk anarchists and communists to liberals unmasks the dastards before the UN, and our main protagonist Danny or Hard-Eyes can go off and enjoy true love in orbital free-fall. The long and deft plot is vastly superior in political savvy to Shepard and indeed most US SF, which has since Spinrad and Le Guin become addicted to navel-gazing; Shirley even prefigures the 90s' youth and antiwar movements, which have again had extremely few echoes here. Yet his narrative is still naive about the sea-change in world politics and militarism that was developing in the USA. If Shepard's novel is a drug-perfected ESP story used for anti-war purposes, Shirley's smoother trilogy is a somewhat macho youth-culture revolt mingling Chicago in 1968 with the anti-Nazi resistance in retro ways. Both narratives have their heart in the right (60s') place but their head has not been updated, and both in retrospect seem anachronistic. Eschewing rosy sentimentality and feel-good inwardness to delve into disturbing yet essential matters of collective survival, they have not had nearly the popularity of much inferior writings.

After Kelso's essay "Loud Achievements" and the brilliant pages by Jones (in this volume) devoted to Lois McMaster Bujold, I can be briefer about her improbable but successful marriage of the sentimental and military narratives than this would deserve. The marriage can be read either as militarism with a human face, gathering new SF readers from the kinder and gentler wing (mainly women) who may perhaps then go on to sterner stuff, or as a subtle subversion weaning readers away from war and militarism. In the absence of a full dissection of her dozen volumes in and around the "Vorkosigan Saga," my impression is that Bujold modulates from one position to the other within each work but that within the development of the series she leans more strongly toward the non-militarist horizon. Kelso argues that from the second novel on the dominant military space opera slowly gives way, within the education of our quite central hero, Miles Vorkosigan, to what I'd call sentimental-cum-political intrigue, so that in the second quinquennium of publication--from *Barrayar* (1991) on--which effects a "deeper pass over the landscape of the earlier books" ("Loud" 12), the taking back of militarism on the whole predominates. This is symbolized by Miles's death and rebirth in *Mirror*

Dance (1994), and becomes compositionally unmistakable when he in *Memory* (1996) resigns from the military, and the "saga" shifts into the civilian mode. Furthermore, by a series of binary manoeuvers Bujold has shifted Miles right from the beginning out of the Pournelle-to-Drake patriarchal killer type, hugely predominant in US SF. The first such manoeuver is his descent from a strong liberal mother and an honour-bound ruling-class officer in the first and possibly untranscended volume, *Shards of Honour* (1986). Even the title is doubly binary: honour (an important value in and out of the military) is in shards, but even if broken up they are still shards of honour. The second manoeuver is Miles's fetal poisoning by enemies of the Vor aristocracy, which results in brittle bones, small stature, and a distinctly non-macho, even slightly comical appearance. This has the advantage of triggering the Ugly Duckling or folktale pattern, where the seemingly poor and downtrodden hero at the end wins, here by a combination of brains and valour, enlisting the empathy of readers. The third binary is Miles's double role as junior officer (who is in reality a privileged imperial spy) and swashbuckling admiral of a mercenary fleet doing the empire's dirty business among far galaxies. The fourth is a foregrounding of the doubling device in the interaction with his clone brother Mark, and less obtrusively with the trajectory of one of his loves, Elena Bothari; and one could doubtless go on (say about the name Miles, both archetypal Latin soldier and Twain's pauper that passes for prince, see Kelso "Loud" 12 and Proietti, "Saving" note 12). One could even suspect that such doublings anamorphically reproduce and negotiate Bujold's double allegiance to psychological SF of the Le Guin type (half a dozen subsidiary characters are deftly sketched in) and to military SF of the galactic space-opera type.

There are drawbacks to Bujold's meld: Miles is often the hero of a Regency romance, improbably charming, resourceful, even sexy--Rochester masquerading as Jane Eyre. Conversely, gory interstellar warfare is hollowed out but also accepted as inevitable--this is well symbolized by the marriage of Miles's liberal mother to his heretic warrior father. Within Bujold's briskly competent narrative drive, her writing encompasses both felicitous nuggets and what I'd call some (not quite purple but) rosy prose. While planets are--somewhat vaguely--differentiated by ideological traditions, any vertical social tension is absent (Kelso cites Bujold's remark that the home Vorkosigan planet is the "white-bread suburb of the galaxy, "Loud" 14). However, it should not be forgotten that in two somewhat marginal novels, foremost in *Falling Free*, she managed to broach a working-class exploited as slave labour, the genetically modified "quaddies," disguised as childlike innocents in a love story of modest pretensions. And the great final chapter of *Shards*, finding and washing the space dead, to my mind transcends Card's focus on the heroic protagonist's guilt and reparation: it encapsulates Bujold's concern with the simultaneously collective and individual price of war to ordinary people, whom it destroys.

A more overt antiwar-cum-feminist voice is to be found in Joan Slonczewski's *A Door into Ocean* (1986). It is a variant on Le Guin's untranscended template in *The Dispossessed* of an exploitative planet, whose inhabitants are possessed by "propertarianism," vs. an egalitarian moon, here with several go-betweens of different stature. In place of the greedy rich planet as against the poor egalitarians, here the hard-dry-stony, aggressively militarist and feudal, hi-tech planet is opposed to the soft-wet-silken water-covered moon, inhabited by ecobiologically oriented and parthenogenetic women, while the rule and mores of a highly destructive and repressive patriarchy is opposed to the "lovesharer" women, who live in a cross between modern basis-democracy anarchism, early Quaker sharing unanimity, tribal communism, and a feminist sister-gathering. Furthermore, instead of the non-interfering estrangement in *The Dispossessed* between the opposed camps, *A Door* is halfway to *The Word for World Is Forest* in that a more realistic military invasion of the hard imperialists takes place and has to be thwarted with great losses to the seemingly soft but unyielding pacifists. A major strength of Slonczewski's is the creation of a very full world ecology, in the imaginative and liberating tradition of explicitly anthropological SF--among others by Oliver, Blish or Bishop--which does not take place in the linear clarity of Le Guin's (or Herbert's) desert but in the rich depths and interstices of

the planet-wide ocean. The politics of the conflict are supply dialectical rather than black and white (the worst military torturer is a woman), but to my mind the respectably Gandhian premise of the ocean-dwellers' victory is much too optimistic. Yet if this novel, one of the masterpieces of the 80s, is a throwback to the US 60s, it also carries forward its "make love not war" theme, being reborn in the protests against the ravages of global eco-destruction.

Perhaps this is the place to mention briefly works of two SF authors I consider to be second to none in their respective generations, and indeed our major beacons, Ursula K. Le Guin and K.S. Robinson. But both have given their major contributions to our theme outside of this period, Le Guin in 1972, as argued in 2.4, and Robinson in 2002 with the *Years of Rice and Salt*, so that their partial incidence on our theme will here be dealt with briefly. Within Le Guin's monstrously multifaceted and splendid work *Always Coming Home*--perhaps the most impressive summa of soft primitivism we have had in utopian or science fiction--the astoundingly rich pastoral recreation of tribalism and ecological balance is systematically violated only by the slave-owning warring male horde of Condors in the "Stone Telling" sections, for whose militarism only rapacious machismo seems responsible. But it is marginal within the mosaic-like work, and a sickness that ebbs away by itself. While this may be acceptable in that (so to speak) renewed prelapsarian world, it is of little help with the immediate concerns becoming more pressing every year.

K.S. Robinson has in the Dennis McPherson-Stewart Lemon strand of his multi-plotted *The Gold Coast* given us the best inside description of skulduggery in (very slightly extrapolated) Pentagon procurements deals, which have "all the trappings of an objective rational process, but [are] at the same time fairly easy to manipulate to whatever ends are desired" (42/213) and the crazy self-serving world of the military-industrial complex. As an exasperated engineer grumbles:

> "Need a boost--military spending--it's been the method of choice ever since World War Two got them out of The Great Depression. Hard times? Start a war! Or pump money into weapons whether there's a war or not. It's like we use weapons as a drug, snort some up and stimulate the old economy. Best upper known to man." (42/220)

Within a novel centered on drug-taking, this is the most potent drug. And Robinson went on to his masterpiece of the 90s, the "Mars" trilogy, which to my mind made him the torch bearer of the historicizing SF that Le Guin had by then largely forsaken for other interests. It is the richest and most believable history--slightly anamorphic to Terra, as when our "green" movement is on Mars (of course) the "red" one--of both corporate struggles against people who actually create a livable planet and ecological struggles of conservation vs. transformation. Revolution and repression, militarization and resistance happen here too, but the occasional shooting is given unrivalled scope and breadth by the multiple and criss-crossing causes and consequences, allowing the reader the greatest of all freedoms: to think through and about it, as an estranged history with alternate time-streams whose coming into being as collective history is the work of praxis (cf. Jameson "If I Find").

Disclaimers similar to what I can discuss here from the opuses of Le Guin and Robinson are due for another as important writer, Marge Piercy. Quite reasonably, she bet in the 1991 *He, She and It* on a future of ecological mega-breakdown and, before the full takeover by Bushism and the Warfare State, on the passage of power to a few mega-corporations with wastelands and gang-ruled urban sprawls in between. Corporation centers and a few "free cities" supplying indispensable specialized know-how live under domes, one of them being our focal Jewish city of Tikvah (which is lay and cyber-oriented--Israel has been destroyed in an atomic war). Life in the mega-corporation cities is indistinguishable from total militarization in the name of technoscience, whereas their conflicts between each other and the free cities at times erupt into mini-wars conducted by both internet and reality warfare. This is the case after our protagonists in Tikvah succeed to produce the perfect defense cyborg Yod, who is programmed both with the male and female stance, with power and deviance, and thus also a perfect, considerate and tireless, lover (a parallel plot, which I shall slight here, concerns the Golem Joseph defending the Jewish ghetto in Baroque Prague). The successful defense of Tikvah

flows at the end into a tentative alliance with the politicized gangs in the sprawl on the ex-US East Coast. This rich novel focusses not only on female scientists but presents also, most cognate to our theme, two female underground fighters, the info pirate Rivkah and the enhanced cyborgized Nili from an Israeli-Palestinian women's enclave surviving hidden in the radioactive zone. It is an example of intelligent SF integration of warfare into her earlier mixture of ecology and political economy with resistance and feminist concerns in her two SF novels *Dance the Eagle to Sleep* and *Woman on the Edge of Time*. Its scenario is at the moment not on the historical agenda, but may return to it if Bushism is defeated and/or the ecology massively breaks down.

My final exhibit here is another novel by Haldeman, *Forever Peace*. It is nearest to us in time, so that it can incorporate both the latest technoscience and the urgency of getting out of Bushist warfare. It has the, to my mind enormous, advantage of attempting to show how the war-cum-militarist universe could be ended by action, but an ambiguously utopian and finally unbelievable way to get out of it. The premises are scientifically impeccable, though by now overoptimistic: a nanotechnology which determines both the protracted North-South global-cum-civil, class-cum-race war in the first part of the novel and (in its ability to create any objects out of water and sand) the "Universal Welfare State" with "electrocash" economy on the US side of the war divide. The warfare is fought mainly by highly trained university people on their three-year minimum draft, "combat-jacking" into invulnerable war-robots--thus melding the SF traditions of Heinleinian suits and cyberpunk. The interesting psychological aspects of a platoon of ten soldiers with interconnected brains, making for a new morality but also vulnerability, is carried over into the "civilian" part, which begins as a scientific puzzle about building a planet-sized particle accelerator on Jupiter and ends as a political thriller. It turns out that the Jupiter Project, supposed to recreate the Big Bang conditions, would also destroy the known universe, but that a Fundamentalist Christian End of the World sect blocks its suspension for religious reasons. Our heroes, who are by convenient coincidence also colleagues of the top US scientists, find out that prolonged collective jacking-in renders people incapable of hurting others. Though the sect's hard core has infiltrated the government and army command, our heroes' derring-do (they occupy the neuralgic center of power in Washington DC and subject its inmates to the pacifist jack-in) prevails, and we all live happily ever after in a saved universe and pacifist world.

It is not clear why the "nano-forges" are kept a US Government secret when their worlwide use would obviate all scarcity and the need for unending wars, but this is perhaps politically believable; more to the point, it is not believable they could remain a secret. Furthermore, while a plot by scientists to save both peace and the universe by changing the brains of the generals is a very welcome utopia, this unfortunately encompasses both its meanings of a better place and of an impossible no-place. The story's beginning of super-cyborgized jungle warfare remains a believable anti-war tale, its middle a rare SF warning about the misuses and huge dangers of technoscience, and its end a very early prescient alarm at one of the main pillars of present US administration, the so-called Christian Zionists who do hold a belief that one should hasten Armageddon. It is also a rare example, just like Haldeman's earlier novel, of a story adopting the usual military and technoscientific grounds (cyberwarfare, huge scientific projects) but then hollowing them out in an, as it were, self-criticism from within. But like some other narratives based on miraculous nanotechnology (say one by Greg Bear), it degrades into a fairy tale.

4. Particularities

> Clear thinking [about war prevention] becomes more at a premium than ever, plus the need for the clear-thinkers to write it all down and teach it to others. False models of thinking about each other, of human beings who are in conflict, are as deadly as false maps to the tactician....The

> anti-war thought that I've encountered in both fiction and real life has been so far too much addicted to feelings and not enough to convincing analysis.
> Lois Bujold

4.0. "Gentlemen, you are mad!"

It is instructive to confront a famous outcry from 1946 to a publisher's blurb in 2004 as a measure of what has (and has not) happened at the center of our subject-matter, and what defines its horizons.

In 1946, after the atomic bombs on Japan and sensing the winds of the arms race, the great utopologist Lewis Mumford published an article in the prestigious *Saturday Review of Literature* with the title "Gentlemen, you are mad!" The "gentlemen" are the US leaders who lead toward global suicide while convinced they are rationally working for peace and security. The madmen, however, are also all of us, letting them get away with it, indeed "view[ing] the madness of our leaders as if it expressed traditional wisdom and common sense" (qtd. in Franklin, *War* 4).

At the end of 2004, a lost manuscript of Heinlein's first utopian SF novel was published. From dozens of his SF titles, he was on its front page identified as "author of *Starship Troopers*." This is the hour chiming on the readers' clock. It is also the hour on the TO and movie watchers' clock: innumerable movies and series about the military are resulting as I write (February 2005) in the introduction of a TO "Military Channel," with an unbelievably propagandistic US program, with a "Military History Channel" in preview. The Pentagon budget for 2006 is foreseen to top 600 billion dollars, which together with the ongoing costs of the Afghan and Iraqi wars will amount to around 30% of the US Federal outlay. As an offshoot, the MIT has opened in 2002 an Institute for military nano-technology with huge grants by the Defence Department.

What a devolution, what a fall, have the US and the world reality and imagination experienced between those two dates! Mumford's mad leaders spend hundreds of millions of dollars to get re-elected so they can spend hundreds of billions in war procurements to enrich a few corporations, and maybe one percent of the US population, and fight a holy war for power and profits. The rest of us allow this. It is a variant of what Marcuse analyzed for the US Secret Service as the Nazi "rationalizing of the irrational (in which the latter retains its power but flows into the process of rationalization), the continuous to-and-fro between mythology and technology" (49).

US "Military SF" (one of five subgroups for SF in the Catalogue I referred to in 3.2) is a small though meaningful epicycle on the mega-cycle of imaginatively organizing and then really fighting this never-ending war. What does it matter that is as a rule poorly written, monotonous, repetitive, and addictive? Or, perhaps even more strikingly, that it defies elementary rules of sense, such as when, in *Star Trek: Nemesis* of 2002 (though mass media are always more brainless that the corresponding level of written fiction), the final conflict between huge spaceships is still a pirate-style boarding and fistfight? It sells well and confirms audience expectations. I have to be the bearer of bad news: obviously, a large part--most probably a majority--of the main audience that has historically nurtured SF after Wells, the US youth and intellectuals, has undergone what is in Italian nicely called *imbarbarimento*, descent into barbarism, or in US idiom dumbing down. Gwyneth Jones pithily characterizes the core that reads military SF as "the rich-poor (materially rich, poor in every marker of high culture) of the USA" (in this volume, Section 3). The causes would include huge existential pressures on the spottily employed and systematically humiliated youth as well as the huge monophonic propaganda machines of all the media, turning aggression and rage against foreign scapegoats.[12] In the middle of this process (still ongoing), Rifkin concluded that the USA is becoming "a country populated by a small cosmopolitan elite of affluent Americans enclosed inside a larger country of increasingly impoverished workers and unemployed persons. The middle class, once the signature of American prosperity, is fast fading.... In 1989 the top 1 percent of families... owned... 50.3

percent of the net financial assets of the country." (173; see on the horrendous statistics of "The Other America" and "The New Reserve Army" of increasing poverty 177-94)

However, a kind of "cold Civil War" that raged in many US cities of the 60s-70s, and still characterized much cyberpunk in the 80s, has been turned to growing criminality and drug-consumption--though not at all to greater urban security. Not only the richest capitalists and executives but also the new elite professionals or "symbolic analysts"-- "distinguished from the rest of the population by their global linkages, comfortable lifestyles,... and abundance of security guards"-- went in for secession into isolated enclaves (Robert Reich, cited in Rifkin 177), lauded early on by a Pournelle-Niven novel and best depicted by the latter Ballard (cf. Proietti "Chiusure"). On the fringes of such symbolizers, subject to the same pressures as their readers, most SF writers have joined the engineers of material and human resources, the admen and design professionals, the new bishops and cardinals of the media clerisy, most lawyers, and the teeming swarms of supervisors as the Post-Fordist "organic" mercenaries. They have sincerely or cynically jumped aboard and refused to think about the price of war and militarism, in US and abroad. They are engaging in what Le Guin has, already in less extreme contexts, called "[a] denial of authorial responsibility, a[n elitist,] willed unconsciousness" ("Introduction" 5). We are lucky to still have niches for the Robinsons and Slonczewskis, voices going against the current, as well as SF from the UK. In the climate of increasing repression, with laws in USA (also UK and France) already allowing for secret, unlimited, and judicially unreviewed detention of any stranger plus suspect "sympathizer," I can only hope such niches will last. But the overall frenzied propaganda for war and militarism will obviously go on in the USA until the macro-political climate changes.

In the meantime, we should strive to understand. All of this is being done in a feedback system of writers and readers, our colleagues, our classmates (if I may coin a term). How, how come?

4.1. On Intellectuals and Death

Who writes to whom, and therefore about what and how, in the US SF since 1945--or since 1959, the year of Heinlein's *Starship Troopers*? It is a nice and unresolved point just which class/es is SF written for, in the commercial and ideological sense. At any rate, it circulates almost entirely within some middle classes of the White North. I have expounded on this at length (Suvin "Utopianism," cf. also "Novum" and "What May," with large bibliographies), and will repeat here that in my opinion the addressor and addressee subjects are various contending fractions of what may be loosely called intellectuals--including what I'd call "apprentice intellectuals," the famous SF core consisting of 13-to-25-year-old readers, no longer overwhelmingly male. Intellectuals are people who work mainly with images, concepts or narrations and "produce, distribute and preserve distinct forms of consciousness" (Mills, *White* 142--cf. more precisely Mills, Noble, and the Ehrenreichs). Hobsbawm calculates that two thirds of the GNP in the societies of the capitalist North are now derived from their labour, though their proportion within the population is much inferior, globally perhaps 10-15%. Politically, they (we) may be very roughly divided into servants of the capitalist bureaucratic state, servants of large corporations, self-proclaimed "apolitical" or "esthetic" free-floaters, and radicals taking the plebeian side. The funds for this whole congeries of "cadre" classes --"administrators, technicians, scientists, educators.... have been drawn from the global surplus" of exploitation: none of us has clean hands. The Fordist welfare-and-warfare-State saw the culmination of the "cut" from this surplus we "middle" 10-15% were getting; and "the shouts of triumph of this 'middle' sector over the reduction of their gap with the upper one per cent have masked the realities of the growing gap between them and the other [85-90%]" (Wallerstein 83-84 and 104-05).

As different from this Fordist dispensation of roughly 1915-73, the new collectivism, while mouthing individualist slogans stripped of State worship, needs fully other-directed intellectuals, whom Post-Modernist cynicism has dispensed from alibis. Post-Fordism has had quite some success in making intellectual "services" more marketable, a simulacrum of profit-making. This began in

sciences and engineering: industrial production since ca. the 1880s is the story of how "the capitalist, having expropriated the worker's property, gradually expropriated his technical knowledge as well" (Lasch xi, and see Noble). In the age of World Wars this sucks in law, medicine, and "soft-science" consulting in the swarms of "professional experts." Now those who buck the market better get themselves to a nunnery. The class aggression by big corporations against the immediate producers, corporeal and intellectual, means that Jack London's dystopian division of workers under the Iron Heel into a minority of indispensable Mercenaries and a mass of downtrodden proletarians (updated by Piercy in *He, She and It*) has a good chance of being realized.

On the one hand, as Marx famously chided, "the bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has turned the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the scientist, into its paid wage-labourers." (*The Communist Manifesto*) On the other hand, the constitution of intellectuals into professions is impossible without a measure of autonomy: of corporative self-government and, most important, control over one's work. No doubt, this constitution was enabled by the fact that the salaried are "the assistants of authority" (Mills, *White* 74), but no authority can abide without their assistance. We share to an exasperated degree the tug-of-war between wage labour and self-determination. Even the poorest intellectual participates in privilege through her "educational capital"; even the richest manager or commanding general may not be able to rid himself of the uncomfortable itch of thinking. In a living contradiction, we are essential to the *encadrement* and policing of workers, but we are ourselves workers. Excogitating ever new ways to sell our expertise as "services" in producing and enforcing marketing images of happiness and safety, we decisively contribute to the decline of people's self-determination and non-professionalized expertise. We are essential to the production of new knowledge and ideology, but we are totally kept out of establishing the framework into which, and mostly kept from directing the uses to which, the production and the producers are put. We cannot function without a good deal of self-government in our classes or artefacts, but we do not control the strategic decisions about universities, research or dissemination of artefacts. The marginalized and pauperized humanists and teachers--increasingly adjunct policemen keeping the kids off the streets--are disproportionately constituted by women and non-"Whites," a sure index of subalternity.

Already before World War 2, Siegfried Kracauer--an important student of culture beyond his famous analysis of the pre-Nazi horror movies--gave us, I believe, two keys we can use to understand the depth processes shaping the mainstream of "Military SF" (and a series of analogous manifestations in US culture) in our Post-Fordist existential squeeze. First, he observed most middle-class professionals, including students and intellectuals, live in personal isolation and a lack of sense, where belief is merely conceptual and the main danger is the *horror vacui*. From these vacuities, sects and mysticisms both religious and lay draw their appeal (106-12). In a second essay, discussing the US illustrated magazines (such as *Life*), he concluded they were one of the most powerful weapons for "locking out understanding": "In them, the spectators see a world, the perception of which is hindered by what they see" (34). He attributed the success of their images to the spectators' fear of thinking about death (I found the same of Disneyland, in "Utopianism"). While we might today, after further experience, broaden the causal system behind his phenomena, the dangerous denial of reality would remain. Even Kracauer's observation that in such magazines the way to banish death was the multiplication of a certain kind of image remains valid. In psychological terms, what we are talking about here is whether, when, how, and how much intellectuals engage in death-lust, while pretending to ignore death.

To illuminate this, we have to posit a spectrum of roles and stances between the poles of what Foucault calls "the 'universal' intellectual" of the Voltaire-to-Zola tradition (usually a writer hurling his political "J'accuse" at the injustices of huge apparatuses and other ruling class privileges) and "the 'specific' intellectual." The latter is the expert that emerged as dominant in the Manhattan Project's atomic scientists and other physicists and has continued down to today's molecular biologists and

security theoreticians, whose high prestige--pay and status--is due to the meshing of technoscientific knowledge with "the economic and strategic domain" (122-23). Such a polarization does not deny the existence of grey zones in between, but it is indispensable to any value-judgment in matters of such gravity as the survival of millions, perhaps billions, of people under war, and of all of us under militarization. A condition of proper usage for this heuristic tool in our context is that it has to be checked by feedback from any particular text, while taking into account that the most interesting texts are not those of the outright Social-Darwinist warmongers of Pournelle's type but those Jameson would nominate for ambivalent political confusion.

For, to understand intellectual production--not only in arts, even in mathematics--I believe the no doubt useful sociopolitical definitions of intellectuals, from Mills and Foucault to Bourdieu's revealing description as "a dominated fraction of the dominant class" ("Intellectual" 145 and Other 319ff.; cf. Guillory 118ff.), are insufficient. We also need an axiological definition, which to my mind would be something on the order of: "people who interpret the past and ongoing flow of cultural production as articulations of a beauty that keeps alive the necessity of justice." This feeds back into approaching SF, as defined at the beginning of this essay: for I agree with Keats and Scarry that beauty is potentially cognitive.

4.2. Allegorical Types, Spacetimes, and Stances

This to my mind means that various fractions of intellectuals, between the poles of Le Guin's responsible or Foucault's universal ones and the irresponsible or specific ones, talk to each other in the symbolic analyses of art. In military SF, a great majority of titles and writers belong to the latter pole. The balance between the two groups in the subgenre may be skewed, for many prominent writers and critics have such a distaste for anything associated with war, and therefore the military, that they refuse this framework *a limine*. I must confess this was my optimistic stance too, but when what seemed transient aberrations grow into a quarter-century trend occupying the center of a genre, realities must be faced and contradictions within them uncovered. The key question is: how is such a dialogue conducted, in what ways and forms? In fiction, by means of a narration employing agents, chronotopes, and stances. My hypothesis is that in SF, and even more clearly in such a schematized subgenre as military SF, they are all to some degree (and in novel ways) allegorical: that their reason for being is to refract societal stances, choices or structures of feeling.[13] I shall briefly discuss their novelty, then adduce some examples and attempt to sound them for stances.

Agents in this corpus such as Triumphant Leader, Dupe, Victim or Resistant Other are allegorical roles or types; however, they differ from classical allegory before mass capitalism, say from Buddha and Aristophanes to Bunyan, by abandoning the one-to-one relation between vehicle and tenor, in which a semiotically presented body stands for a pre-existent notion (as Plutus for riches and Ares or Ira for war). When a body (a type) came to be overdetermined by standing for several notions--say the Miles Gloriosus of later Antiquity or the Renaissance Capitano for military inscription, cowardice, magniloquence, and so on--it was not too difficult for Renaissance realism to inject into its constituent notions a truly contradictory one, say the affection for a younger man as opposed to Epicurean sensuality in Falstaff's relation to Prince Hal, and thus to evoke that illusion of soulful depth or three-dimensionality which we came to call a "character." In that sense, I have argued that all the characters of Realism have a backbone of type (Suvin "Can People"): the naive *amoroso* of comedy underlies Stendhal's Fabrice del Dongo, uncomprehendingly lost on the battlefield of Waterloo. But the allegory was backgrounded and indeed came to be theoretically blackballed by most Romantics in their flight into the depths of the stressed individual (though their civic wing produced the best allegorical poem in modern English, Shelley's "Mask of Anarchy").

In doctrinaire individualism the individual is a Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, communicating with other such island-dwellers by means of ground-to-ground missiles in offense or alliance. Though Defoe's Crusoe came with a huge baggage of implements and notions from the

society that shaped him, the bourgeois ideological mirage blanked this out. The senseless Romantic opposition between the valuable individual as an unsplittable atom opposed to the soullessly mechanical collectivity underlies even the ancestral, and possibly still best, dystopia--Zamyatin's *We*, mimicked then by Orwell's *1984*. As usual, it was taken to its extreme by the Nazis, who agreed with Klages that the intellect is "the enemy of the soul" (cf. Glaser 99). Yet not only has the Leviathan of centralized State by now faded or been swallowed by the stronger Leviathan of globalizing corporations (I argue such points in Suvin, "Reflections"), but the overdetermination initiated by Realism has by now grown much more intimate and complex. Joanna Russ's pioneering encapsulation goes:

> Perhaps science fiction is one symptom of a change in sensibility (and culture) as profound as that of the Renaissance. Despite its ultra-American, individualistic muscle-flexing, science fiction (largely American in origin and influence) is collective in outlook, didactic, materialist, and, paradoxically, often intensely religious or mystical. (*To Write* 10-11)

In fact, the allegorical type had surfaced already in the very unromantic experiences of crowded cities and then crowded battlefields (in Balzac the two can be scarcely distinguished), where roles such as Young Upstart and Courtezan, rather than nuclear individuality, became again determining frameworks for success and survival. The individual Young Woman or World War Soldier was thereby not denied but slotted, and the slot determined to a significant--sometimes bearable but sometimes overwhelming--degree her freedom of choice. The narrative agent had a face and as a rule a non-allegorical name, but also a deep structure of type(s)--as Shelley's poem mentioning his period's prime minister begins: "I met Murder on the way,/ He had a mask like Castlereagh." The spaceship containing various ranks of diplomats, military, and ragtag civilians is only a further development of the drawing room, hotel or sanatorium of the Realistic tradition, where such neo-allegorical types--social roles, ages, genders or nationalities--could believably mingle. This mingling then leads to enrichment but also to confusion. Enrichment, because a narrative agent can evolve or shuttle between traits and roles, be US, woman, militaristic, ethnically socialized, traumatized by repressed rape in adolescence, upwardly mobile, and a genius--in fact a superwoman singlehandedly winning a galactic battle--all in one fell swoop (fans will recognize here Elizabeth Moon's Esmay Suiza). Confusion, because almost all such agents in recent SF, from Heinlein's archetypal Space Soldier called Johnny Rico on, repose on an irreconcilable contradiction. The individualist stress on the narrative protagonist-hero/ine, who is--with wens and all, as Cromwell said to his painter--the reader's narrative focus and guide, is at odds with the collective framework into which modern mass organizations (the bureaucracy, but most notably the executive, Catch-22 bureaucracy-in-arms of an army or interstellar navy) and the consubstantial mass technology inevitably put her. What Jameson would call the personal and the tale of the tribe are simultaneously contrary to each other and a source of potential strength. In military SF, you must be both a hero and an interchangeable cog in the all-encompassing machine. Thus the price is very high: the collectivity no longer stands for participatory democracy from below upward but for militarized hierarchy.

A basic choice presents itself here, which is part and parcel of the perennial "two souls" of US SF, polarized between the thoughtful Twain-to-Le Guin and the gung-ho Edisonade-to-Heinlein paths. The poles differentiate warmongers from the war critics. To pick up on my discussion of James's *American Scene*, is there a material and moral price to the US linear accumulation of the "perpetual increase of everything" or not? Will the authorial stance focus on the inevitable or even exhilarating nature of war, boyishly--and after the 80s also girlishly--foregrounding the nifty technology and ranging through all the times and spaces of actual or imaginable history, or will it focus on its historical price in atrocious psychophysical suffering of victims, whether enemies or "our" soldiers, and the destruction of things and values? If the former, is there any redeeming element to be found within imperial trash indulging in destruction? If the latter, is there any indication as to the causes of war and militarism which would help the reader to understand how these might be prevented?

Often, as noted by Franklin and Jameson, the refusal to envisage the price in blood and suffering means a shift from army to navy locales, and in the extreme cases to space equivalents of the Strategic Air Command (cf. Franklin, *War* 95-108; Jameson, "Science Fiction" 36) busting planets into smithereens. When the Marines have to descend to slugging it out on the ground, the technological wonders of "suits" isolate combatants from the gory mess, even more so when battles are followed from spaceships on virtual space screens in pretty streaks of colour--as inaugurated by *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*, which spoke to the adolescent "love for shiny gadgets, spiffy uniforms, authoritative-sounding technotalk and a hot rod that shoots really cool laser blasts" (Corliss). But such militarist SF mainstream, from Pournelle to Drake or Moon is rather dreary (and furthermore much of it is discussed in the essays by Jones and Proietti). As a rule, the pro-war writings are only about the war/military, plus some crude identificatory ego-psychology. To the contrary, as a rule the anti-war writings are only partly about the war, i.e. also about much more around the war. Though this makes them difficult to summarize, I shall focus on a few narrative as well as ideological characteristics of the better SF about war and militarism, mainly in the "pause" period 1974-2001, discussed in more detail in 3.2. First, about the narrative agents and their consubstantial chronotopes: and centrally, do victims have faces here?

Militarist and pro-war SF works are at best, say in Heinlein, allegories of socializing the reader (at first only male, as of the mid-80s also female--see on that much more in Jones) into triumphant warfare and the military. As opposed to them, in anti-war works the voice, stance or view of (and at best from) the plebeian underdogs and victims is incorporated to various degrees and in various ways. This latches on to the Twainian tradition of Sturgeon, Disch, Le Guin, Dick, and others mentioned earlier. The underdogs--as a rule, overtly or covertly, US characters--are variants on either duped soldiers in the field (in both Haldeman titles and Shepard) or on the refuseniks who understand they're other, as already Sturgeon's soldier and Cordwainer Smith's Commander did: some of Shirley's, Robinson's, Le Guin's (in "New Atlantis") or Haldeman's (in *Peace*) underground members or subversives, Slonczewski's collectivist women, and Piercy's alliance of women, cyborg, and underground (surprizingly, Poul Anderson has an exceptional refusal of genocide in "Dereliction"). Card's Ender begins as a dupe with an aptitude for ruthlessness plus agonizing about it, but at the end bursts that chrysalis, as it were, and becomes a religious and super-elite refusenik. As in other aspects, Card is having it both ways: Ender is a child, for most of the narration much sinned against, but also a genius and White as in the most Rightwing militarist SF. But as a rule, our protagonist to be identified with is a draft-age male, and such SF rehearses from the late 60s on the alternatives posed in all clarity for the Vietnam War generation. In some significant exceptions, the protagonist is not single but serial/collective and/or female, as in Slonczewski and Robinson (Piercy adds the ambidextrous cyborg). Haldeman's *Peace* seems inscribed into "hard SF," written for and about scientists and academics, but subversively speaks out of this community and about the dangers of technoscience; Piercy is equally immersed into cyber-programming but here science is again (also) a weapon for freedom. At the "soft" end of this spectrum, in Le Guin, Slonczewski, Robinson, and Piercy, the status of women (and of sane erotics) is, as usual in the Left tradition, a measure of both power and victimization: rape precedes and signals genocide. As the Italian Futurists' Manifesto of 1909 pithily put it, on the eve of the season of World Wars: "We shall glorify war--the world's only hygiene--militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom-bringers, beautiful ideas worth dying for, and scorn for women" (Marinetti 41-42).

To the contrary, with a very few exceptions such as Haldeman and Piercy, in the war critics technoscience is slighted in favour of psychological and even political argument. The presence of a hospital (quite frequent in Bujold) is a signal of heterodoxy, concentrating on the bodily price of war, and even more so the rare presence of burial ceremonies (as at the end of Bujold's *Shards* and in a way of Card) or of sacrifice (in Piercy). Both may show the raw presence of mangled bodies, this final vulnerable rampart of humanity, excised in pro-war writing beginning with Heinlein (see 2.1 above,

and much more in Proietti, "Saving"). Finally, the victims we are shown can be supposed enemies and outright Aliens--a difficult feat, managed only in Le Guin's creechies in *The Word*, Piercy's cyborg, or at a remove in Card's Bugger queen, though I suppose the parthenogenetic collectivist women of Slonczewski's are the truly alien Other to the mercantile patriarchy. The family resemblance between terms for such derided and disposable people, taken from the dominant lingo which the SF shows up as alienating, reveals to my mind their root in political deviance: creechies (the natives) are homeomorphic to Disch's conchies (conscientious objectors) and even earlier Pohl-Kornbluth's consies (conservationists), the template for all of them being the post-1945 witchhunt commies (communists).

Whatever else the epoch following on, say, the 1911 Balkan War and Mexican Revolution may be, it has two red threads. First, it is 100 years of never-ending mass warfare, internal or international, of which the two World Wars were only the noticeable peaks; the lulls in the North around the two World Wars were a local illusion. World War 2 was fought in good part to end the internal dangers of the US and then global Depression, and it can be argued the USA is since the early 1960s exporting its low-grade urban warfare precisely in the form of militarized "police actions" (cf. Dal Lago)--certainly there's no dearth of prominent SF works arguing that. Second, not coincidentally, this is the epoch of mass bureaucracy, itself born out of war procurements, and identified in the pioneering works from the neuralgic areas of imperial Europe East of the Rhine: Weber, Simmel, Kafka... but then also from Gogol to Belyi, Zamyatin, Bulgakov, and Co. It is again Jameson, our indispensable Virgil in these infernal *bolgie*, who remarks how Big Brother has in the US globalization been supplanted by the language as used by prostitute mass media and experts: "Everyone today is, if not organized then at least organizable," and what has been called "subject-positions" are "the forms of identity afforded by group adherence." The demolition of the nuclear subject has had positive cognitive aspects, bursting the shackles of individualism. But Jameson adds the warning, quite evidently also applicable to militarist SF, that "the dissipation of those illusions [as to the autonomy of thought] may reveal a wholly positivist landscape from which the negative has evaporated altogether, beneath the steady clarity of what has been identified as 'cynical reason'" (*Postmodernism* 322-23).

When people (or their stand-ins, the narrative agents) are inserted into huge organized groups--bureaucratic, technoscientific, military--with an overwhelming structure, seemingly as firm and eternal as Saussure's *langue* is when compared to any of its actualizations in *parole,* this is much more than a framework. Just as language, it is an intimately osmotic home (that with startling frequency in this corpus turns also into a prison-house) intervening into or indeed shaping the protagonist's deepest love-hate values. These may be most revealingly analyzed as the knot of belonging, which will lead to stances toward war and militarism. In this knot, the single personality is not only part of a collective, it is made possible and at least co-created by the collective. The best theoretical tool I've found to begin dealing with this is Jameson's "overdetermination in ambivalence," where works and narremes (such as the protagonist) "become endowed with associations at one and the same time 'plebeian' and 'bureaucratic', with the not unexpected political confusion inherent in such ambivalence" (*Postmodernism* 314).

Thus, a crucial parameter in these narrations is the difference in authorial stance (usually transferred to central narrative agents) concerning mass slaughter, which entails a choice of belonging. Blithely condoning it as either inevitable or even good, and correlatively finding a home in the military, is omnipresent in pro-war SF, which has a special narrative role of "shreddies," minor characters wasted mercilessly and repetitively (though there are exceptions concerning military honour and care for the troops as against *realpolitik*). On the other pole is opposition to slaughter, especially when the line between the killed are combatants or civilians becomes unclear, vividly brought out in Shiner, Haldeman's two novels, Robinson, and Piercy, correlative to which are alternate communities of dissident scientists and even underground fighters (as already in Russ's *Female Man*, Le Guin's *Word*, and Dick's *A Scanner Darkly*). In this most alienating world, opposition to war and to the military is not always identical, for the military can be an apparent--and for a while real--surrogate

home of soldierly fraternity, as in most Bujold and in the earlier Haldeman (and as, for a while, in the 20th-Century armies arisen from liberation wars or revolutions, from Trotsky's Red Army, Villa, Zapata or Ataturk to the guerrillas and partizans from Spain, Yugoslavia, and China to Cuba, Vietnam, and Africa). In function of the narration's stance (*intentio operis*) is the political setup envisaged. It ranges from direct extrapolation of the Cold War and Vietnam War situations, modulating into Third World threats and then terrorism, say in both of Haldeman's novels, to Bujold's benevolent quasi-feudal empire with local autonomy (not capitalist, but more than a little Ruritanian--however, as different from C. Smith's not so benevolent and immensely powerful oligarchy, rather rosy than somber); Card characteristically straddles both extrapolation and exoticism. I am tempted to posit as the absolute limit of all US SF about war the fact that politics are never caused by economic interests--at the very rare best, in Le Guin's *Word*, Robinson's "Mars" or Slonczewski, these can be mentioned as one not further examined factor. The economic process is reduced to the destructive consumption in war, while class interests (so glaring in Bushism) do not appear even in an authorial subconscious. In that context, Piercy's setup of economic politics is a glaring exception, correlative to her not writing primarily for the SF readership.

The opposition may range from (loyal or cynical) doubt to outright anti-war stance, beginning with passive resistance. As Haldeman's article exemplarily concluded, illustrating his trajectory to *Forever Peace*:

> I had refused to kill people directly, but wasn't reluctant to apply technology and expertise to the same end.... [M]erely paying income tax made you an accessory to the murder of Vietnamese; civil disobedience was the only moral alternative. If I'd known then what I know now, that may have been the route I'd taken. ("Vietnam" 100-01)

Beyond doubt and passive resistance, or indeed the quite frequent *deus ex machina* happy ending (as in Haldeman *War*, Card, Shepard, and Shirley) often making for what I have called broken-backed narratives, actual active resistance, if need be an apostasy against one's own country of provenance and original allegiance, arises very rarely: I can think in this period only of Shirley, Le Guin, Robinson, Piercy, and Haldeman *Peace.* The huge pressures of fannish (and probably publishing) conformism as well as of self-censorship are evident here.

The 1961-74 "Golden Age" culminated in the refusal of linear time, of technoscientific progress that led to vaster murdering, by opting out as in Haldeman or by more heroic opposition as in Le Guin. This recurs here too but in muted forms. It may become simply personal evasion, as in Shepard, improbably coupled with political reversal, as in Card, or it may be collective resistance, as in Le Guin's failed group, Robinson's, Slonczewski's, and Piercy's more successful and best articulated mass movements or, midway between them, Haldeman's improvised scientists' cabal. Often, as in Shirley, there is a nostalgic ending having the best of both: after the victory of resistance, the bliss of anti-gravity erotics. Bujold's simpler worlds of space opera avoid the final evasion by structurally incorporating it into the binary tensions between the militarist and sentimental or erotic aspects, yoked together by our victorious but afflicted hero, victim and power-holder in a charmed universe. I would consider all of these narrative strategies, finally revealed at the end of each book, as attempts to find a space for the utopias of pacifism, erotics, and finally of self-determination in a hostile world which often bends them out of recognition. Yet narratively and realistically unmotivated utopianism easily degrades into improbable fairy tale, if not Card's outright Messianism. Obversely, where alternatives are not only suggested but up to a point believably (which means collectively) shown in "thick" detail, as in Slonczewski, Robinson, and Piercy, utopianism grows what Bloch would call "concrete."

Just like its readers, US SF has not found a believable way out of war and militarism, but at its best it has given us precious articulations and signposts.

Notes

1 W&M ′05 full

*/ I am very grateful to John Clute, Fredric Jameson, and Sylvia Kelso for sending me some secondary materials, and to Clute, Alex Fambrini, Jerry Määttä, Salvatore Proietti, Alcena Rogan, Johannes Rüster, and other friends who discussed with me some aspects of this article. Opinions and mistakes are mine.

1 On semantic hygiene: Science Fiction is in this volume abbreviated (except for titles, and for a first mention in any contribution) as SF, and "sci-fi" is--as usual--used only as a somewhat ironic reference to low-grade products; utopia is used without a capital letter unless it refers to More's country and title. Notably, instead of America, "USA" is used whenever that country and not the whole double continent is meant; furthermore--following complaints from Mexico through Grenada, Panama, and Nicaragua to Colombia, Bolivia, and Chile about the semantics of the Monroe Doctrine--"US," or a form like "US-based," is used as adjective instead of American wherever possible, since we did not have the courage to adopt the universal German usage of "US-American." Citations are, of course, left as found.
Given the many SF reprints, citations to a title will be by chapter/ page.

2 Cf., for the extraordinary actuality of Orwell's political analysis in the age of Bushist Never-Ending Warfare, Catani's competent sketch of war in SF. The US Commission on National Security reported in 1999 (before the attack on Twin Towers!) that since the end of the Cold War, the USA has "embarked upon nearly four dozen military interventions... as opposed to only 16 during the entire period of the Cold War" (cited in Gowan, "Instruments" 152).

3 The pivot role of H.G. Wells, from the wars of classes in *The Time Machine* and *When the Sleeper Wakes* through the reverse imperialist *War of the Worlds* to the World War of *War in the Air* will alas be slighted; I hope to be forgiven, the readier as I devoted two chapters to it in *Metamorphoses*.

4 There is of course a whole small library of works on this theme, from which I list only the Pocock referred to in the quotation.

5 The bestialization of enemies owes nothing to the rise of communism, rather one could say that (as we have experienced since 1989) the latter was a godsend to fill a pre-established necessity of the system. For one example, see George Washington's quite normal reference to "both [the Savage and the Wolf] being beasts of prey though they differ in shape" (qtd. in Smith-Rosenberg 1326): one could paraphrase Voltaire to the effect "Should Communism (or today, Terrorism) not exist, we would have had to invent it."

6 I take the cue for this term from Jameson's "World Reduction" essay, which speaks about Le Guin and her differing methods, but does mention a "surgical excision of empirical reality" (223).

7 My take on *The American Scene* was sparked by Prof. Giles Gunn's lecture, "The Moral Relevance of America's Greatest Travel Book in an Age of Terror," at the University of Salerno, Dipart. di Studi linguistici e letterari, in October 2004, from which I also take the quote; the interpretation and inferences are mine. An important element for this withering of time-horizons into a two-dimensional arrow is to my mind the successful clamp-down on the immense discontent by working classes, surfacing from the millions of Thoreau's "lives of quiet desperation" into protest movements from Populism to Socialism and unions, that was well represented in the US estranged fiction by names such

as Donnelly, Baum or London, and in its New Deal phase is clearly coresponsible for the rise of mass SF and refracted in it.

8 I wish to record here my debt to *The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (CD-ROM, 1995), edited by John Clute, and especially his own entries on various writers and aspects, though I might--as in this case--here and there disagree. On rereading my essay, I've spotted a few places where his turns of phrase have seeped into my own, because I could not better them. My dedication to John and his artist-wife Judith by no means implies their responsibility for any opinions in this article.

9 As we all know, the story is more complex and contradictory. I am here speaking only about the overall effect of the intellectuals' adjustment, and have written at length about the nuances in "Introduction" and "Polity."

10 On criteria for fascism today, cf. Britt.
On "survivalism": it is the fictional equivalent of the near-fascist or fully fascist "libertarian" militias, religious or lay, which bloomed in the 1980s and into the 90s. Their stories are set in post-holocaust venues where the hated State apparatus and its all-embracing citizenship has disappeared, so that our macho hero must kill or be killed. I would read this as the extrapolation and coming to the fore of the smouldering mini-civil-war in the post-1960s USA. It comes in two variants, with group protagonist, usually a political Right-wing tract with dystopian pretensions of eventual world-domination (cf. the pioneering survey by Orth in the Proietti-Suvin Bibliography), or with single protagonist, usually a tale of unbridled violence including torture and rape. The latter variant's higher, more or less sanitized reaches may be seen in Kate Wilhelm's *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* already in 1976 (discussed in my "Science Fiction"), the *Mad Max* movies and books, and in some fiction by Niven (cf. Franklin *War* 211, Clute "Survivalist," and Proietti, "Saving" section 5). Significantly, as Clute notes, after the first Gulf Oil War in 1991 the fortunes of this subgenre abruptly ebbed, pre-empted by Bushism: this anxiety has been stanched, the war has been exported.
Similarly, the very success and shameless ubiquity of earlier privately employed, secret or supposedly idealistic mercenaries (the "mercenaries business" is estimated at 130 billion dollars per year or one sixth of the global military spending, there are over 50,000 of them in Iraq only; cf. "Où" and the wealth of data in "Multinationales") has reduced their visibility in military SF to just another variant or niche, as in Drake's "Hammer's Slammers" or the "Battletech" series.

11 An interesting question is why the Italian names like Mandella and Mingolla. My guess would be that they connoted a semi-peripheral position of their bearers: neither admitted to fully share WASP power like the Irish or the Jewish-Americans, nor on the periphery like the Black, Hispanic, and Asian-Americans.

12 The transferral of rage, when faced with what appears an insoluble existential quandary, to Others is a well-known sickness, present in the US tradition since the first colonizers applied it to Native Americans, see Smith-Rosenberg 1333 and passim. Cf. on rage when a sense of justice is offended Arendt 63-64 and on "the brutalizing effects of post-Fordist labor markets" and rage Luckhurst 149 and passim. The best insights into the subject of mass killings and their meaning is to be found in the burgeoning new disciplines of Peace Studies and Sociology of Violence, cf. for an introduction Herberg-Rothe.

13 I adopt and adapt my use of allegory from Fredric Jameson's writings about cultural products, in his *Fables* (cf. chapter 5, esp. 90-104) and *Postmodernism,* also *Seeds.* See an earlier discussion of mine on SF as parable in the final essay of my *Positions*.

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