# *The Evolution of the American Invasion Narrative*

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# The Evolution of the American Invasion Narrative

## Introduction

At the end of the fifteenth century, European explorers voyaged west across the Atlantic Ocean and came across a continental territory hitherto unknown to the Ptolemaic world. Such was the size of the landmass, the continent was proclaimed as the New World and presented a vast space for European projections of the future of humanity; with the imperial powers intent on acquiring the territories and many of their citizens dreaming of exotic new lives. This was the discovery of America. It was also an invasion. Europeans arrived on an inhabited land and imposed their own country, displacing or killing the indigenous people. These dissonant interpretations of history remain an unresolved trauma in the national identity, spoken to in times of heightened national anxiety by the invasion narrative, a revisiting of the attack on the continent by a hostile invader. In these instances, the victims of invasion are the descendants of the imperial forefathers, citizens of the United States of America, symbolically cut from the tether of European colonial rule by the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Sprouting from the initial seed of European invasion and mobilised according to developing anxieties in each historical period, American invasion narratives form a sub-genre of literature that evolve out of a tradition of Jeremiad writings, dating back to the Puritan settlers of the seventeenth century. Coinciding with the emergence of the United States as an imperial power, they exploded in popularity after the worldwide attention given to the British writer George Tompkyns Chesney's *The*

*Battle of Dorking* (1871), beginning in America with Pierton W. Dooner's *The Last Days of the Republic* (1880), depicting an invasion of the United States by China. Invasion narratives explore and embody national anxieties. Invaders are drawn to highlight specific perceived weaknesses in the nation or national character; enemies are constantly re-imagined to suit the contemporary circumstances or concerns of the narrative. Invaders vary from Whitman Chambers' Japanese in *Invasion!* (1943) to Jack Finney's human-replicating spores in *The Body Snatchers* (1955). Invasions are used in narratives as metaphors for widely different purposes: by Pauline Glen Winslow in *I, Martha Adams* (1982) to reflect fears of Communist occupation; by Richard Wilson in *The Girls From Planet 5* (1955) to criticise feminism; and by Jack C. Haldeman II in *Home Team Advantage* (1977) to satirize clichés used by baseball players in post-match interviews. The invaded - invader relationship is one of Self and Other, of thesis and antithesis. Invasion works as a model for dramatising these concerns and exploring possible outcomes.

Perhaps because of its relative newness as a nation, the United States features in narratives of invasion with surprising frequency from the turn of the twentieth century onwards and provides the setting for the development of the invasion tradition. Emerging from the nineteenth century as an expanding power, the United States was probably the nation most secure from the threat of invasion and, its colonisation by Europe aside, had no real history of invasion. It is ironic that its founding on an extended invasion by European settlers, the only significant invasion of the territory, is unacknowledged by American writers imagining a future attack. Foreign military initiatives on American soil came historically – in part – as a consequence of friction caused by American expansionism. The War of 1812, which saw the British burn

Washington, was declared by America on Britain after a series of conflicts over American trade with France during the Napoleonic Wars and began with an American advance into Canada. There was also the Mexican-American war of 1846-8, declared by Mexico after America annexed Texas. Other examples are isolated attacks: the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, and most recently the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in 2001. America does not have the history of invasion in Europe that supplied the context for many invasion narratives. The invaders in the European narratives were drawn from imminent threats, neighbouring nations with large naval and military forces that were competing with each other for dominance and resources. In many cases, particularly France and England, they had also invaded each other in the past. Without this history, with enough natural resources to be self-sufficient and being located far enough away from serious military or naval threats from Europe or Asia for there to be no credible potential invader, America needed to import the imaginative context from Europe for the fiction to happen.

It is the flexibility of invasion with regards to the identification of an enemy that makes the subject appropriate to America despite the evident lack of an imminent threat. Conversely, it is precisely because of this absence of such a threat that imaginings of America invaded can vary so widely, with invaders being Japanese, German, Chinese, Russian or extra-terrestrial. Indeed, in Frederick Robinson's *The War of the Worlds: A Tale of the Year 2000 A. D.* (1914), they are all of these and more![1] America's relative newness as a nation enabled writers to continually explore and interrogate questions of national identity. Having no permanent enemy gives writers licence to invent one, subject to the oppositional construction sought by the narrative. Fears of immigration and the importing of cheap foreign labour can be

represented by a Chinese invasion, whereas anxiety over the unfortified defences and military underspend encourages a British or German attack. Extraterrestrial aliens provide the imaginative leap necessary to present a potent invasion threat to a nation in a location that would otherwise make it impossible; aliens can be credited with the technological capability and military might to arrive in America before resistance to them can be mounted. They also provide an adaptable medium of reflection, so that an idea of American identity can be cultivated in opposition to the invader. Alien invaders enable the writers to be more symbolic, critiquing societal conformity, for example, with aliens that are able to mimic human form. As an emergent nation, America does not have the history of Europe or the neighbouring enemies of any of the European nations, so there is an imaginative space to be filled, a creative licence for writers to oppose America with whoever or whatever fits the purpose of the narrative. Come the Cold War, that space was occupied by the Soviet Union, which influenced the narratives' use of Communist or Communist-like invaders to set against free, democratic America.

America's apparent geographical security from invasion is not the only reason that the popularity of invasion narratives seems strange. The trend of the nation in the nineteenth century was toward expansionism, with ideas of American exceptionalism and manifest destiny influencing policy and culture. America was an emergent nation in the period preceding the growth of these narratives; it had seen off the threat of Britain, made allegiance with France – symbolised in 1886 by the gift of the Statue of Liberty – and sought to expand by acquiring territory from the ailing Spanish empire, specifically Cuba in 1848 for one hundred million dollars. Incursions into Canadian territory in the late 1830s and Latin America in the mid-century were made by

privately-financed militia, but these activities were undertaken without government support and against popular opinion. Indeed, the principles set out at the birth of the independent, republican nation by the founding fathers were against invasion; Benjamin Franklin believed that 'a young state, like a young virgin, should modestly stay at home' and Thomas Jefferson claimed that 'if there be one principle more deeply rooted than any other in the mind of every American, it is that we should have nothing to do with conquest'. Yet as the nineteenth century progressed, military and imperial ambition increased. James Monroe's Annual Message to Congress in 1823, that later became known as the Monroe Doctrine, sought to ward imperial Europe away from the American continent, declaring, 'we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety'.[2] After annexing Texas, James Polk declared:

> Our union is a confederation of independent States, whose policy is peace with each other and all the world. To enlarge its limits is to extend the dominions of peace over additional territories and increasing millions. The world has nothing to fear from military ambition in our Government.[3]

He explained that other nations should see this annexation 'not as the conquest of a nation seeking to extend her dominions by arms and violence, but as the peaceful acquisition of a territory once her own'.[4] By the turn of the Twentieth Century the prevailing ideology in America had become righteously expansionist, not defensive; William McKinley argued in 1898 that 'the mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation'[5] and Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed in the following year that 'when great nations fear to expand, shrink from expansion, it is because their

greatness is coming to an end'.[6] The only people experiencing the loss of territory were the American Indians, subject to 'Indian Removal' policies. Yet, as Francis Jennings argues, this invasion of America was 'buried under ideology',[7] perceived as a necessity of civilisation in quasi-extermination treatises such as Francis Parkman's *The Conspiracy of Pontiac* (1851).

Though invasion was not the imminent danger that the narratives contend, the fiction works as a projection strategy to engender and provide justification for expansionist aims. Military expansionism was unpopular in America during the nineteenth century, seen as unnecessary expenditure given the absence of a clear and present danger. By creating one – or preparing the imaginative space for one to occupy given a change in circumstances – invasion narratives make the argument that unpreparedness for war is the nation's Achilles heel, an accident waiting to happen. The invaders, on the other hand, often possess characteristics that the American nation lacked that would advance any expansionist agenda: a strong military, a direct purpose and a desire to obtain territory controlled by other, rival countries. Imagining the invasive Other introduces it as a possibility, a new identity to by assumed by the nation given its imperfections, a nudge in the direction that America would need to go to see its imperial potential fulfilled. It is an aggressive advocating of imperialism by role-reversal; suggesting the inevitable consequence of peaceful isolationism is destruction, the thwarting of manifest destiny. The hope that America represented in that period to its citizens is jeopardised by the threats imagined in these narratives.

**The Projection Strategy: Invader and Invaded, Other and Self**

The fear represented by many invasion narratives is of an alien Other whose very presence could cause imbalance in American identity. This engendered suspicion that divergence from an ideal standard signified hostile intentions and that the danger to the United States as a consequence of allowing the alien to move unchecked or inadequately checked was imminent. Fear of a threat that is either disproportionate or non-existent is the paradigmatic characterisation of the paranoid. In his essay 'The Paranoid Style in American Politics' (1951), Richard Hofstadter borrows this 'clinical term for other purposes',[8] namely to chart the existence of this ethos in mainstream political rhetoric. As we shall see, the paranoid style he outlines has much in common with the tone used by writers of invasion narratives. Hofstadter observes the 'apocalyptic and absolutist framework' used to express hostility in the paranoid style. Again, the need for decisive, immediate action to prevent the fall of the nation is a recurrent one in invasion narratives:

> As a member of the avant-garde who is capable of perceiving the conspiracy before it is fully obvious to an as yet unaroused public, the paranoid is a militant leader. He does not see social conflict as something to be mediated and compromised, in the manner of the working politician. Since what is at stake is always a conflict between absolute good and absolute evil, what is necessary is not compromise but the will to fight things out to a finish. Since the enemy is thought of as being totally evil and totally unappeasable, he must be totally eliminated—if not from the world, at least from the theatre of operations to which the paranoid directs his attention.[9]

Here, the idea is that difference is a threat to identity that cannot be appeased, only destroyed. It is important to Hofstadter that the paranoid style is not confined to the fringes of debate since, 'it is the use of paranoid modes of expression by more or less normal people that makes the phenomenon significant'.[10] The arguments are not so easily dismissed when used by 'more or less normal people', which adds undue legitimacy to irrational concerns. A feature of later invasion narratives reflecting the 'member of the avant-garde' in Hofstadter's essay is the scientist or technician hero able to identify, or diagnose, the invasion and fated to warn the wider public of its presence whilst also representing the everyman. Such an example is Miles Bennell, the small-town doctor in Jack Finney's *The Body Snatchers* (1955).

Another key aspect of the paranoid style that is reflected in invasion narratives is the strategy of projection. In Chapter One, we shall see in Washington Irving's *A History of New York: From the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty* (1809) how colonials use othering to justify the treatment of the natives at their hands and to distance themselves from immoral and inhuman acts against another race; this strategy is a hallmark of Hofstadter's paranoid style:

> It is hard to resist the conclusion that this enemy is on many counts the projection of the Self; both the ideal and the unacceptable aspects of the Self are attributed to him. The enemy may be the cosmopolitan intellectual, but the paranoid will outdo him in the apparatus of scholarship, even of pedantry... On the other hand, the sexual freedom often attributed to the enemy, his lack of moral inhibition, his possession of especially effective techniques for

> fulfilling his desires, give exponents of the paranoid style an opportunity to project and express unacknowledgeable aspects of their own psychological concerns.[11]

Projection acts here as a form of exorcism. Alien invaders, too, often comprise the aspects of the familiar that are undesirable, such as living by morally incomprehensible or inconsistent mantras and being hostile to those who are perceived as different. Also, projecting anxieties in this manner leaves the alien interchangeable with any vaguely threatening entity, allowing for an amalgamation of contemporary concerns with deep-rooted fears of the Self. The Self, represented by the invaded entity, knows how threatening the invader is because the invader is a projection of all it could not come to terms with, could not deal with internally.

A more refined understanding of how projection works in the invader-invaded relationship can be found by considering identity in post-colonial theory, studied definitively by Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1998). Bhabha proclaims that, 'it is from those who have suffered the sentence of history – subjugation, domination, diaspora, displacement – that we learn our most enduring lessons for living and thinking'.[12] Being the process that begins this 'sentence of history', invasion marks the point at which the other and the familiar collide, where the need to define what is Other and familiar is most pressing:

> The question of identification is never the affirmation of a pre-given identity, never a *self*-fulfilling prophecy – it is always the production of an image of identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image. The

> demand of identification – that is, to be for an Other – entails the representation of the subject in the differentiating order of otherness. Identification… is always the return of an image of identity that bears the mark of splitting in the Other place from which it comes[13]

Invasion enforces this transformation of the subject by insisting on the definition of familiar and Other. Ostensibly a challenge of the invaded familiar by the invading Other, the invasion itself is the negotiation of identity between the two agencies. Due to projection, however, the identification of invader and invaded, of familiar and Other, is not absolute:

> That desire for the Other is doubled by the desire in language, which *splits the difference* between Self and Other so that both positions are partial; neither is sufficient unto itself.[14]

Extrapolative invasion narratives are written using past-present futurism: the imagining of a future based on an author's contemporaneous consciousness, which is itself established and influenced by events, experiences and knowledge of the past. As narrative sympathy in invasion narratives lies with the invaded entity, the invaders are representations of the Other written from a familiar perspective, through the prism of anxiety of how an invaded Other that is most terrifying to that familiar would appear. In Irving we saw how familiar and Other can be reversed to create the imaginative space for an entity capable of invading America. The agency of hostility is projected on to the Lunar Other and removed from the American familiar that inherits the role of the defenceless and dominated, of which it has no other reference for than the

natives subject to its colonisation. As the United States, America is a colonial *and* a post-colonial nation, both descended and independent from its colonial architects. As such, however much the American authors cry victim in invasion narratives, their colonial past is ever present, projected on to the invaders they imagine as imminent threats or as residual guilt for the country's colonial past, read back into the American scene as an assault on the present.

Though projection and splitting mean that neither the invaded nor invading agencies can be represented as separate absolutes or considered without the other, they are framed that way by the dichotomy of the invasion process. The invader and invaded agencies may share characteristics and even be disguised reflections of one another, but must be considered at face value to understand the dynamics of the invasion process. The invader-invaded relationship is one of aggressive interdependence and interaction. An invasion is the violation of the sovereignty of one body by a foreign agent. The consequence of such a violation is the permanent change to the body's constitution as a response, whether the invasion has succeeded or failed. Invasion is always a negative process because it violated the sovereignty, so the term 'invader' carries permanently negative connotations. It constructs a binary relationship between the invader and that which it invades, so characteristics related to either invader or invaded are reflected, causing the opposite association with the Other; in other words, the negativity of the invader implies positivity in the invaded. The opposition of the agencies and the negative association of invaders suggest a Manichean struggle; the invader-invaded relationship is one of aggressor and victim. The invaded is the familiar and the invader is Other, never wholly knowable. The process is violent and enforced, eliciting an automatic response in the invaded body to defend its

sovereignty and retain its pre-existing disposition; when this response is too late, as invasion has already occurred, the body is shocked into paralysis experiencing the violation but being powerless to do anything about it. It becomes witness to its horror, which is amplified by its defencelessness. Where the invader is attempting – and succeeds in – conquest, the invaded agency becomes trapped within its own body, having lost its own sovereignty irrecoverably but unable to define itself by anything other than this. The invaded agent becomes a traumatised identity as a consequence of invasion, even if it is unsuccessful, in an attempt to prevent the process from reoccurring.

**The Territory of Invasion**

When discussing invasion in terms of Self and Other we see how invasion uses the Other – the invader – to interrogate and re-determine the Self, which is the territory of the invasion. Entwining of the destiny of the individual with that of the nation, territory relates to both the area or land invaded and also the people who claim it as theirs before the invasion takes place. Though placed in opposition and set up as a Manichean struggle, the battlefield is not neutral since the territory belongs to, is part of, the invaded. This imbalance is reflected in language; 'invader' has no convenient, all-purpose opposite in language – like 'invadee' – for 'that which is invaded'. The invaded can be a sphere of influence; an entity; a nation; an area; a body; the body politic. In these narratives America is the constant scene, but a scene of varying significance. It is the idea of the nation that is the territory of invasion in these narratives, represented and interrogated according to the requirements of each text.

John Ulrich Giesy's tubthumpingly patriotic *All For His Country* (1915) portrays an idea of America very different from that imbued in the insular Minnesotan survivors of Thomas M. Disch's *The Genocides* (1965). Protagonists in each narrative embody the territory threatened by the invaders. Maverick scientist Jim Hunt of Murray Leinster's *The Brain Stealers* (1954) contrasts with soldier-citizen Sam of Robert Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters* (1951) as America resists invasion through technological ingenuity and dogged determination to retain independence respectively.

Territorial invasion in literature is used to identify and illustrate problems in contemporary society. These problems are often latent, indicated only by trends in the subject society that, if continued along what is perceived a logical path, will result in the destruction of that society as it stands. Literature provides the means to portray this process of how the society may be brought down as a result of the manifestation of this latent problem in a form that is fully realised and unchallenged, providing the time and space to convince the reader of the validity of its thesis. Since invasion narratives are drawn so that the issue is of a potential danger rather than an immediate one, this time and space is essential because the reader must be taken from a relatively safe environment to something akin to Armageddon. Invasion enables this transition to occur; an invader punctures the comfort of the contemporary without significant enough warning to prevent the penetration. Acting outside the known environment, the speed of and motivation for the invasion do not have to be explained in exacting detail, only hinted at. These hints – often merely conjecture on behalf of those invaded – are all the reader has to form ideas about the abilities and inclinations of the invaders, and because of this can seem factual. Narratives can further confuse the

critical faculty of the reader at a fundamental level by later presenting what had been spontaneous guesses as fact, justifying the speculation in the discourse, itself a speculative construction. By establishing assumption and reality as virtual synonyms through this process, the narrative validates itself within its own pretext; its arguments are given parity in importance to those based around reality. Through this, invasion narratives externalise undesirable internal aspects of the societies they describe, proposing an identity for the territory that may represent only a minority of opinion in that society.

Also, territorial invasion associates the personal with the local or national, the individual with the communal. For a literature that often uses the collectivism of its invader as a negative and threatening characteristic, it is somewhat ironic that appeals are made invariably to the collective sympathies of the reader. Originating through the creative imaginings of state politicians and religious leaders, the invasion sub-genre is used to affirm or in some cases ascertain a national identity. Representations of invasion are less concerned with the alien outsiders than the perceived flaws of those already inhabiting the targeted sphere. The purpose of the invader is to represent the contemporary problem and provide a threat to what are identified in the narrative as the core values of the national identity. This is done in order to stimulate an avowal of that identity against the problem. The process is similar to the Freudian idea of the Other, a psychological construction representing opposing values to those of the Self that the brain uses to help define the Self by means of transference; the Other is an empty space for the brain to project unfavourable or incomprehensible characteristics it perceives, distancing itself from its perception so to preserve the Self from the perception. Seen as the Other, the invader embodies all that is unfavourable and

incomprehensible to the invaded. Hostile connotations of invasion mean that the new, the different and the foreign become antagonistic to the establishment. To preserve itself against the threat, the established territory must define itself and face the threat from a position of strength, lest it succumbs. Strength is equated to stability, even rigidity; identity is something that fixed and inflexible, so challenges to the established order are not seen as valuable or progressive, but threatening. Metaphors of disease are often used to portray the threat to identity posed by the invader and also represent the relation of the two opposed agencies. Although the invader is a living being, it shares the value of a virus or cancer cells to the invaded body. Malignant, the invader is suitable only for destruction. Knowledge of the invader is used either to inculcate fear and loathing of the invader into the reader or to bring about the invader's destruction, with both alternatives resulting in little characterisation of the alien.

Deep-rooted psychological aversion to invasion perhaps explains why the theme became a popular one in literature and why anti-immigration policies have enjoyed a sustained popularity through centuries. That an agency should want to invade a specific target is often taken for granted by narratives, which rely on contemporary debate, blind patriotism or an innate universal fear of invasion to justify the preciousness of the target. The motivation for the invasion offered to the reader is invariably the conjecture of those invaded; assumptions about the value of the target are derived from the same source. Where a country is invaded, national icons and perceived characteristics acquire added importance as they are identified in the narrative as the potential casualties of a successful invasion. Embedded aversion to invasion on a personal level is extended to a national collective by the association of

readers with their country. Invasion narratives rely on the strength and plausibility of this association to convey the authority of their message of emergency. If the association is inadequate, the message may exclude the reader; playing on national identity is a convenient method of including a large cachet of people by expressing an idea as a shared concern.

## The Mechanics of the Invasion Narrative

Considering the psychological rationale for the rendering of a given conflict as invasion with regard to terms such as Self and Other is important for understanding the underlying processes involved in the invasion dynamic, the imagining of an entity as the invaded and another as the invader. The next step is to show how this works when played out as narrative. Invasion works as a process of multiple phases, usually involving the preparation for the physical invasion, the initiation of the physical invasion and the progression of the invasion from physical to cultural territory. There are various types of narrative; early examples like Henry Grattan Donnelly's *The Stricken Nation* (1892) are often future histories, reporting events as if they have already happened. That style of narrative becomes less popular after H. G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds* (1897), an eyewitness account of a Martian invasion, followed by the popularisation of the third person narrative style in pulp fiction. Accounts of stealth invasion such as Eric Frank Russell's *Three To Conquer* (1957) use progressive estrangement, the gradual movement in a fantastical narrative away from familiar reference points, to slowly reveal the extent of the invasion.

The change of a body targeted for invasion to that of an invaded unit is, for the majority of narratives, rarely instant and obvious, but occurs over a series of phases, particularly evident when the narrative portrays an invasion of stealth. When the invasion begins is unclear; is it when the plan is first conceived, when the information-gathering sentries are sent into enemy territory to observe or prepare infrastructure, or when the first act of hostility or assimilation takes place? It is the revelation of hostility in the narrative that confirms the foreign object is invasive. This hostility should not be necessarily deliberate; germs, for example, could cause devastation amongst a populace but move out of biological imperative, not a desire to conquer. Determined by the perspective of those invaded rather than the invader, invasion narratives invite intentional or anthropomorphic projections of motive on to all invaders, even when that may not be suitable or conceivable, such as in Marius' *The Sixth Glacier* (1928) where New York is 'invaded' by ice. Intent of hostility on behalf of the foreign entity is assumed by the characterisation of its presence as invasion; an invader, therefore, is always pursuing a malign purpose.

This perspective of the invaded is predominantly the basis of the invasion narrative and is the perspective from which the narrative is voiced. Readers are invited to sympathise with the plight of those subject to invasion, to imagine themselves in the same position. Narratives use images of devastation and disgust to draw a gut reaction from the reader, inviting the experience of terror or horror at what is being done by the invaders. Invaders demonstrate their power by using destructive weaponry to bring down buildings of symbolic national importance or show their repulsiveness by violating the intimacy of the body in grotesque fashion. By evoking such a reaction, invasion narratives invite readers to project their own anxieties on to a text, to fill in

the blanks left by an unspecific narrative. Invaders are drawn obscurely, vague and unknowable, to facilitate this strategy; coupled with progressive estrangement to present a sense of disorientation. The invasion is revealed to the reader slowly, even in the most direct of narratives, as the extent to which the invasion will go or has gone is described in the text as narrative progression. Revelations concerning the methodology of the invaders arrive to advance the text, characterising the ruthlessness and depth of the invasion process. The tone of the narratives express the urgency required to stave off the threat, particularly important given the frequent unlikelihood of the narrative premise. Unravelling the plot with ever greater acts of violation draws the attention away from the flawed pretext, using anxiety and vague projection to maintain the suspension of disbelief.

**Success/Failure**

A successful invasion implies pessimism in the narrative that the events and attitudes that brought out the invasion are unstoppable and irreversible. These texts function as diatribes against the changing of society – usually a perceived increase of liberalism – bemoaning the fall from a halcyon time or preoccupation with luxuriance enabled by a prosperous economy that precipitates the loss of focus on securing the nation against potential attackers. There is inevitability in this course of action in that social permissiveness is a vulnerability that can and will be exploited by an observant danger. Much like the demons of Christian fables were able to possess those succumbing to moral weakness, the threat is so close and overwhelming when it strikes that the nation unprepared for attack will be unable to restore itself afterwards.

During the Cold War, narratives describing successful invasions develop into post-invasion narratives, reducing the significance of the physical infiltration of the country – it has already taken place in Gordon Dickson's *Way of the Pilgrim* (1987) and Pamela F. Service's *Under Alien Stars* (1991) before events of the text begin – which allows for an expansion of the narrative moral, meaning that a successful invasion does not necessitate fatalism. This change in emphasis marks a new frontier in the invasion, the attack on the culture of the conquered nation, maintained by the surviving citizens now living in occupation. Here a successful invasion is not so important in itself, save that it moves the frontier from physical to cultural territory.

An invasion doesn't have to be successful in order for the point of the narrative to be made. Often the failure of an invasion attempt is more suitable for the narratives, as it allows the weaknesses in the national frontiers to be identified yet retain the faith in the endurance and capabilities of the native people. An unsuccessful invader is more readily tailored to specific points of weakness, yet having flaws of its own that les the nation regroup and repel it, becoming stronger for being made aware of its deficiency. Beginning as a criticism of national weakness, the narrative of failed invasion becomes a flattering portrait of national strength, as in Cleveland Moffett's *The Conquest of America* (1916), celebrating the resolve or ingenuity of the invaded peoples in thwarting an attempt at conquest. It can also reinforce the heinousness of the invader for targeting somewhere it does not belong, an unnatural affront to an established order that is able to ultimately reassert itself because the invader is inappropriate to the environment. An unsuccessful invader does not have to render the nation impotent, but shock or surprise it with a quick or covert attack, needing only to stun and not to strike a knockout blow. Being a temporary loss of autonomy and

independence, the weakness in the boundary exploited by the invader can be a relatively minor one, so the fiction can be used hyperbolically to represent even small facets of day-to-day life that prove irritating as threats to national security.

**Boundaries**

The very nature of invasion brings to attention the boundaries crossed by the invaders. The constitution of these boundaries depends on the form the invasion takes, so does not mean the national borders as a default. Indeed, because America as a nation is remote from most forms of invasion by credible agencies, the national borders are rarely the most prominent boundary for the narrative. It is only the early fiction where armies arrive by sea that this is the case; it is far more common for the invasion to be launched from *within* the nation, an entry point that bypasses the borders and allows the invasion to spread outwards. The entry point can be created by stealth; a fifth column operating surreptitiously to allow an invasion force passage. The alternative – or sometimes in addition – to this is a technological development that allows invaders to land within the targeted territory in a fashion that cannot be prevented by the incumbents; by flight via giant mechanical birds called Jeanne D'Arcs in Louis Buswells' *Clouds of Death* (1929), or by teleportation via an inter-dimensional portal in Murray Leinster's *The Incredible Invasion* (1936). The ability to launch an invasion is perhaps the key component in the constitution of the invader. Semantically, it is this that makes the invader so, since without the ability to cross the boundary, the invasion cannot occur. The type of invader is determined by its method of invasion, so associated anxieties are projected according to the way by which the

invasion is initiated, be it fear of a superior force when the invasion is a direct attack or fear of being supplanted if the invasion is by stealth. In any instance, the ability if the invader to invade, the method by which it identifies the boundary to cross and then crosses it, is intrinsic to how the narrative conveys the invader-invaded relationship, the terms of the negotiation between the two.

The concept of boundaries to be crossed changes as invasion fiction develops thematically. Even for early invasion narratives, it is not the national borders and naval defences or the physical landmass that represent the nation, but also sea-space. Territory is an abstract concept even at the beginning of the tradition; the invasion begins when patrolling the coast are attacked. Space is something that is undefined, uncertain, more ready for negotiation than landmasses with fixed borders, a softer target for invaders than the rigid body of the nation. It is common sense for the invaders to target the most negotiable parts of the nation, the weaknesses in national security or identity that can be exploited to initiate an offence. Part of how an invasion narrative portrays the way by which the nation can be threatened, then, is to identify potential points of intersection and areas surrounding these points that are ripe for negotiation. The invader is used to pinpoint these locations, defining the boundary and therefore the territory within it by the act of crossing it. The unit of territory or identity of the invaded nation – or at least what it should be – is confirmed by its invasion, which represents what it is not. Being drawn for the purpose of an invasion narrative, the boundary exists to be crossed is necessarily ambiguous and is fraught with weakness, lest the invasion would not be able to occur and the narrative would not exist.

**State of Criticism**

The approach of this study is to resist a broad critical interpretation of these narratives, instead treating the texts archaeologically as cultural artefacts. This emphasises the importance of the historical context from which the texts were produced, how the invasion narrative is re-imagined when fears of impending national crisis prominent. As such, the study revisits a neglected body of fiction, reappraising hitherto unimportant texts by establishing their significance as a reflection of the circumstantial basis of their composition. Prior critical attention paid to invasion narratives has been sporadic, and has not treated the fiction as a body of work, which is perhaps surprising given that they follow a tradition and fit so readily into a sub-genre. Critics that have looked at the fiction exclusively as invasion narratives have done so in isolated essays. More recently, critical interest in early science fiction has resulted seen a revisiting of invasion narratives. The sheer volume of material for early and pulp science fiction provides any aspiring critic of the period with an almost blank slate from which to work with. Much important work collating and contextualising the fiction has been done by Everett Bleiler in his two anthologies *Science Fiction: The Gernsback Years* (1990) and *Science Fiction: The Early Years* (1998), both essential guides to students of the era that survey and review the fiction exhaustively. *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (1997), edited by Peter Nicholls and John Clute, contains an entry on invasion science fiction that acts as a broad critical introduction to the subject. There is now a Wikipedia entry on 'invasion literature' that borrows heavily from I. F. Clarke's defining of the future war sub-genre.

America's unique importance to the development of the invasion narrative stems from its history as a country habitually perceiving threats to its nation that rarely materialise. Enemies for the United States are constantly re-imagined, proposed and extrapolated as invaders to identify weaknesses in the national body politic or new frontiers for the nation to expand towards. Vital work exploring these themes has been done by David Seed, who has written extensively on American fiction. His key work, *American Science Fiction and the Cold War: Literature and Film* (1999) looks at how science fiction novels and films 'are not producing arbitrary fantasy but rather reworking key metaphors and narratives already circulating in the culture'.[15] His approach stresses the importance of placing science fiction literature in its historical context, given its use of metaphor and narrative, and also the importance of literature itself, occupying 'a space equal to sociological, strategic and other modes of speculation'.[16] In 'Constructing America's Enemies: The Invasions of the USA' (2007), he looks at how American writers constantly re-imagine invaders subject to contemporary national debates and, most recently, 'The Course of Empire: A Survey of the Imperial Theme in Anglophone Science Fiction at the Turn of the Century' (2010), he looks at how the themes explored in the fiction of the period relate to 'the acquisition of new territories, the shifting relations with Britain, and the rising tensions in the US labour market'.

H. Bruce Franklin's *War Stars: The Superweapon and the American Imagination* (1988) demonstrates how fiction can provide the imaginative foundation for decisions on policy and, in the example of America, help prepare the way for military and ideological expansionism: research into and development of ever more powerful

weapons. He sees fictions representing America as the victim of invasion to be a disingenuous strategy to foster militarism by creating a state of emergency when none existed. Enviably, Franklin explored literature of the period of the turn of the century that has since become virtually unobtainable. Another important study that accommodates invasion narratives is Mike Davis's *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (1998). Again relating the fiction to a historical context, Davis argues that the central purpose for imagining and reimagining disaster in American fiction is 'white fear of the dark races'.[17] Los Angeles is given particular attention, he argues, because of its ethnic diversity.

I. F. Clarke's *Voices Prophesying War: Future Wars, 1763-3749* (1992) *The Tale of the Next Great War, 1871-1914: Fictions of Future Warfare and Battles Still-To-Come* (1995) and his essay 'Future-War Fiction: The First Main Phase', 1871-1900 (1997) are key works in cataloguing and contextualising much of the early invasion fiction that I describe in my first chapter. Clarke's studies established and enabled critical recognition for the future war sub-genre; his approach is to essentially survey and summarise the fiction to communicate to his readers the sheer volume of narratives produced at the turn of the twentieth century. He identifies George Tompkyns Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) as the principal text of the sub-genre, hailing it as the work that 'touched off the chain reaction of future-war stories'.[18] American future-war narratives perform the same functions as the European ones but locate themselves in an American setting. Their significance increases, however, when contextualised as American invasion narratives, imagining the destruction of American cultural signifiers and using this as a means of fostering

anxiety over potential dangers in a way that was relevant to the American reader. Clarke notes that:

> the United States did not have any enemies able to wage war on the scale of the conflicts contemplated across the Atlantic[19]

These imported fictions from Europe provide the imaginative context for invasion that was not there due to America's situation. It is the process of importing these ideas from Europe that ultimately enables American invasion fiction to find its own voice, developing around specifically American national anxieties rather than bastardised European troubles. It is this reconstitution of the idea of invasion fiction – within a nation that faced little danger of external attack – that enables the thematic expansion of invasion fiction into literature that explicitly acknowledges represented invasion fears as the imaginative externalising of internal anxieties.

Since Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, Jr.'s essay, 'Science Fiction and Empire' (2003), science fiction criticism has stressed the importance of imperial metaphors and symbolism, of which invasion plays a large part. The most substantial recent critical work related to empire is John Rieder's *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction* (2008), appended by his precursory essay, 'Science Fiction, Colonialism and the Plot of Invasion' (2005). Colonialism and invasion are thematic bedfellows, so Rieder looks into invasion quite thoroughly, albeit from the view that it is 'most heavily and consistently overdetermined by its reference to colonialism'.[20] Invasion for Rieder is a means towards colonialism, the method by which it happens. It is only important to him in its context within colonialism; he only touches on the

'psychological basis' of invasion because it would provide considerable distraction from his central arguments. It is not just invasion that is subject to this interpretative totality but the science fiction genre too:

> Most historians of science fiction agree that Utopian and satirical transformations of encounters between European travellers and nonEuropeans form a major part of the genre's prehistory, that the period of the most fervid colonial expansion in the late nineteenth century is also the crucial period for the emergence of the genre, and that science fiction appeared predominantly in those countries that were involved in colonial and imperialist projects.[21]

Rieder argues, with great conviction, that colonialism and science fiction are inextricably linked by 'the heavily fraught idea of progress'.[22]

Whereas Rieder can bypass the 'psychological basis' of invasion fiction, it is a key aspect of my approach to the subject, especially when looking at texts in isolation, considering the body of the text as the imaginative space where tensions within a nation or culture are played out as conflict. Rieder cites Slavoj Zizek's concept of 'ideological fantasy', a mixture of 'conscious disavowal and practical effectiveness' as the means by which 'science fiction addresses itself to the fantastic basis of colonial practice itself'.[23] Colonists are able to treat inhabitants of their targeted land inhumanely because they deny the indigenous their humanity; they are inferior, sub-human for the purposes of the colonisation. For invasion fiction, the separation of invader and invaded is evident but less perfect, not absolute; it is a conflict within a body that requires some form of resolution. It is the fiction itself that is the ideological

fantasy, imagining the invader as a projection of elements that the invaded fears but also desires, to be incorporated into the ideal body at the point of resolution. The division of invader from invaded is, on some level, a false one; the invader is tailored specifically to the weaknesses of its target to highlight those weaknesses. Projecting the qualities identified as frightening or secretly desirable on to an alien Other as the effect not only of reducing the invader to a series of hostile characteristics, but also the invaded to a set of vulnerable ones. Demanding sympathy for the victims of invasion, the narratives consciously disavow its strengths to renegotiate its constitution. Invasion fiction is an exercise in self-reduction that enforces such a renegotiation. There is no 'real' invader, only an imagined enemy that reflects the primary anxieties in the narrative. These anxieties reflect the obstacle to progress within the invaded body identified by the narrative, extracted and externalised by manifesting as the invader. With colonialism, the subject of the ideological fantasy, the perceived obstacle to progress, is the indigenous population. Colonialism can be seen as an aggressive way of processing and familiarising an encountered Other, where invasion others the familiar in order to reconfigure the Self.

Eric Mottram's essay 'Out of Sight, but Never Out of Mind: Fears of Invasion in American Culture' defines said invasion fears by dividing them into six categories:

> 1. Fears that human beings are not the only intelligent beings in what Henry Adams called 'the multiverse'.
>
> 2. Fears of some form of underground or overground, invisible or semi-invisible. Here versions of the manichean vision in which the world is a

battlefield of good and evil forces describe a main location for racial fears and anxieties relating to genetic engineering, secret societies, and so forth.

3. Fear of insurrection or invasion from within – by blacks, Indians, the Left, student dissenters, private armies, and so on. In the current emphasis on manic survivalism, this fear includes Armageddon and the city masses invading wilderness and mountain.

4. Fears of the Mafia which have, under the guise of necessary permissions given to the FBI, CIA and other government forces, masked fears of threats to community and individual freedom.

5. Fear of invasion from without, from Russia, Cuba, UFOs cosmic rays, communists and the rest.

6. Ambivalent fear of total surveillance by God, or some god-like authority or demonic ruler, or even of the interlocking surveillance construct maintained by the FBI, CIA, military intelligence, police and the Internal Revenue, a complex that would include the Mormon filing system, closed circuit television in public places, bugging and so on. Here the complexity of the issues becomes clear since, for so many people, total surveillance fulfils a dream of freedom as security through domination, rather than a release from a totality of authority.[24]

These categories could probably be further distilled; categories 1 and 5 strike as the same concern; a fear that the human race is not alone is only a fear of invasion if it entertains the possibility that the unseen cohabitants of 'the multiverse' will attempt to encroach upon the territory of human beings. Whereas Mottram's essay surveys fears of invasion in American culture and requires specificity, my purposes diverge in that I am only interested in how they fit inform invasion narratives. As such, Category 4 could also be seen as part of 3 and 6; the Mafia could be conveniently placed in with the other groups Mottram identifies, whereas the fears over threats to community and individual freedom could be associated with fears of surveillance. By separating them in this way, Mottram seems to be trying to distinguish between the official surveillance authority of government agencies and the illegal surveillance authority of snitching and protection rackets undertaken by organised crime syndicates. Whether officially sanctioned or not, the fear is of the same thing, and separating the Mafia from other organisations isn't helpful when assessing the underlying fears in invasion narratives.

In contrast with Mottram's classifications, I would contend that for invasion narratives, the underlying anxieties over invasion could be grouped into three main categories, with a fourth that informs each of them. The informing anxiety is Mottram's 'underground or overground'. This could be an invasion by God, the idea that we are all unwitting participants in a battle between good and evil and could be made aware of this divine purpose at any time (by way of a terrible invasion). Invasion narratives are a wake-up call or a call-to-arms, to realise this inevitability and to participate on the side of good before succumbing, unaware, to the machinations of evil. It relates to the desire to find meaning in life, to do something

worthwhile with it, the fear that living without purpose or adequate purpose will result in judgement or damnation. It could be equally appropriate for an invasion of godlessness, a revelation that everything that was believed, the foundations of that belief, was wrong; the overground or foreground manifests within the realm of what is perceived as reality in order to shatter it in a moment of discontinuity. Invasion represents a point of no return, so all future existence is subject to its occurrence, that all that has gone before is made insignificant by its coming into being. All that is purposeful or right is suddenly, irredeemably, made not so; energies and life spent on making such purpose and adhering to a particular code of conduct is subject to the reinterpretation enforced by the invasion revelation, which renders it wasteful expenditure. Whether of God or the absence of god, the fear is one of hubris; decadent or unaware, the self-obsessed, myopic perspective is made obsolete by invasion when the truth invasion uncovers has been there all along, disguised by the preoccupations of day-to-day routines and misplaced faith in an inadequate or incorrect value or belief system.

With this informing category set out, I propose that fears of invasion can be broadly classified into three distinct forms that may overlap in some instances: invasion from without; invasion from within; and invasion by self-mutilation.

Invasion from without is the most straightforward concept of invasion, where an external agent breaches the defences of a sovereign territory to enter it. The invader in this instance is completely alien to the territory, a foreign Other. The agent has no significant presence in the territory before the invasion is launched, save perhaps an observer or sympathiser. Arriving from without, there is clear distinction between the

invading and invaded agencies. It is an explosive coming together, as the strength and unity of the identity of the invaded body is challenged directly and aggressively, punctured by the force of the attack and often resulting in the deflation of national complacency. This model is appropriate for invasion narratives where the invasion threat is obvious, from a massed army, a foreign country or an alien race arriving in the territory with an open display of hostility. There is no ambiguity about the repercussions for the target of the invasion; the incumbents are faced with ruin and conquest upon failure to defend themselves adequately, without hope – however false – of conciliation.

Invasion from within involves a less clear distinction between the invaded and invading agencies. Each remains separate, but involves a greater interaction and intersection than those involved in an invasion from without. This lack of distinction is due to the slow, secretive process involved in the progression of the invasion, which operates by stealth to subvert the authority of the invaded territory rather than obliterating it. The hostility of the invading agency toward that which it invades is concealed since the invader operates in concert with the incumbent regime, working to undermine and ultimately replace it from the inside, monitoring its actions at close quarters to better discover its weaknesses. Invaders are double agents or replicants when invading from within, mimicking the actions and even the form of the incumbents, creating an atmosphere of distrust and paranoia. Resembling the incumbents closely but harbouring a hostile agenda towards them, the invaders are a caricature or a parody of the familiar, replacing what is already there with something incomplete and inferior despite the superficial similarities. There is also the sense that the invasion is here and growing, unbeknown to the very people it targets, creeping up

on them beneath their notice. The otherness of this invader is more subtle and sinister because of its lack of obviousness, a progressive estrangement that slowly defamiliarises the incumbent from its own environment. There is a sense of horror in narratives that portray invasion from within that is absent from other narratives, a greater malignancy in an invader that is a distorted version of what is already there than one with distinct differences.

The third classification, invasion by self-mutilation, is the one in need of greatest qualification. Here, the invaded entity is oppressed by a representation of itself, is Other in a familiar environment that is hostile towards it. The invading agency is the authority within the territory, engaging in a destructive exertion of power that will ultimately crush that which it has authority over. Though familiar, the acts of hostility toward the invaded entity maintain the narrative dichotomy, preventing the synthesis or absorption that would end the process of invasion. In narratives where the invader has conquered the incumbent authority and seized control of the territory, the sense of invader and invaded is maintained despite the defeat of the invaded. The agency that has taken control of the territory does not belong there; though no longer in control, the moral ownership of the territory in invasion (and post-invasion) narratives is still that of the dethroned incumbent. Narrative sympathies remain with the invaded peoples, who maintain their right to the territory in the narratives and their identity as the true representatives of the nation in that the are victims of hostility. Yet this occurs within a territory that is now alien to it, a body that attacks itself to correct the difference. Where narratives betray fears of invasion by self-mutilation, the invaded defend a cultural inheritance preserved through the loss of autonomy, an idea of a nation or identity that endures the divorce of its physical, authoritative manifestation.

Though this classification is most obvious in post-invasion narratives, the fear it represents is acknowledged in any invasion narrative where invasion is a consequence of lack of preparedness. The invader may be the agent of ruin in more conventional tracts of foreign invasion, but the blame for this ruin is liberal myopia, complacency or failure to fortify, all behaviours that are characterised in invasion narratives as indulging weakness and, because of this, all forms of national self-mutilation.

As demonstrated by the evidence of self-mutilation in standard lack of preparedness narratives, grouping invasion fears in this way is only helpful if the fluidity of each classification is understood. Each invasion narrative may more readily be suited to interpretation as being primarily concerned with one form of invasion over another, but that does not exclude the others. Indeed, most invasion narratives comprise a combination of the three, with some such as P. W. Dooner's *The Last Days of the Republic* (1880) meeting all three. America permits the importing of Chinese immigrant labourers to work more cheaply than the native workforce (self-mutilation). These labourers work secretly against the United States (invasion from within) in order to prepare the way for an attack by the Chinese military (invasion from without). This narrative is chiefly an invasion from without, since the central source of the hostility is the Chinese army, but the presence of the two other categories shows a secondary and tertiary facilitation of this main invasion threat. Where Dooner's text displays how all three fears can be represented by one invasion, others use fears of a certain type of invasion as a feint for the arrival of a different sort, for example, M. J. Engh's *Arslan* (1976), where expectations of a hi-tech, stealthy assault from the Soviet Union were so high that America falls victim to a direct attack by Turkiston, an unsophisticated military dictatorship in Asia. Here, fears

of one type of invasion facilitate the other indirectly, showing the pitfalls of preparing for the wring type of invasion. This creative use of invasion fears is what assists the development of the tradition, changing the primary focus on each and by playing one fear against another.

**Chapter Content**

The invasion fiction in this study relates to fictional invasions of the United States in the present or the near-future. This is distinct from the far-future speculations of space-opera, the intergalactic warfare of military science fiction and the more recently emerging sub-genre of alternate history, though there is some thematic overlapping. Though space operas often represent invasions of Earth or Earth under alien rule, the immediacy of the narratives is lost to the displacing of events into the distant future, often to an unrecognisable landscape where America does not exist. Some examples of alternate history depict invasions of America but the sub-genre is, by definition, unconcerned with the future or with extrapolating contemporary trends into a nightmarish scenario. In maintaining this strict criteria, the study describes a tradition that perceives a national weakness and constructs an imminent, accordant threat to emphasise a pressing need for fortification.

The breakdown of the chapters is in part chronological and also intended to reflect the broad categories identified as phases of the narrative's evolution. These are as follows:

Chapter One: Seeds of Anxiety

This outlines the historic concatenation that prepared the way for the invasion narrative, developing from the European Protestant jeremiad which is in turn contested satirically by Washington Irving. The tension between the jeremiad and the satiric narratives repeat themselves as a cycle throughout American history.

Chapter Two: Early Invasion Narratives

Following this is a chapter on early invasion narratives, showing how interchangeable the enemies of America are at the beginning of the tradition and how this is enabled by the lack of a serious military threat to the United States at the time.

Chapter Three: The American Appropriation of *The War of the Worlds*

The next chapter centres on H. G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds*, which depicts an invasion of Britain but is ironically the most important narrative for representations of invasions of America, leading as it does into representations of invasion in genre science fiction. The chapter will incorporate discussions on the American pirate versions of the text, significant for the importing and popularising of the imaginative context of alien invasion in American fiction and also transpositions of the text into cinema and radio.

Chapter Four: Stealth Invasion

Incorporating horror conventions and paranoia, stealth invasion becomes a popular style of invasion narrative during the Cold War and branches the theme into insidiousness and conspiracy, obscuring the boundaries between the invader and invaded. Marking an attack on a new domestic frontier, Stealth invaders terrify by

their proximity, appearing almost identical to those they invade by being able to mimic the human form yet being truly repulsive.

Chapter Five: Post-Invasion Narratives

In post-invasion narratives, the physical process of invasion becomes elliptical and the territory upon which the negotiation of the invasion process takes place is cultural. Post-invasion is the final stage of the invasion narrative, a consolidation of the invasion by the eradication of the indigenous nation.

Chapter Six: Self-Conscious Invasion

Ending with self-conscious invasion narratives that satirise the idea of the invasion paradigm helps reinforce the presentation of invasion as tradition, showing it coming full-circle by returning to Irving. Particular focus here is given to William Burroughs's *Nova* trilogy, taking an almost critical approach to invasion by using it as a permanent context with multiple, simultaneous invasions that defy logocentric sequencing. I conclude with the return of the invasion narrative to the 'straight' invasion story, an attempt to reinvigorate the narrative despite acknowledging its descent into cliché.

This study is not intended as an exhaustive account of all invasion narratives. Given the limitations of space and the wealth of material available, it is unlikely that any single account could be exhaustive. The objective is to demonstrate how the invasion narrative speaks to the trauma of American identity; the various ways by which invasion embodies and explores national anxieties; to show the model mutates through time and is revisited at points of national tension, reflecting the potential for

danger rather than the fact of it. Each type of invasion is established by detailed analysis of the key pertaining texts and commentary on other related narratives, set against the historical context from whence they came.

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[1] Other invaders in this narrative come from India, Persia, Chile and Argentina.

[2] 'United States: Republic or Empire?',
http://www.alternativereel.com/includes/articles/display_article.php?id=00053

[3] *ibid*

[4] *ibid*

[5] *ibid*

[6] *ibid*

[7] Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: University of North Carolina Press, 1975) p. v

[8] Richard Hofstadter, 'The Paranoid Style in American Politics' (1951)

[9] *ibid*

[10] *ibid*

[11] *ibid*

[12] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994) p. 172

[13] *ibid*, p. 45

[14] *ibid*, p. 50

[15] David Seed, *American Science Fiction and the Cold War: Literature and Film* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999) p. 2

[16] *ibid*, p. 4

[17] Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster* (New York: Vintage, 1998), p. 281

[18] I. F. Clarke, 'Future-War Fiction: The First Main Phase', 1871-1900,
<http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/clarkeess.htm> [accessed 27 May 2010]

[19] *ibid*

[20] John Rieder, 'Science Fiction, Colonialism and the Plot of Invasion', *Extrapolation* 46 (2005), pp. 373-94

[21] *ibid*

[22] *ibid*

[23] *ibid*

[24] 'Out of Sight but Never Out of Mind: Fears of Invasion in American Culture', p. 138-9, in Mottram, Eric, *Blood on the Nash Ambassador* (London: Hutchinson Raduis, 1983), pp. 138-180

## Chapter One: Seeds of Anxiety

America's discovery in 1492 is taught as an accepted historical fact, even though there were people already living there when the Spanish fleets arrived and that other Europeans – the Norse – had already made it to the continent a few centuries earlier. The man famous for America's discovery is Christopher Colombus, whose name is Anglicised from the Latin Christophorus Colombus, which in turn derives from the Italian Cristoforo Colombo; the Spanish knew him as Cristóbal Colón. News of Colombus's role in reaching the continent arrived too late for him to be honoured by having the country named after him. Called 'The Map That Named America'[1] by the Library of Congress, 'Universalis cosmographia secunda Ptholemei traditionem et Americi Vespucci aliorum que lustrationes', or 'A drawing of the whole earth following the tradition of Ptolemy and the travels of Amerigo Vespucci and others' was drafted by cartographer Martin Waldseemüller in 1507. Waldseemüller rewarded the Florentine explorer Amerigo Vespucci – via a feminisation of the Latin 'Americus' – after gleaning a false impression of him from two letters that had reached Europe exaggerating Vespucci's achievements, arriving in the territory seven years after Colombus. Though the Spanish resisted it at first, since they had beaten the Florentines to the continent, the name America became the established way of referring to the 'new world'.

Unquestioned was the idea that the territory was new. The Indians that were 'found' by the explorers were frequently treated as savages to be removed or assimilated into the European projection through what was deemed 'civilisation', whether Protestantism, progression, rationalism or the scientific method. Though the Indian

displacement was mostly an accidental process given that the greatest cause of death amongst the Indians was from smallpox, the idea of the territory as 'America' was proposed by Europe as being superior to that which existed already; an idea that was enforced where necessary. The appropriate metaphor widely used by post-colonial scholars is that of the palimpsest, a recycled manuscript where evidence of the text erased to make space for the new one remains. The nation is post-colonial but is not a returned colony; the dominant legacy is European, with Indian culture preserved only through relocation into 'reservations' separate from the rest of the country. Consolidated during the period between the first European landings and the declared independence, the nation is a European Other, the *Utopia* (1516) described by Thomas More, constructed from the dreams of the immigrants moving there that were inspired by every Raphael Hythlodaeus that had returned from across the Atlantic to brought back word of the territory.

## Literary Precursors

The caveat in the belief in American Manifest Destiny, the new promised land of the people of God, is the fear that it could be squandered by immoral behaviour or corruption. Many invasion narratives inherit their language and tone from seventeenth century Calvinism, the preaching of hellfire and damnation for those who indulge in sin. Warning of dire consequences for the nation if the trajectory of certain behaviours is followed, it is appropriate to describe such invasion narratives as jeremiads. The definitive study of the tradition of the jeremiad from which these invasion narratives evolve is Sacvan Bercovitch's classic text, *The American Jeremiad* (1978).

Bercovitch outlines the purpose of the jeremiads of the seventeenth century Puritan settlers in America as being 'to direct an imperilled people of God toward the fulfilment of their destiny, to guide them individually toward salvation, and collectively toward the American city of God.'[2] Jeremiads associate the fate of the individual with that of the nation, infusing religious righteousness with nationality and linking the personal with the collective by way of spiritual destiny. A Canadian immigrant, Bercovitch writes of how he was perplexed by 'the prophetic history of America', it being:

> ...a country that, despite its arbitrary territorial limits, could read its destiny in its landscape, and a population that, despite its bewildering mixture of race and creed, could believe in something called an American mission, and could invest that patent fiction with all the emotional, spiritual and intellectual appeal of a religious quest.[3]

Jeremiads often define America, therefore, equally by who and what it is not as readily as who and what it is, an exclusive body politic that would achieve dialectical synthesis only by a process of confrontation that results in the expelling of undesirable elements from within its territorial boundaries or the dissolution of the body politic, the destruction of the Puritan idea of the nation.

Bercovitch observes that 'over and again the colonial Jeremiahs portray the settlers as a people of God in terms of election, the body politic and the advancing army of Christ'.[4] Perhaps the most prominent of these 'colonial Jeremiahs' was the New England Puritan minister Cotton Mather. In *The Wonders of the Invisible World*

(1692), written as an account of the Salem witch trials, he uses oppositions that are comparable to later Manicheanism in invasion narratives, an 'us and them' absolutism that stresses the heinousness of the Other as it does the purity of the familiar. Present here is the consciousness of the newness of the American nation, the settlement of the land, 'The *New-Englanders* are a people of God settled in those, which were once the *Devil*'s territories.'[5] By the late nineteenth century, when invasion narratives begin to proliferate, America has been declared an independent nation in 1776 and the American Indians have been all but removed. The idea of the land being 'once the *Devil*'s territories', the reality that America was founded by invasion, is left unsaid and unacknowledged by American invasion narratives.

Having shown the claim to the land to be righteous and preordained, Mather moves to warn of the threat posed to it by the forces of evil, here being the witches and wizards on trial. New England, he believes, was under siege from 'an Army of *Devils*'.[6] The metaphor is one of invasion: demons of 'the invisible world' taking possession of people and seeking to subvert the newly found settlement for a malign purpose. The symbolism of witchcraft returns in fiction produced during the Cold War, where invaders appear familiar but host an evil entity representative of a deadly threat to the nation. The puritan entwining of national and individual destiny intensifies the threat posed by an individual witch. Rather than being a minority that reinforces the sense of majority, one discovered witch becomes evidence of this dormant 'Army of *Devils*', an individual threatening the security of the nation as though the entire army had been exposed. The intensification of this threat by the individual is matched by its potential severity, as the price for failure to properly ward off the threat is the relinquishing of the newly founded settlement of God to Satan, disrupting what was seen as destiny.

What also recurs in later invasion narratives is how the threat is characterised as 'an Attempt more Difficult, more Surprizing, more snarl'd with unintelligible Circumstances than any we have hitherto encountred.'[7] The language is apocalyptic, yet also encompassing the fear of something new and nefarious, a justification for recourse to a response that is equally unconventional or extreme.

One of the first secular accounts of invasion can be found in *A History of New York: From the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty* (1809), a satirical portrait of the city and its formation by Dutch settlers. Penned under the pseudonym Diedrich Knickerbocker, the novel's author is Washington Irving, renowned for being the first American to make a living solely from writing. With Chapter V of Book I of *A History of New York*, he became the first American author to write and publish a narrative imagining the invasion of America. The importance of the chapter here lies in how it explicitly shows an implicit process in later invasion narratives, namely the transfer of the reductive othering of the colonial gaze from the natives to invaders. This is the process that allows American writers to imagine America as a potential victim of invasion rather than an expanding imperial power.

The preoccupation of Chapter V is the moral basis of the dominant civilisation in America – the descendents of white, European Christians – to ownership of the nation:

> What right had the first discoverers of America to land and take possession of a country without first gaining the consent of its inhabitants, or yielding them an adequate compensation for their territory?[8]

Four rights by which this justified are outlined: discovery, cultivation, civilisation and gunpowder. The first of these is of particular significance since the validity of discovery as a right requires the contention that America was 'totally uninhabited by man'[9] before the Europeans arrived. The narrative reminds us of the problem classifying this arrival as a 'discovery':

> For it is well known that this quarter of the world abounded with certain animals, that walked erect on two feet, had something of the human countenance, uttered certain unintelligible sounds, very much like language; in short, had a marvellous resemblance to human beings.[10]

These 'certain animals' are, of course, the Indians, dispossessed of their land by the European settlers. Irving's narrative determines, ironically, that this 'marvellous resemblance' is only that, characterising the natives as inferior, undeserving of their land and worthy of disenfranchisement and even eradication:

> These miscreants had no title to the soil that they infested -- that they were a perverse, illiterate, dumb, beardless, black-seed -- mere wild beasts of the forests and, like them, should either be subdued or exterminated.[11]

This quotation encapsulates how ruthlessly they are deconstructed; they are strange, savage, uncultured, unholy, beyond civilisation and requiring elimination. In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Edward Said argues that colonialism and imperialism 'are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that

include notions that certain territories and people *require* and beseech domination'.[12] Here, the natives are not only sub-standard, not only sub-human, but blight humanity. They represent an obstacle to its progress. As such, the act of removing them is constructed not as an act of selfishness but one of necessity, even mercy.

What follows is a list of rationalisations to explaining why the settlers are more entitled to America than the natives, each taking an imaginative path of logic that concludes the moral right, or compulsion, of the settlers to exterminate. Additionally, the 'scruples of conscience'[13] over the dispossession and extermination of the natives are alleviated by the repeated vindication of these actions as God's work, a strategy of relinquishing personal responsibility or guilt for subsisting from the fruits of colonisation at the expense of those displaced. With abolitionism gaining momentum in America at the beginning of the 19$^{th}$ Century allusions are made to the contemporary debates over the keeping of slaves, another group denied humanity, dignity and autonomy in democratic America:

> It was soon found that they were of a hideous copper complexion -- and being of a copper complexion, it was the same as if they were negroes -- and negroes are black, 'and black', said the pious fathers, devoutly crossing themselves, 'is the colour of the devil!'[14]

Christianity is a tool of the would-be civilisers that is used as moral justification to other those who are deemed unworthy of incapable of civilisation, 'liberty is too radiant a deity to inhabit such gloomy temples'.[15] The civilisers, the settlers, claim to act in the name of in God and define opposition to their desires as pagan, unchristian

or the work of the devil. Evidence for this conviction is presented in the natives' supposed lack of cultivation. That they 'did not improve the talents Providence had bestowed on them'[16] and are neglecting the land they have been inherited, proves 'how undeserving they were of the blessings around them'[17]. In short, America is wasted on them.

That God would take the side of the European settler and not the indigenous people is a presumption of the colonial mindset. Here, God's will regarding what classifies as ownership is interpreted and determined by Protestant scholars. Similarly, the arguments proposing the inferiority of the 'savages' are made by European philosophers and writers. These arguments are 'considered as fully admitted and established'[18] as fact because they are uncontested, 'no Indian writers arose on the other side'.[19] The Europeans thinkers take an inquisitorial approach to the natives, expecting any response to be made under these terms. The absence of an Indian writer to make a response is treated as acceptance of the accusation. This is the colonial gaze, a culturally myopic approach to foreign culture that judges without desire or capacity to empathise or understand a divergent perspective, seeking only weaknesses and justification for domination. Irving exposes the assumptions of superiority in the colonial gaze and the hypocrisy of the gazers. Indifference to wealth and ambition is further evidence of the 'most abject and brutified nature'[20] of the natives. The settlers are also unable to acknowledge their own cultural shortcomings, that what they offer could be imperfect or in some respects recessive:

> They likewise made known to them a thousand remedies… and that they might comprehend the benefits and enjoy the comforts of these medicines,

> they previously introduced among them the diseases which they were calculated to cure[21]

Processes of civilisation and improvement, even where the intentions could be honourable, result in adversity for those subject to them. Convinced of its superiority, the colonial mindset is oblivious to its failings. Yet, returning to religion, we see that the Christian proselytising is undermined by the practices of the preachers, who fall short of their own standards in having 'used every method to induce them to embrace and practice the true religion -- except, indeed, that of setting them the example'.[22]

Having demonstrated the inability of European colonialists to judge from any perspective other than their own, Irving supposes 'a parallel case'[23] to illustrate the plight of those subject to colonialism. He suggests an invasion of Earth by the inhabitants of the Moon, technologically and philosophically superior to the dominant powers of Europe and the emergent America, achieving 'such an enviable state of perfectibility' in contrast with the 'shallow brains of the good people of our globe'.[24] And with this *A History of New York* becomes an invasion narrative.

Irving's invaders are set up to parody the European colonists of America, and are contrasted to humans in the same manner by which the humans were compared to the natives. The language and assumptions of colonialism are retained, but transplanted away from the authority of the American settlers and applied to them; they are now subjected to the colonial gaze, their treatment as Other being informed by the earlier deconstruction of the natives. The inhabitants of the Moon arrive by 'sailing through the air or cruising among the stars', comparative in incomprehensibility to the

'European mastery of navigating floating castles through the world of waters to the simple savages'.[25] Comparing the humans to the inhabitants of the moon acts as a way of describing them, recalling the incredulity in the tone of the European descriptions of the Native Americans, mocking the arbitrary basis for the standards of perfection insisted upon by the European colonists. Their appearance is radically different from that of the human: cyclopean, tailed, pea-green and carrying heads under their arms. They believe in 'the profound, omnipotent, and all perfect energy, and the ecstatic, immutable, immovable perfection' instead of religion and their men are entitled to 'a community of wives enjoined by the law of nature'[26] instead of a monogamous family life. Their foremost authority is the Man in the Moon, a profound philosopher who is compared to the Pope for his 'terrible passion and possessing equal authority over things that do not belong to him'.[27] They view as heresy the ironic contentions of John Heywood, Francois Rabelais and Thomas More among others that the moon was made of green cheese. Lunar philosophy is contrary to common sense; its proponents are known as Lunatics. Failing to accept the wisdom of this philosophy and complaining of how the Lunatics 'seize upon our fertile territories, scourge us of our rightful possessions, relieve us of our wives'[28], they are hunted with 'hippogriffs', hypnotised by 'concentrated sunbeams' and have their cities demolished by 'moonstones', then banished to 'the torrid deserts of Arabia, or the frozen regions of Lapland'.[29]

*A History of New York*'s parodic portrayal of the European colonists as lunar invaders shows the ridiculousness inherent in assumptions of superiority, characterising as lunatics and being unable to understand why the natives felt no gratitude for the pillaging of their land. It identifies the hubris in those who would see superiority

within themselves but are ignorant of alternatives, maintaining that ignorance by eliminating anything resistant to that idea of their superiority or that does not assimilate into that predetermined narrative. Illustrating the flaws in the colonial mindset, it admonishes them for their othering and demonising people of a different culture or appearance, suggesting that a greater attempt both to accommodate the culture that was dispossessed by Europeans and an acknowledgement of the imperfections in Western culture should have been made; it promotes understanding over ignorance, marking an attempt to familiarise the Other. This is very different from what we shall see in the tradition of invasion narratives, which use the same device used by Irving to imagine his lunar invaders, that of othering a familiar, to manipulate anxieties and play on the fear of the Other. Later narratives resemble the subconscious recreation of the national origin, transplanting the circumstances of the European invasion that led to the establishment of the American nation into the contemporary United States.

What is present in Irving's satire that is absent from most invasion narratives is the explicit reversing of the roles of invader and invaded that occurs in his describing the colonising of America by the Europeans *before* describing its invasion by the moon. This keeps as a constant a familiar perspective – an 'us' – despite its transformation of role from invader to invaded. Two things happen as a result of this reversal: the role of aggressor is projected away from the familiar, which in turn embraces the role of victim. Irving is forced to suppose an interstellar invasion because of the cultural and political dominance of the West, there being no similarly developed nation on Earth that could illustrate his point. Whereas his narrative does this for an ironic purpose, it serves in subsequent, unironic invasion narratives as the imaginative leap required to

disavow aggression and claim sympathy and vulnerability despite being in a position of strength and dominance. Unknown and unknowable, the construction of the invaders is a form of projection of the Self, an imagining of an unknown Other from one's own perspective. As such, there are vague but ominous expectations about the path of invasion as a predetermined narrative, given the referent of the American settlers as colonists. In projecting the aggression on to the invader, the Self is split, retaining an imperfect, incomplete and weakened set of characteristics as the invaded that adds to the insecurity in identity. H. Bruce Franklin writes, 'what seem to be the attitudes of a defenseless ugly ducking are in reality characteristic traits of the American imperial eagle, a bird that habitually views its own behavior as 'defense' against prey.'[30] This imaginative leap that casts a recurrent invader as the potential target of invasion is the process by which this occurs. The reductive, colonial gaze that was fixed on the natives is transplanted to fantastic invaders, who are like the natives in that they are othered and expendable. Unlike the natives, they are drawn as aggressors seeking to subjugate and as such provide a more morally justifiable target for fantasies of extermination.

**Fractured Identity**

Implicit in the ideas of evolution and rationalism is the trajectory towards perfection, a linear motion of progression that acquires the good and discards the bad. Beginning again in 1776 as the United States of America, the nation declared itself independent from its European forebears, yet preserved the legacy of European discovery through its population demographic and its name. Championed by Cotton Mather and judged hypocritical by Washington Irving, the idea of America as a chosen land of God's

people began to crystallise as Manifest Destiny, the zenith of this being Joseph Smith's founding Mormonism in 1830 at La Fayette, New York after claiming to have been visited by a prophet. For perfectionism to be achieved, imperfections must be eradicated, and there was a continuing negotiation in the country over who was entitled to be called and treated as an American citizen. Attempts were made to 'civilise' or exclude the Indians through Indian Removal policies, restrictions on immigration began to be drafted despite immigration being at the very centre of America's identity and the American Civil War was waged from 1861-5 between the northern and southern states, primarily over differences concerning the rights of slaves.

Though the outcome of the Civil War saw slavery abolished in the United States, jim-crow laws in the secessionist Southern states maintained 'separate but equal' status for black people until 1965, with laws prohibiting interracial sex and marriage – or 'miscegenation' – remaining until 1967. The term miscegenation originates from a hoax pamphlet promoting mixed race marriage entitled *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the American White Man and Negro* (1863). It was produced anonymously by two reporters working for the *New York World*, later revealed to be George Wakeman and David Goodman Croly, and attempts to parody a progressive approach to sexual relationships by implicitly reinforcing the hierarchy of master and slave, 'the error of all religion and education has been in appealing to the higher faculties, and ignoring the influence of the lower'.[31] Provoking anxieties over pretensions of 'Anglo-Saxon' cultural superiority, it also plays on nativist evolutionary fears amongst white males over a mixed-race future, particularly strong

in the South and the Irish working class, by taunting their sexual frustration with presentations of attractive, lusty white women preferring slaves:

> The white Irishwoman loves the black man, and in the old country, it has been stated, that the Negro, is sure of the handsomest among the poor white females.[32]

> The white young man is away at college, travelling in Europe, or practising at his profession in the large cities, while the white girl, who matures early, is at her home, surrounded by the brightest and most intelligent of the young coloured men of the estate. Passionate, full of sensibility, without the cold prudence of her Northern sister, who can wonder at the wild dreams of love which fire the hearts and fill the imagination of the impressible Southern maiden.[33]

Coined for the dubious purposes of this pamphlet, the term miscegenation is today generally considered offensive. Like the Indian, the slave and the non-white immigrant, women – subject to these possessive fantasies – were not granted equal treatment under the law. Universal suffrage was only achieved after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1920, delayed in part because of the momentum to extend electoral power to non-white citizens but also due to opposition from the United States Brewer's Association, fearing that the most immediate consequence of the female vote would be the prohibition of alcohol.

**Defining an Alien in Law**

Though lacking in credible invasion threats or enemies with the capability of launching an attack that would create a sustained danger to national identity at the time when the popularity of invasion narratives exploded in the late nineteenth century, the related beliefs in American exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny make it an appropriate setting for fantasies of invasion. It is a country that people emigrated to in search of opportunity, which lead some of those living there who were already enjoying such opportunity to become fearful that newcomers may dilute it. Its newness as a country is an open space for negotiation that invites demand for a more rigid self-determination:

> Give me your tired, your poor,
> Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
> The wretched refuse of your teeming shore[34]

The famous inscription on the plaque mounted inside the Statue of Liberty in 1903 is often quoted as representing an open-door approach to immigration in America. Yet the turn of the nineteenth century sees intensification in anti-immigration policy, as the United States begins to determine itself, by law, by whom it would exclude and define as Other. Language used by proponents of initiatives to restrict immigration has a colonialist referent of the settlers that became conquerors, envisaging ruin and displacement resulting from any new intake. The poem's treating of those fleeing to America remarks the security of the dominance of America as a Western nation; 'wretched refuse' recalls Irving's descriptions of the expendable natives, while the

welcoming implies an expectation of gratitude towards the country on behalf of any who come to America for the opportunity to be there and live as a citizen.

Earlier in the nineteenth century, immigrants were welcomed by the United States to meet the demand for labour, but economic decline during the latter half of the century led to growing popular dissent over immigration levels. Successive governments addressed these concerns with a series of anti-immigration measures. Revisions made in 1880 to the Burlingame Treaty of 1868 allowed the government to suspend immigration and in 1882, the U. S. Congress passed a new Immigration Act that levied a tax of fifty cents on all aliens landing at United States ports, granting powers to the authorities to deny entry to convicts and those deemed mentally deficient. Further measures included the 1885 Contract Labor Law, prohibiting the importation and migration of foreigners and aliens under contract or agreement to perform labour in the United States and the Naturalization Act of 1906, requiring immigrants to learn to speak English in order to become naturalised citizens, establishing a standardized naturalisation form. One group of immigrants singled out by legislation were the Chinese, who began arriving in large numbers as a result of the 1848 California Gold Rush and the 1860s rail building programmes. When conditions changed during the 1870s, there was an increase in xenophobic unrest, blaming Chinese 'coolies' for depressed wage levels. Yellow peril literature proliferates, including three narratives that imagine the Chinese entry as a precursor to invading America: P. W. Dooner's *The Last Days of the Republic* (1880), *The Battle of the Wabash* (1880) by Lorelle and Robert Woltor's *A Short and Truthful History of the Taking of California and Oregon by the Chinese in the Year A. D. 1889* (1882). Pressure from anti-Chinese groups, such as the Supreme Order of Caucasians, eventually resulted in The Chinese

Exclusion Act of 1882, permitting the government to prevent Chinese entry. This was extended in The Geary Act of 1892, adding onerous new requirements such as forcing all Chinese residents to carry a resident permit, barring them from bearing witness in court and preventing them from receiving bail in *habeas corpus* proceedings. This ban was intended to last only ten years, but stayed in place until its repeal in 1943.

Though the treatment of the Chinese may strike as evidence of an immigration policy driven by racism, the approach to Japan suggests that this as much due to expedience in given circumstances as principle. Unlike the Chinese, the Japanese did not arrive in large numbers and were not subject to such persecution. An informal arrangement between Japan and the United States, known as the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907, declared that the U.S. would not impose restriction on Japanese immigration or students, and Japan would not allow further emigration to the U.S. Japanese exception was perhaps a concession to fear of reprisal, given Japanese pursuit of an aggressive foreign policy that saw them attack and defeat the Russian army and navy during the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5. With the American immigration policy causing diplomatic consternation with whichever country was subject to restriction, the agreement allowed the U. S. government to appease the anti-immigration pressure groups and reduce the risk of a retaliatory attack. The agreement was never ratified by Congress and was ended in 1924. Fears of invasion by the Japanese are represented in two significant invasion narratives: Roy Norton's *The Vanishing Fleets* (1907), which H. Bruce Franklin suggests influenced President Truman's use of the atomic bomb on the Japanese during World War Two and Homer Lea's *The Valor of Ignorance* (1909), used by Japanese military schools as a blueprint for attacking America and perhaps leading to the assault on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

On February 4, 1917, the United States Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1917, also known as the Asiatic Barred Zone Act, overriding a veto by President Woodrow Wilson. This act added to the number of undesirables banned from entering the country and designating an 'Asiatic Barred Zone' from which all immigration was prohibited, a region that included much of eastern Asia and the Pacific Islands. Previously, only the Chinese had been excluded from admission to the country. The Emergency Quota Act of 1921 limited the annual number of immigrants who could be admitted from any country to three percent of the number of persons from that country living in the United States. Just over half the allocation was for northern and western Europeans, and the remainder for eastern and southern Europeans, a seventy five percent reduction from prior years. Professionals were allowed in regardless of their origins. This legislation was superseded by the Immigration Act of 1924, or Johnson–Reed Act, a law that included the National Origins Act and the Asian Exclusion Act. It limited the number of immigrants who could be admitted from any country to two percent of the number of people from that country who were already living in the United States in 1890, down from the three percent cap in 1921. The law was aimed at reducing the number of unskilled workers and further restricting the Southern and Eastern Europeans who were arriving in large numbers starting in the 1890s, as well as prohibiting the immigration of East Asians and Asian Indians. Immigration from Latin America and Africa was not restricted. This spate of legislation preceded the advent of pulp science fiction in the late 1920s, and also *The Red Napoleon* (1929) by Floyd Gibbons, depicting a Soviet invasion of America led by Karakhan, a charismatic Eastern European dictator who early in life has learned the Darwinian message of the 'law of fang and claws'.[35]

Immigration policy remained fixed until after World War II, when fears of Communism and anxiety over immigration from Eastern Europe conflated. The National Origins Formula was retained in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) of 1952 (also known as the McCarran-Walter Act), which organised the variety of statutes governing immigration law into one body of text, updating the ratios to be based on the 1920 census and eliminating racial restrictions, but retaining restrictions by national origin. The National Origins Formula was abolished in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, replaced with a system of separate quotas for the Western and Eastern hemispheres. Its chief proponent was Democratic Senator Pat McCarran, who made the following statement as the bill was being debated:

> I believe that this nation is the last hope of Western civilization and if this oasis of the world shall be overrun, perverted, contaminated or destroyed, then the last flickering light of humanity will be extinguished... Today, as never before, untold millions are storming our gates for admission and those gates are cracking under the strain.[36]

What is most notable here is McCarran's identification of 'deadly enemies' of the United States. He uses the word twice in the speech, in reference to the 'hard-core, indigestible blocs' of people of foreign cultures present in America and to the opponents of the bill. This is a distinct change in emphasis from deeming a person or group as merely undesirable. He insists that failure to respond swiftly and decisively will result in the country being 'overrun, perverted, contaminated or destroyed', conjuring images of legions of diseased, immoral devastators preparing to advance.

The language is that of invasion narratives, a warning of an invasion that is imminent and being facilitated by the collusion of the opponents of his bill, who are contributing 'to promote this nation's downfall more than any other group since we achieved our independence as a nation'.

**Defining an Enemy in Law**

McCarran's labelling of potential immigrants as enemies is an extreme position because the United States has separate legislation for the purposes of defining its enemies. McCarran's speech emphasises the point that for certain Americans, being identified as Other is the same as being an enemy, that mere difference is evidence of a national threat.

Legislative bills that identified threats to America as a democracy were drafted on the basis that they were wartime measures. The first raft of these bills were the Alien and Sedition Acts, a collection of four bills passed in 1798 by the Federalist government in the fifth United States Congress during the Quasi-War, an undeclared naval war with France. It comprised The Naturalization Act (An Act to Establish a Uniform Rule of Naturalization), which extended the duration of residence required for aliens to become citizens to fourteen years; The Alien Friends Act (An Act Concerning Aliens), which authorised the president to deport any resident alien considered 'dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States'; The Alien Enemies Act (An Act Respecting Alien Enemies), which authorized the president to apprehend and deport resident aliens if their home countries were at war with the United States of

America; and The Sedition Act (An Act for the Punishment of Certain Crimes against the United States) made it a crime to publish "false, scandalous, and malicious writing" against the government or its officials. Proponents claimed the acts, signed into law by President John Adams, were designed to protect the Catholics from alien citizens of enemy powers and to prevent seditious attacks from weakening the government. The Democratic-Republican opposition, like later historians, denounced them as unconstitutional, as infringing on the right of individual states to act in these areas and designed to stifle criticism of the administration rather than protect the country, an accusation supported by the Sedition Act's expiration date of 3rd March, 1801, the day before Adams' presidential term was to end. Only the Alien Enemies Act remains intact today. A further Sedition Act to suspend *habeas corpus* was written into law by the Lincoln administration in 1861 during the American Civil War. Targeted at the Southern secessionists, it was used first against suspected Communists in the 1940s and much more recently (in the past few years) against suspected terrorists.

The Sedition Act of 1918 forbade the use of 'disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language' about the United States government, its flag, or its armed forces or that caused others to view the American government or its institutions with contempt. The act also allowed the Postmaster General to refuse to deliver mail that met those same standards for punishable speech or opinion. It applied only to times 'when the United States is in war' and was repealed two years later. A landmark judgement in America law was the Supreme Court decision of Schenck v. United States (1919), upholding the Espionage Act of 1917 and concluding that a defendant did not have a First Amendment right to free speech against military draft during World War I. Charles

Schenck was the Secretary of the Socialist party, responsible for printing, distributing, and mailing leaflets to men eligible for the draft that advocated opposition to it. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes made the following declaration to support his ruling:

> The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that the United States Congress has a right to prevent. It is a question of proximity and degree. When a nation is at war, many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight, and that no Court could regard them as protected by any constitutional right.[37]

This is the founding of the 'clear and present danger' rule, the blueprint for subsequently identifying enemies of the United States supposedly posing a national threat. The phrase 'substantive evils' recalls the Puritanical idea of America as Manifest Destiny, a settlement of God that was a permanent target for would-be invaders.

Anti-Communist anxiety in the 1940s saw the introduction of three measures that were important for the ideological definition of American as an Anti-Communist nation but were, in practice, ineffective and against the spirit of the American constitution. They also represent the growing fear of subversion, the requirement for constant vigilance against a proximate, imminent threat; a peacetime militarism against an invasion from within that is reflected in literature by Robert Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters* (1951) and *Sixth Column* (1949). The Alien Registration Act or Smith

Act (after Representative Howard Smith) of 1940 made a criminal offence of advocating the overthrowing of government, with potential punishment of up to twenty years incarceration. It also required all non-citizen adult residents to register with the government. The most notable uses of the act were in the aborted Great Sedition Trial of 1944 against a perceived international Nazi conspiracy (involving, amongst others, the Mothers' Movement) and the Communist Party trials of 1949. The statute remains in place today, though a series of United States Supreme Court decisions in 1957 threw out numerous convictions under the Smith Act as unconstitutional. United States Executive Order 9835, or The Loyalty Order, was passed by President Harry S. Truman in 1947 to root out communist influence within the various departments of the federal government, a response by Truman to quiet right-wing critics who accused Democrats of being soft on communism. Pat McCarran's Internal Security Act of 1950 required the registration of Communist organizations with the United States Attorney General and established the Subversive Activities Control Board to investigate persons suspected of engaging in subversive activities or otherwise promoting the establishment of a 'totalitarian dictatorship'. Members of these groups could not become citizens, and in some cases, were prevented from entering or leaving the country. Citizen-members could be denaturalised in five years. It passed despite a Presidential veto; Truman used his veto statement to compare the bill unfavourably to the Alien and Seditions Acts.[38] The act was never enforced, even with regard to the United States Communist Party, with sections of the act gradually ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

Growing concern within sections of the United States government over national security was not always enshrined in legislature, largely because most of the concerns

proved unfounded. Yet the presence of these concerns required the government to be seen to be responding to them, resulting in a series of committees set up to investigate various threats. The variety of groups perceived as threatening mirrors the numerous dangers being concurrently imagined in pulp science fiction: the Overman Committee (1918-9) to investigate German as well as Bolshevik elements in the United States; the Fish Committee to investigate people and organisations suspected of being involved with or supporting communist activities; and the Special Committee on Un-American Activities Authorized to Investigate Nazi Propaganda and Certain Other Propaganda Activities (the McCormack-Dickstein committee) of 1934-7. In May 1938, the House Committee on Un-American Activities (the Dies Committee) was established to investigate German American involvement in Nazi and Ku Klux Klan activity, but soon concentrated on investigating the possibility that the American Communist Party had infiltrated the Works Progress Administration, including the Federal Theatre Project and the Federal Writers' Project. It also carried out a brief investigation into the wartime internment of Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. The House Committee on Un-American Activities became a standing (permanent) committee in 1945. Chaired by Representative Edward J. Hart of New Jersey, the committee of nine representatives investigated suspected threats of subversion or propaganda that attacked constitutional government, focusing on real and suspected communists in positions of actual or supposed influence in the United States society. A significant coup for HUAC was the charges of espionage brought against Alger Hiss in 1948. Hiss's trial and conviction for perjury was used as evidence of the usefulness of congressional committees for uncovering communist subversion. In 1947, the committee held hearings into alleged communist propaganda and influence in the Hollywood motion picture industry. After conviction on contempt

of Congress charges for refusal to answer some questions posed by committee members, the 'Hollywood Ten' were blacklisted by the industry. One of those involved was Howard Koch, playwright of *Invasion from Mars* (1938), adapted for radio by Orson Welles and The Mercury Theatre as *The War of the Worlds*. The prestige of HUAC began a gradual decline beginning in the late 1950s, increasingly becoming the target of political satirists and activists, mirroring the pattern in invasion fiction of an ironic response to a cliché, dispersing the anxiety by belittling it.

Despite the lack of evidence found by these committees of any 'clear and present' danger to the United States government, anxiety over national security had become a mainstay of American politics, encouraging voices seeking to exploit it. An important figure in raising the issue of potential Communist infiltration of the United States government was, of course, Senator Joseph McCarthy. His rise to prominence coincided with a spate of Hollywood B-Movies featuring the invasion of Earth by extraterrestrials: *The Thing From Another World* (1951), *It Came From Outer Space* (1953), *Phantom From Space* (1953), *Invaders From Mars* (1953), *Killers From Space* (1954), *Target Earth* (1954) and *Earth Versus The Flying Saucers* (1956). A well-received speech to the Republican Women's group of Wheeling, West Virginia included his famous claim to have a list of names of Communists and sympathisers in government positions and also the following declaration:

> In my opinion the State Department, which is one of the most important government departments, is thoroughly infested with communists... One thing to remember in discussing the communists in our government is that we are not dealing with spies who get 30 pieces of silver to steal the blueprints of new

> weapons. We are dealing with a far more sinister type of activity because it permits the enemy to guide and shape our policy.[39]

The rhetoric recalls again the exterminable association of those defined as being outside of or other than American identity; like pests, the Communists have 'infested' the department. With the beginning of his second term as senator in 1953, McCarthy was made chairman of the Senate Committee on Government Operations. Given this position rather than the Internal Security Subcommittee – the committee normally involved with investigating Communists – he exploited the flexibility of the mandate to conduct his own investigations of Communists in the government. Questions posed by the sub-committee were characterised by the persistent, hostile innuendo and unsubstantiated accusations that became known as McCarthyism. An ill-fated inquiry into the army lead to conflicting accusations made by the two parties, which were investigated in turn by the widely covered Army–McCarthy hearings, exposing McCarthy's hectoring, reckless style and helping contribute to his decline in popularity and credibility.

The abundance of laws governing what constituted an Other to America coming during the twentieth century follows a pattern of seeding and germination; passing legislation became a way of responding to anxieties over threats to American identity that had taken root much earlier. This was a pattern that would repeat itself in fiction, with the explosion in popularity of the invasion narrative at the end of the nineteenth century.

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[29] *ibid*, p. 74

[30] H. Bruce Franklin, *War Stars: The Superweapon and the American Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988) p. 21

[31] George Wakeman and David Goodman Croly, *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races, Applied to the American White Man and Negro* (New York: H. Dexter Hamilton & Co., 1864), p. 32 http://www.archive.org/stream/miscegenationthe00crol/miscegenationthe00crol_djvu.txt [accessed 09/05/2011]

[32] *ibid*, p. 30

[33] *ibid*, p. 43

[34] From 'The New Colossus' (1883) by Emma Lazarus

[35] Floyd Gibbons, *The Red Napoleon* (New York: Popular Library, 1977), pp. 17-8

[36] Senator Pat McCarran, Congressional Record, March 2, 1953, p. 1518.

[37] Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., *Schenck v. United States* 249 U.S. 47, 39 S. Ct. 247, 63 L. Ed. 470 (1919)

[38] 'the greatest danger to freedom of speech, press, and assembly since the Alien and Sedition Laws of 1798.' Harry S. Truman, Veto of the Internal Security Bill <http://trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/viewpapers.php?pid=883> [accessed 1 June 2010]

[39] Senator Joseph McCarthy, http://www.civics-online.org/library/formatted/texts/mccarthy.html [accessed 30 May 2010]

## :hapter Two: Early Invasion

Jarratives representing the invasion of America begin to become popular and ecurrent in the late nineteenth century. This first batch of invasion narratives were nfluenced by the European future war story, largely born out of anxieties over the iture of nations given the rise of foreign powers with imperial ambitions, the icreasing mechanisation of war and pre-centennial, even pre-millennial angst. The atalyst for the materialisation of all these loosely related concerns as cautionary ction was the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. France, an old nperial power, was overwhelmed by the more accomplished soldiers and greater ctical acumen of the Prussians, who subsequently unified all the surrounding ermanic states into one large nation, Germany. The ease by which the French were anquished frightened the other European nations. Less than a century before this eriod Napoleonic France had nearly conquered Europe; although the French army as depleted from its expansionist era at the turn of the nineteenth century, defeating rance established Prussia as an emerging power and the formation of Germany npressed its imperialist intent on the rest of the continent. Britain stood alone as the ominant power in Europe after the Napoleonic wars and as an old imperial power, it emed inevitable that its interests should be threatened by German ambition.

view of these circumstances, it is unsurprising that the text established by the work I. F. Clarke to be the 'perfect archetype'[1] for the future-war sub-genre should be ritish. General George Tompkyns Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) was iblished in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and quickly became the subject of a tional debate, condemned by Prime Minister William Gladstone for being

unnecessarily alarmist. Yet the text's popularity was undiminished by Gladstone's denunciation, being read round the world within months of its publication. As with some of the literary responses, Gladstone's comments on the text served to give inadvertent credence to the arguments within by acknowledging its existence. It describes how British forces are occupied on more fronts than they are equipped to deal with, leaving their homeland inadequately defended. Britain's pride in its nation's strength and belief in the capability of its armed forces is shattered by an invasion by a foreign enemy, later revealed to be Germany. The enemy conquers the British forces, constituting auxiliary volunteers, with great ease. They fight bravely and with dignity, but in vain, unable to cope with the overwhelming skill and organisation of the invaders. The main symbol of the invaders' superiority is the torpedo. A weapon more advanced than any at Britain's disposal, it serves as the initiating device of the invasion, breaching the Channel defence and allowing Germany to get into the country, also serving as a warning about the need for continuous development of new military technology. The deployment of the torpedo shows Germany is capable of defeating at least the remnants of the symbolically powerful Royal Navy, establishing the enemy as a threat of some potency. It is the shock of German advantage that startles the British, coercing them into a belated interest in the war when they realise they have encountered a dangerous enemy. Not denounced as evil, or demonised as something less than human, Germany is commended for its opportunism in taking advantage of Britain's divided attention.

Britain's neglectful lack of preparation is characteristic of a nation that is too comfortable with its own sense of superiority. Unaware of the German torpedo, the leading journal, formulator of public opinion, claims, 'a contest between British ships

and those of any other country, under anything like equal odds, can never be doubtful'.[2] In the reality of Chesney's story, British forces are far from invulnerable, being disorganised and poorly informed. Such complacency in security from invasion is a recurrent theme for early invasion narratives. A second is the emotive nature of the population, moved to war almost on a whim:

> ...the English were always an impulsive lot: the whole country was boiling over with indignation, and the Government, egged on by the press, and going with the stream, declared war.[3]

Declaring war is not a sensible move due to the activities occupying the time of the British armed forces, and through it Chesney portrays a Government lacking authority and wisdom. Whilst the rulers of the nation are responsible for its fall in the text, Chesney affirms that those rulers are not the Government, but the electorate as blame for Britain's defeat is laid upon the newly emancipated, 'the lower classes, uneducated, untrained to the use of political rights, and swayed by demagogues'.[4] Anti-democratic sentiment is evident in the text, because 'the warnings of the few were drowned in the voice of the multitude'.[5] Chesney himself became a Tory Member of Parliament, building his political reputation on staunch nationalism and fervent attacks on the prevailing retrenchment policies of Gladstone's Liberal government. Civil liberty is not a concern of Chesney's narrator; the most important matter is British autonomy, national identity and sovereignty. The narrator says, 'we English have ourselves to blame for the humiliation which has been brought on the land',[6] implying a greater sympathy with the nation as an idea than the people occupying it. Greater rights would be preserved by restrictions on civil liberties in the

form of civic duties; the narrator proposes to increase conscription and leave the rule of the nation to those who have had long experience in it, the undemocratic higher classes. Britain's defeat is a direct cause of the 'selfishness of the day'.[7]

Illusion, or self-delusion, is an important aspect of the text. In the nineteenth century, much of Britain's wealth and status depended on its colonies. Without these, Britain is a very small island with limited natural resources. Deprived of subsidised colonial trade, reasons Chesney, Britain's wealth would diminish considerably. Britain is defeated because it is occupying a position as premier world power that it can no longer justify. By acting as irresponsibly as the world's leading state is want to, Britain overreaches itself and is left vulnerable, believing that past prestige and superiority makes it invincible. However, those defending the country are auxiliaries, not professional soldiers; they play at being soldiers as Britain plays at being the planet's strongest imperial power. The bravado of the British government in allowing this to happen is exposed for what it is. To draw an unflattering comparison, Chesney describes a German officer:

> ...a fine soldier-like man, but nothing could exceed the insolence of his manner, which was perhaps all the greater because it seemed not intentional, but to arise from a sense of immeasurable superiority.[8]

The moral of the story is that a misplaced or deluded confidence will result in ultimate downfall; undignified bombast that is unenforceable will lead to shame. This indignity is the root cause of Britain's downfall, which could have been avoided if only a degree of restraint was employed by those leading Britain to conquer whilst failing to

fortify what was already owned. A third recurrent theme for early invasion narratives is found here in the interrogation of the home culture rather than that of the invaded. Written from an Anglo-centric perspective, *The Battle of Dorking* does not consider Germany at length. German superiority is primarily due to an absence of professional soldiers defending the nation; there is nothing to suggest that Germany is more staunchly defended and therefore less vulnerable than Britain.

Although the history of conflict at close proximity makes the anxieties expressed in European invasion narratives more understandable than those in their American counterparts, the dangers manifesting in European texts as a result of those anxieties are the exaggerations of writers seeking to further political agendas. Disproportionate focusing on these agendas and their urgency stretches narrative credibility in so far as the importance of the agenda is placed above the verisimilitude of the extrapolation. The success of the Germans in *The Battle of Dorking* is presented as the failure of the British to fortify home defences, but the only reason those defences are exposed as inadequate is because Chesney all but removes the Royal Navy – a crucial part of the national defence – from proceedings by sending them to South America. Contentious plausibility is also evident from the narrative's denouement, where the British accept the success of the German invasion without retaliation, despite having a large military presence that Chesney placed in South America that could be recalled to reinvigorate the depleted national strength. The reason given for the inability of the British to correct their failing is the humiliation of defeat, so great that the nation never recovers. Here, Britain's history of being invaded, an aspect that makes the conceit of the text plausible, is negated by the text's exaggerating the importance of its underlying moral. Britain had endured invasion before and recovered yet *this* invasion

as a result of *this* government's failure to prepare for an attack at *this* time condemns the nation to oblivion; the urgency of action is conveyed by the ruinous consequences of not heeding the message but the severity of the consequences are so great as to be unreasonable.

Published all around the world and quickly capturing the imagination of European authors, the wider cultural impact of *The Battle of Dorking* on American culture is reflected by its parody, 'An American Battle of Dorking: The Conquest of America' (1872) by the essayist Charles Heber Clark. Writing under the pseudonym Max Adeler, he lampooned the Presidential candidacy of newspaper editor Horace Greeley by imagining him as President, using *The Battle of Dorking* as a cautionary fable that popular support for an inadequate, myopic government leads to invasion by a superior enemy that conquers the nation, bringing shame on the United States for its short-sightedness and lack of perspective. It begins as Chesney's narrative does explaining that the text is an account of events in the near future that led to the fall of the nation; in this instance, it is the election of Greeley as President that proves disastrous for the United States. Elected because he is an 'honest man',[9] Clark ridicules Greeley's romanticising of the agricultural West and undervaluing of the industrial and commercial East through the policy of forcing 'the entire population of seaboard states westward at the point of the bayonet'.[10] The President then makes a series of diplomatic gaffes related to his preoccupation with farming and illegible handwriting that invites invasion by a coalition of Russia, England, France and Austria. They arrive on the 'absolutely deserted'[11] East coast unopposed – since Greeley had deployed the army to prevent a civilian return to the West – hang the President and Congress and install Prince Frederick William of Prussia as King. This constitutes 'a

fearful blow at Republicanism – a blow from which it can never recover. It made us, who were freemen, a nation of slaves.'[12] Despite this humiliation, life for the majority of Americans improves after the invasion. Left 'dying of starvation'[13] by Greeley, he imperial enemy, 'to his credit, be it said, treated them kindly, fed them, and brought them back to their old homes.'[14] By correcting the error made by the democratic process, the invaders have saved the Americans from themselves. Cartoonist Thomas Nast contributed to the campaign against Greeley by illustrating the essay as 'American Battle of Dorking; Or, H. G. At the White House' (1872) in *Harper's Weekly*, further ingraining the narrative into the American consciousness and again emphasising the importance of the ironic narrative in the establishment of the American invasion tradition.

**Who is the Enemy?**

Where the emergence of Germany provided Chesney and authors from rest of Europe with an obvious danger of a major military superpower that was a nearby invasion threat, there was no similar proximate danger to America across the Atlantic Ocean. Beginning a pattern that is to reoccur throughout all invasion fiction, American authors of early invasion fiction constantly re-imagined the enemy, incorporating concerns and anxieties that remained wildly divergent until the after the Second World War when the threat of the Cold War became evident. America's apparent security from invasion manifests even in narratives portraying it; James Barnes' *The Unpardonable War* (1904) shows a failed attempt by Britain at invading America, concluding that, 'the invasion of America had been fruitless, as every writer who had

given thought to the subject had prophesised'.[15] Similarly, Donal Hamilton Haines' *The Last Invasion* (1914) sees the invading army of the unlocated Blues surrounded and moving toward inevitable death and declares, 'that's what they get for trying to invade a country as big as the United States. It can't be done. They've made such a good effort as nobody thought they could, but they're at the end of their rope'.[16]

For early narratives imagining an invasion threat arriving from the East, the contemporary background to their publication was the debates over the application of the Monroe Doctrine, a declaration of military retaliation by the United States should any of the European imperial powers attempt to re-colonise the newly independent Latin American states. Lacking a significant naval presence, the enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine relied on the support of Great Britain, through foreign secretary George Canning, and was seen as an Anglo-American alliance against the 'Holy Alliance' of Bourbon monarchies – Spain, Austria, Russia and Prussia – to secure trade routes and sustain Britain as the leading imperial power. As the nineteenth century progressed, the growth of America's wealth coincided with increasing imperial ambitions. The appointment of the vociferously nationalistic James G. Blaine to the position of foreign secretary led to international friction over the Philippines, with Blaine invoking the Monroe Doctrine at the suggestion of the Spanish reclaiming the territory. America's ability to enforce the Doctrine without large naval resources is the underlying concern of many of these early narratives. Blaine is referred to in 'The Stricken Nation' and 'The End of New York', praised by the former and mocked by the latter, which also satirises the Monroe Doctrine by having America saved from Spanish conquest by the navy of Chilé.

With no outstanding source of danger to America, various nations are presented as posing an invasion threat. Great Britain was the invader in *The War of 1886, Between the United States and Great Britain* (1882), *The Fall of the Great Republic (1886-1888)* (1885), 'The Stricken Nation' (1892) and *The Unpardonable War* (1904). China attacks in *Last Days of the Republic* (1880), *The Battle of the Wabash* (1880), *A Short and Truthful History of the Taking of California and Oregon by the Chinese in the Year A. D. 1889* (1882), *The Recovered Continent, A Tale of Chinese Invasion* (1898) and *The Yellow Peril in Action* (1907). In *The Vanishing Fleets* (1907) and *The Valor of Ignorance* (1909) Japan is the enemy. In *The Invasion of the United States* (1916) and *The Conquest of America* (1916), Germany provides the threat. Spain is the aggressor in *The End of New York* (1881). *The Invasion of New York; or, How Hawaii was Annexed* (1897) by J. H Palmer describes consecutive invasions of the United States by Spain and Japan. Other narratives feature alliances of nations combining to attack America. *All For His Country* (1915) sees Mexico conduct a diversionary invasion from the South to distract attention from the Japanese forces coming from the East. *The Next War: A Prediction* (1892) involves an invasion by a united black and mixed-race army; it is an Allied Asiatic force in *The Yellow Peril in Action: A Possible Chapter in History* (1907). The invasion in 'The Year 1899' (1893) is conducted by 'a league of Chinamen, negroes and Indians',[17] all associated by an anti-white, anti-Christian conspiracy:

> Mohammedan, Brahiminical, and Buddhist leaders would be found to excite religious frenzy among the Turks, Turkamens, Arabs, Persians, Siamese, Burmese, Cochin Chinese, Malays, and Hindoos, and it was expected that the

> whole of Asia and Malaysia and all northern Africa would join in a holy war against the white race everywhere[18]

Equally bizarre, if not more so, is the group of invaders all attacking America in *The War of the Worlds: A Tale of the Year 2000 A. D.* (1914): Japan, China, Africa, India, Persia, Chile, Argentina and the Martians. The array of enemies identified by various writers in European and American invasion fiction is satirised by P. G. Wodehouse in *The Swoop! Or, How Clarence Saved England* (1909), where nine different invaders arrive in England simultaneously. Rewritten and resituated for American readers as *The Military Invasion of America* (1916), the total number of invaders is reduced to two: Germany and Japan.

Narratives with thinly concealed political agendas often refer to contemporaneous pieces of legislation or the recent past and retell events of history in their context. Dooner's portrayal of the working class lynch mob in *Last Days of the Republic* has a precedent in reality. German development and use of torpedoes against Britain in *The Battle of Dorking* is an extension of the American deployment of defensive underwater explosive charges in both the War of Independence in 1776 and throughout the War of 1812. The latter war is a huge influence on many of the early American invasion narratives. The reason Britain and America go to war in *The Stricken Nation* is because of a conflict arising from British interference with American merchant vessels, whereas battles in *The Conquest of America* are still fought with cavalry. Both narratives refer to the inadequate border fortifications; Donnelly mentions the 'useless'[19] defences at Fort Hamilton and Lafayette and claims that defences at Governor's Island were commissioned in 1832 but remain unfinished.

Arguably the most important image from the War of 1812 for American invasion narratives is the burning of the White House, identified by Tom Shippey as symbolic of the fate of the republic.[20] Devastating such a prominent building impresses as a horrifying spectacle; the destruction of landmarks is a frequent occurrence in American invasion fiction but not necessarily in British. It is perhaps because this feature is key to the American imagination that the editors of the American newspapers serialising *The War of the Worlds* (1898) altered the text in order to cater for it.

Though Dorking is 'the perfect archetype' for European fiction and its influence on the texts is clear, there is an evolution in the narratives in embracing uniquely American ideas, incorporating the innovation of science and technology that would ultimately lead towards the growth of genre science fiction. Initially merely restating the concerns voiced in *The Battle of Dorking* over lack of preparedness for invasion, American writers found flexibility in the literature, applying messages more relevant to them and their nation. Where naval strength is the cause of British complacency in Chesney's story, it becomes the stated goal for American writers influenced by the spate of European future war fiction instigated by *The Battle of Dorking*. The narrators of Henry Grattan Donnelly in 'The Stricken Nation', Cleveland Moffett in *The Conquest of America* and J. W. Muller in *The Invasion of America* bemoan the absence of an American navy to repel their respective invasions before they reach land. P. W. Dooner's *The Last Days of the Republic* departed substantially from the idea of a formal, naval war to imagine an invasion launched by a fifth column of people partially integrated into American society: Chinese immigrant labourers. Lorelle's *The Battle of the Wabash* maintains this idea, extrapolating the Chinese

immigration as the beginning of a century-long plan to subordinate the white dominance of the United States. *The Fall of the Great Republic (1886-1888)* by an author using the pseudonym 'Sir Henry Standish Coverdale' is a further departure from the *Dorking* model, imagining as the successful invasion and occupation by a British-led European force of individualists as the only way to depose a socialist-governed America.

Invasion can be used, therefore, to destroy the nation or to save it, depending on the context of the narrative. Differing treatments of Britain by American invasion narratives show the capacity in the literature for variations on same enemy, how authors use change the nature of the threat rather than merely the source. The choice of Britain as invader lacked credibility. When the production and popularity of invasion narratives exploded towards the end of the nineteenth century, Britain's invasion of America in the War of 1812 was the single instance of invasion since America's colonisation and was an ill-planned, unrealistic attempt by the British to regain control. Its failure was almost an apology to America for the war starting; Britain declined to call for adequate reinforcement after suffering defeats at Lake Erie and Chippewa whilst the Treaty of Ghent in 1814 essentially restored captured territories to their pre-existing state. By claiming victory over the British after the Battle of New Orleans, America reasserted its post-colonial Constitutional values, themselves written as a method of defining the nation against the British imperialist policies that had controlled the country since the European settlers arrived. British acceptance of America's independence after the War of 1812, its support for the Monroe Doctrine and its preoccupation with European tensions meant that the only major enemy America had known was an enemy no longer. Despite the climate of

peace and security prevailing in the nation, invasion narratives capturing the imagination of American readers and writers and importing anxieties more understandable in a European context in tandem with the cautionary format of the stories required authors to cast an the invader, with Britain being America's only historical example. In 'The Stricken Nation', the emergence of the United States is viewed enviously, its growing wealth and bounty of resources 'watched with jealous interest by the nations of Europe'.[21] Having a 'hereditary and traditional'[22] hatred of America, Britain provokes America into causing a diplomatic incident that results in the declaration of war. Though not America's invader in *The Conquest of America*, Britain is deemed responsible for the attack by Germany, spreading 'the spirit of hatred against Germany' through the world and 'especially' America that prevented any 'fair and friendly'[23] dealings between the two nations.

This 'hereditary and traditional' hatred is absent in other narratives that depict a British invasion of the United States. Donnelly's Britain very different from that of Samuel Rockwell Reed, 'Sir Henry Standish Coverdale' or James Barnes, who each exhibit reverence for the experience and international standing of the European nation. For Barnes, England is 'under wise and able management',[24] provoked into invading by an overly-aggressive socialist government elected almost by accident after the candidates of their two more distinguished opponent parties were besieged by in-fighting and illness respectively. The English declaration of war on the United States is similarly excused in *The Fall of the Great Republic*, which sympathises with the English for their agitation by Irish-Americans, who helped foment discontent. Coverdale's Irish sponsor terrorism in England, contributing 'openly and without any attempt to conceal the purposes for which they were made':

> In their meetings the wildest schemes of vengeance against England were planned, and bloody plots deliberately woven, not only for the commission of the most fiendish and inhuman crimes against English men and English women and children, but also aiming at the embroilment of the United States in actual war with the other great Anglo-Saxon Power.[25]

In each of these three texts, the invasion by Great Britain results in a favourable outcome for the United States, with defeat teaching the nation appropriate diplomatic humility in *The War of 1886* and *The Fall of the Great Republic (1886-1888)* and the failed invasion bringing the two powers closer together after realising the futility of conflict in *The Unpardonable War.*

The changing role of Britain in these early invasion narratives reflects on America's changing self-perception given its emergence as a superpower. Before eventually entering the First World War alongside Britain there was some uncertainty as to whether the United States would intervene on the side of the Germans or even participate at all. The period that was seeing this fiction produced was one of global instability, of failing imperialism such as the Ottoman and Spanish empires – the latter ceding territory to the United States – as well as rising nations such as the Germany and Japan. With the racial composition of the United States changing through the country's fairly liberal approach to immigration, the idea of Anglo-Saxonism – essentially a racial and cultural epithet used to characterise the nation as predominantly white and Christian[26] – became commonplace in invasion narratives as a means of associating Britain and America. American writers using Britain as a

sympathetic invader such as Coverdale see Britain as an aspiration, a father-like nation that the young America would do well to emulate. The absence of Britain's steadying hand, its experience in dominating territory, is missed when America tries to explore itself and its wealth:

> At the close of the Revolution which separated the colonies from England the country was populated with a sparse but homogeneous people, possessing in an eminent degree the sterling virtues and the robust common-sense which characterize the Anglo-Saxon race.[27]

The disturbance of this 'sparse and homogenous people' comes when they use immigration to exploit the vast resources of the nation but are unable to control the numbers and temperament of the new intake. For writers such as Coverdale, the America of this period is undergoing rites of passage. Flirtations with multi-racial immigration and socialism are seen as distractions from the nation's Anglo-Saxon destiny; it takes the humbling of these ideas in the form of invasion by Britain to save the nation from itself.

**The Racial Dimension**

Race is a factor in virtually all early examples of invasion narrative. Even those that are not overtly or deliberately racist make cultural assumptions about ethnic civilisation that lack the nuances of political correctness, which can be an uncomfortable experience for the modern reader. Armies not sharing the 'Anglo-

Saxon' heritage dominating the cultural identity of the United States are frequently debased, compared to something less than human. A notable exception to this is the Blues in *The Last Invasion*. That the Blues are distinctly foreign is communicated by the scout, who 'spoke good enough English, but there was about his words a difference, somehow, that showed that his tongue was used to uttering a different speech'.[28] Other than that, there is no real clue as to where they come from. The Blues are feted for the way they conduct themselves in war, 'These Blues aren't savages. They make war mighty effectively, but no invading army in history has caused less suffering to the people'.[29] Even when captured, Tom – the young protagonist – is able to empathise with the invader:

> Yet somehow it was impossible to hate the Blues. They did not act like a conquering army; they acted like a lot of boys released from school. They shouted and sang, called back and forth to one another, and laughed like so many children, but there was no disorder, no indications of the dreaded "straggling"[30]

The simile of being like boys from school is one of harmless familiarity, completely at odds with the usual strategy of othering used to create the fearsome impression of an invader. Haines does use othering at one point to declare an admiration for their fighting abilities, 'They ain't men; they're devils!'.[31] Other invasion narratives use the term 'devils' to refer to an animalistic lack of sophistication, but this does not apply to the The Blues as their conduct is impeccable.

Equally, the British invasions of *The War of 1886* and *The Fall of the Great Republic* are conducted admirably, yet in these two narratives the demeanour of the British is juxtaposed with that of the influx of immigrants arriving in the United States after the revolution. Coverdale suggests that America is naïvely accepting an undesirable contingent exiled from Europe:

> The vigorous measures which had been taken by all the nations of Europe between 1885 and 1887 to clear their own borders of these revolutionists had been effectual in driving hundreds of thousands of them to America. They brought with them their theories, their fanaticism, their fierce hatred of all orderly society.[32]

The 'revolution' that these immigrants have brought with them is socialism or Communism coupled with aggressive political activism, a discontent with their lack of opportunity. In Reed, there is a socialist uprising of the immigrant poor comprising 'Bohemians, Swabians, Italians, Poles, etc',[33] whereas in Coverdale, this desire to organise and voice discontent spreads to the lower echelons of American society, 'the ranks of the unemployed and dissatisfied there were constantly recruited by immigrants from the most dangerous classes of Europe'.[34] Coming 'from the lowest ranks of a degraded and ignorant peasantry'[35] and still a colonised people at the time of publication, the Irish in Coverdale are singled out as being particularly troublesome:

> They swelled the ranks of workmen without work, and helped reduce by competition and division the already scanty wages of labor. Every one of them

> was a poisonous ferment dropped into the already overstimulated mass of popular discontent and agitation[36]

Though they are criticised for their influence on the other members of the lower classes in American society, the Irish are, paradoxically, 'Clannish by race and religious prejudice' and possessed of 'insular and ethnic narrowness and exclusiveness', occupying 'a class by themselves'.[37] It is their failure to integrate into American society and not their presence in it that Coverdale identifies as the main problem.

The Irish immigrants identified as being dangerous to American national security in *The War of 1886* and *The Fall of the Great Republic* are not invaders themselves or even a front for invasion, perhaps because the idea of an invasion by Ireland would be too preposterous for even the wildest of invasion narratives. John Ames Mitchell's satirical short novel, *The Last American* (1889) is written from the perspective of a Persian archaeological expedition to a ruined New York in 2951. Using the far future setting to obscure details, the narrative hints at Irish power involving Hi-Bernyan rulers, a Murfey dynasty and a Protestant massacre but does not extrapolate this into an invasion. However, these immigrants are blamed for the invasion and are othered like invaders. The usual invader-invaded relationship is displaced to accommodate fears of immigration that cannot be constructed directly as an invasion. Elsewhere, invasion narratives expressing anxieties over immigration of other ethnic groups do so more directly. One of the most recurrent invaders in the early texts was China, whose immigrant labourers arriving in the Western American states in the latter part of the

Nineteenth Century were drawn in Dooner's *The Last Days of the Republic* as a front, a wedge to drive through a large scale invasion when conditions were right.

For Dooner, the scheming of the Chinese is a racial characteristic, the narrative being a paranoid extrapolation of immigration as a conspiracy against the nation. America imports cheap, hard-working, docile Chinese and employs them ahead of the white Americans and other European immigrants who demand higher salaries. Although it is the employers who demand the influx of cheaper labour to curb costs, and the politicians who allow this despite the rising unemployment amongst U. S. nationals, the ire of the narrative is directed against the Chinese, who have only arrived due to greater opportunity and still lived in impoverished conditions. Unprovoked attacks on the immigrants lead to pressure being placed on the government by those who employ the immigrants to arm their employees so they can defend themselves. Their wish is granted, heightening the feeling of militancy amongst those most steadfastly against the Chinese. Tension rises from the increasing integration of the Chinese into America; interracial marriages take place and discriminatory laws are relaxed or abolished. A political group called the Workingmen is formed and, almost immediately, launches a large-scale assault on the Chinese residences. Supported by the government, the Chinese emerge victorious and subsequently strengthen their position in America; the integration grants them the legal authority, whereas the unprovoked attacks grant them the moral authority. Further aggression from the formerly confederate South in South Carolina encourages open hostility from the Chinese and ultimately a race war. Better suited to the wartime conditions than the Americans, the Chinese flourish, conquering the country and virtually exterminating the white dwellers. This, argues Dooner, was the plan of the Chinese all along, each

stage being part of a carefully constructed scheme of world domination with America, rich in natural resources and vulnerable due to its permissive jurisprudence, as a first step.

The conception of *Last Days of the Republic* is to transform the humble immigrant Chinese labourer into a savage invader that will bring the United States to ruin. Initially, the incumbents are given unflattering portraits, the 'oozing ambition' and greed of 'Young America' and 'wonted lethargy'[38] of the Spanish section of the Californian population. Paradoxically, given the organisation of the conspiracy, the 'Coolie' was, by contrast:

> ... so eminently stupid in great things, and so quick and keen in small; so devoted to toil, and so averse to sentiment; so obedient, so cunning, so ignorant, so willing, so unassuming, and so servile.[39]

Their durability proves greater than that of the Americans and European immigrants when social conditions begin to deteriorate. Chinese are able to live with less food and money than the Americans and Europeans, but also able to live in squalor and dirty, uncomfortable clothing. American and Europeans have lived with the advantages that higher wages have enabled; the reduction of these wages implements a social situation of a reduced quality of life that the Americans and European immigrants are unwilling or unable to manage successfully. The docility and dedication of the Chinese proves advantageous, as they are able to adapt to American life easily despite the hostility from the incumbents and the inequity in wages. Only five percent of the Chinese are women, so there is little opportunity for the men for

family life, which is identified by Dooner as a financial advantage to the Chinese, but in terms of social and sexual comfort it may be a disadvantage. Seen as a disadvantage, it shows a mental toughness in the Chinese that helps them integrate into America and manage unfavourable circumstances.

This ability to endure greater hardship without complaint than the Americans and other immigrants is then cast into suspicion. The Chinese invasion becomes the 'Asiatic serpent',[40] whilst the seeking to integrate with the inhabitants is nothing but a 'mask of dissimulation',[41] a false disposition to trick America into susceptibility, a strategy to fool the American masters into perceiving the Chinese as 'willing slaves'.[42] Dooner's narrator posits that the clues to the ultimate intentions of the Chinese were available but missed by the American masters:

> They had not learned to interpret the restless, anxious, observing glances; the interminable endeavor; the avarice, and the bland, significant courtesy, so common to the whole Mongolian race.[43]

Despite the narrator's implied ability to interpret the 'Mongolian' mannerisms, recalling the imperial nation of Genghis Khan, Chinese theology is described as being 'as incomprehensible as his social and political peculiarities'.[44] There is no attempt to understand, excepting that these psychological elements contribute to the domineering ambitions of the Chinese. Whilst the American is incapable of understanding the Chinese mentality, the Chinese is shown to be incapable of understanding the American, particularly in relation to legal jurisprudence. American identity is centred by Dooner on liberty and freedom, the tenets of the newly independent country,

incompatible with the grand designs of imperial subjugation by Dooner as a central principle of the Chinese. The honesty and bravery of the white militia in the face of 'overwhelming numbers' and 'consummate skill'[45] is lauded by the text, which instead blames the leaders of its country for its failings. There are numerous divisions within the American ranks that undermine the unity needed to thwart the Chinese, 'whose patriotism is so intense that he is not satisfied to rest even in death unless his bones are deposited in the hallowed soil of his mother country'.[46] A very early American invasion narrative, *Last Days of the Republic* is more pessimistic here about the virtues of American individualism in describing its failings against a more unified Chinese, a narrative strategy which is which is reversed in subsequent narratives.

Part of the plan for world domination in Dooner is that the peaceful disposition of the Chinese is an elaborate pretence, a front for violent ambition. The narrative suggests that China 'early became aware that a conquest inaugurated by the exercise of peaceful negotiations could, alone, promise complete success', and 'built up her civilization and maintained her autonomy by the undeviating pursuit of peace'.[47] It is the American locals that initiate the violence, forming protest groups such as the Workingmen who attack the Chinese settlements. Yet it is the Chinese in Dooner whose acts of violence, though provoked, are met with moral opprobrium. Whereas the British in Reed, Coverdale and Barnes are proportionate in their approach to war, Dooner's Chinese 'indulged in a most cruel and savage rapacity, by the indiscriminate slaughter of the white inhabitants of whatsoever age or sex'.[48] Early invasion novels tend to treat the inability to fight war in a civilised fashion as a racial marker yet, ironically, propose that the way forward for the white population of the United States is genocide despite decrying it as barbaric in other races. King Wallace's absurd *The*

*Next War: A Prediction* (1892) imagines America besieged by a thirty million-strong amalgam of black and mixed-raced invaders, who are chased away to the southern mountains and left to die. William Ward Crane's *The Year 1899* (1893) envisages an anti-white, anti-Christian global conspiracy, 'a common frenzy of hatred against the sign of the cross' that indulges in the massacre of whites as 'the usual way'.[49] As invaders, they are fearsome, 'Their natural habits, their slight value of human life, and their wild religious enthusiasm made them soldiers who could hardly be excelled'.[50] In Crane, this ferocity is more a source of dehumanisation than an admiration for their martial capabilities, a way of preparing the reader for their extermination.

Other 'yellow peril' invasion narratives explore different anxieties concomitant in their texts with the racial angle. Lorelle's *The Battle of the Wabash* expresses concern over the political implications of Chinese immigration. The narrative describes a steady increase of Chinese over the Twentieth Century from one and a half million at the beginning to ninety million by the year 2000 radically alters the electoral roll. The Chinese influx slowly assimilates the other races, 'obliterating the race barriers, and drawing the whites more toward us'.[51] Crane's invaders are presented in numerous metaphors of inhumanity. The Chinese are observed 'showing their teeth like rats'[52] and treated 'everywhere like noxious reptiles'[53], after their invasion fails, killed wherever they are found. The black proportion of the invading army are captured 'in droves, like runaway cattle'.[54] The sense that the invading armies are a depersonalised, homogenous mass is elicited by their coming as 'great human floods'.[55] Crane refers frequently to the squalor of the living conditions of the invading races and suggests cleanliness as a means of preventing invasion, 'by great care and through sanitary precautions, England, Sweden, and Norway escaped the

plague, which freed them from the danger of invasion'[56], a clear association of all non-white races with disease. This is unintentionally ironic, given the smallpox epidemics imported to America from Europe by white immigrants that contributed to a massive reduction in the indigenous population by the nineteenth century.

Inconsistent in its own dubious logic regarding a racial hierarchy, *The Year 1899* makes exceptions for the Japanese, Koreans and the Cherokee Indians, suggesting there are cultural elements contributing to these fantasies of annihilation that mitigate the geographical differences. Crane constructs the Japanese, Koreans and Cherokees as aspiring to Anglo-Saxon standards. Invited to join the conspiracy of invaders, the Cherokee head-chief Colonel Mays declines, replying, 'we are Americans... and we have no sympathy for even the *open* enemies of our country'.[57] Though neighbouring and ethnically closer to China than the West, perceptions of the Japanese in Western anti-Chinese fiction are more favourable than that of the Chinese. Dooner sees Japan flatteringly as the Eastern equivalent of Britain where Jack London considers Japan as a prototypical Western nation, differentiating crudely between 'yellow' and 'brown'. London's fear of Japan resides only in that it may 'awaken' China:

> The menace to the Western world lies, not in the little brown man, but in the four hundred millions of yellow men should the little brown man undertake their management.[58]

The permutations of this fear are explored in 'The Unparalleled Invasion' (1914), where the Chinese provide a global invasion threat via a concerted population expansion. This advance is halted when American scientist Jacobus Laningdale,

whose name suggests an author self-reference, conceives of a final solution for the Chinese before they reach America: extermination by germ warfare. Though not representing an invasion of America, 'The Unparalleled Invasion' spells out what writers of invasion narratives such as Crane and Dooner suggest by presenting China chiefly as an unassimilable obstacle to Western hegemony that can only be destroyed because it cannot be controlled. Less discerning in its racism than other narratives, Marsdon Manson's *The Yellow Peril in Action* sees an invasion force that represents all of Asia, uniting Japan and China by allying Japanese technological innovation with Chinese manpower.

**Presentations of Invasion**

Invasion is an aggressive process and as such, invasion narratives specialise in causing the reader intellectual discomfort; they are designed to disturb the reader's sensibilities so even narratives that pander to prejudices inflict horrors on those in the texts representing the reader's interests. Encouraged by most texts to identify with the home nation against the invader, the narratives unsettle the reader through relations common to all narratives: the alien nature of the invaders to the incumbents of the targeted territory, established by place of origin, appearance and ideology; the unified purpose of the invaders in comparison to those they target; the terrible consequence of invasion on the incumbents of the targeted territory given the calm at the beginning of the narrative's events; the negative reassessment of the particular preoccupations of contemporary life that left the targeted territory vulnerable in view of the consequence of invasion extrapolated by the narrative. Narratives emphasise certain relations above

others depending on their interests; *The Battle of Dorking*, for example, expresses how the frivolousness of the pursuits of contemporary life at the expense of failing to prepare for an invasion invites preventable catastrophe. The consequence for the British Empire of its underdeveloped defences in *The Battle of Dorking* is a humiliating defeat; America's failings in 'The Stricken Nation' lead to the total devastation of the country and its social order:

> Reddened by the glare of flames from hundreds of its buildings; its streets drenched with the blood of thousands of its people slain; a mob of 10,000 of the scum of its population, delirious with drink and despair, pillaging the palaces of its millionaires and committing the most fiendish outrages upon the weak and helpless; its splendid architectural monuments, churches, hotels, schools, crumbling to ruin beneath the terrible missiles which were falling with unerring aim and titanic force.[59]

The visceral images of ruin provided by 'The Stricken Nation' illustrate the use of shock in representing invasion, exaggerating the intensity of what is being described. Donnelly's *cause célèbre* that inspires such a graphic scene of American devastation is a political debate on budget expenditure. Including hotels, churches and schools in the destruction, Donnelly goes beyond merely exploiting the spectacle, suggesting the invasion as an attack on the nation's infrastructure.

Taking their form from political debate and the puritan jeremiad rather than fiction, early American invasion narratives early American examples of the fiction are written similarly as future histories, presenting the events of the text as if they have already

happened. The conceit of these narratives is their presentation as reported fact; despite being hypothetical, often paranoid evaluations of contemporary culture the moral conclusions appear authoritative because they are constructed as the wisdom of hindsight. Labelled 'preparedness tracts'[60] by H. Bruce Franklin, the narratives announce the doom that has in the fiction, already befell the nation then tell the tale of how it came about and how America was not ready for it. The lack of preparedness is reiterated throughout these narratives. Most give examples of American military failings and interpret these accordingly; Benjamin tells of how 'The American flag ship had been sunk by a fourth-rate European ironclad--the first practical proof of the miserably short-sighted policy of a nation of fifty millions of inhabitants'.[61] More directly, *The Unpardonable War* simply chants, 'we're not prepared, we're not prepared!'[62]

Reiteration of purpose in future history invasion narratives is matched by an insistence on the accuracy of what is being conveyed. In *The Last Days of the Republic*, Dooner claims 'that I am not responsible for the result any more than I should be for the product of the multiplication of two given numbers'.[63] Dooner compares the exactness of a mathematical equation to 'the data of thirty years of observation and experiment... taken and submitted to a deductive examination', assuming that his is an objective and infallible position, uncorrupted by 'the hopes, the fears, the experience, the passions and prejudice of men'[64] that he perceives in those he portrays. Other narratives such as Robert Woltor's *A Short and Truthful History of the Taking of California and Oregon by the Chinese in the Year A. D. 1889* and J.W. Muller's *The Invasion of America: A Fact Story Based on the Inexorable Mathematics of War* insist on their exactitude in their titles. Some authors of invasion

narratives preface their work with a few explanatory paragraphs or even an essay that outlines all the arguments made in the extrapolation. Serving as a mediated version of the narrative, their purpose is to provide further justification for its premise, validating the fiction of the extrapolation by demonstrating the non-fictional rationality upon which it is based. Cleveland Moffett's *The Conquest of America* is prefaced with an explanatory essay demonstrating how the people of the United States are 'totally unprepared to defend ourselves against a first-class foreign power'.[65] Coverdale supplements *The Fall of the Great Republic* with twelve appendices of extracts from pamphlets and newspapers concerning Irish and socialist sedition. It could be said that these appendices devalue the extrapolations they precede by their existence because they imply that the strength of the argument articulated by the narrative is insufficient for the narrative to stand independently. When the narrative follows an essay as in *The Conquest of America* the extrapolation seems partly redundant, since as the arguments that determine the plot of the narrative are discussed in detail before the narrative begins or after it finishes.

Pictures and illustrations of events in narratives were invariably set alongside the texts in magazine fiction of the period. Although not always adjacent to the passages of text they depict, illustrations were included as part of the fiction in order to help the reader visualise proceedings. Often from political and military backgrounds, many authors of future war fiction did not have any literary pedigree, so illustrations were useful in cementing the ideas of invasion and scenic destruction in the imagination of the reader, especially where the descriptive ability of the author may have been insufficient to affect the reader in this way. Using photographs rather than illustrations, Muller's *The Invasion of America* portrays the realism of the

extrapolation visually. However, the text is an extrapolation, not a history, meaning that the photographs used are removed from the context from which they were shot and transposed into Muller's projection, which belies the authority Muller claims in the use of his subtitle. Furthermore, some of the photographs are altered to fit in with the text: aeroplanes are added to pictures entitled 'For miles beyond that the enemy's patrols had occupied points... ' (p. 92) and 'They flew over the tall municipal buildings of New York' (p. 100). Proclaiming his narrative as a certainty, Muller's words are at odds with the visual manipulation of the photographs, creating a tension between the argument of the narrative and the way it is presented because they do not always fit the narrative.

Much like the zealous insistence on the accuracy of arguments, the altering of the photographs is counter-productive in terms of the provision of their validity, belying an unconscious acknowledgement that the cases made by these narratives are insufficient of themselves. In *The Conquest of America*, Moffett veers toward alternative justifications for his desire to militarise the United States should the invasion threat preoccupying his narrative fail to materialise:

> Who can say how much of Germany's greatness in business and commerce, in the arts and sciences, is due to the fact that all her men, through military schooling, have learned precious lessons in self-control and obedience?[66]

Moffett here attempts to deflect criticism of his narrative as indulging over-precaution by briefly championing the indirect benefits of militarisation. Other authors of invasion, conscious of how their warnings of imminent invasion could be perceived as

alarmism, prejudge possible critical reception by showing – in future history – how the 'alarmist' was proven right. The conspiracy hatched in William Ward Crane's *The Year 1899* is discovered by Stanhope, a refugee American writer over in China, who is dismissed as 'a rabid crank'[67] when he returns to the United States to warn of the coming danger. Fears of the coming invasion are rejected in 'The Stricken Nation', 'the dangers were only delusions existing in the brains of alarmists'.[68] By presenting their warnings in this way, the authors of invasion narratives reinforce the idea that their arguments are apart from a consensus and not of the mainstream. Donnelly vaingloriously – and ultimately inaccurately – wrote 'The Stricken Nation' under the pseudonym 'Stochastic', suggesting a narrative self-perception of the argument as visionary.

An historic disadvantage to the perception of the authors as oracular and accurate is the repeated failure of their prophesies of invasion to materialise, although the purpose of the narratives was to extrapolate events that might happen in order to spur the reader into taking what action they could to prevent the prophesy from being realised. As time passed, the insistence of the narratives of the imminence of invasion was undermined by its absence, leading eventually to a change in the way narratives were constructed. That this would happen was, in retrospect, inevitable given that even in the early examples of invasion fiction there is a wide variation on how the authors use invasion itself as they experiment with the presentation and try to establish theirs as the singular threat to the United States. The point in the narratives where the invasions occur begins to vary depending on the nature of the threat described. Narratives of unpreparedness fashioned after *The Battle of Dorking* such as 'The Stricken Nation' build up to the invasion by first showing the complacency of

the targeted nation in being secured from any invasion threat, then following with the invasion to shatter this prevailing mood. The invasion is usually the focal point of the text but not always; in *The Fall of the Great Republic* the invasion seems almost an afterthought, occurring at the very end of the text after long passages accounting the Fenian/Socialist revolution. Where there is no evident political agenda in the narrative, as in Haines' *The Last Invasion*, events prior to the invasion are not significant, so Haines is able to begin the text in the midst of it.

Distinct from *The Battle of Dorking*-styled future histories and classed as youth fiction, *The Last Invasion* does not feature real-life politicians or figures of national importance, marking the trend in invasion fiction away from verisimilitude and toward more fantastic fiction. Narratives after the turn of the nineteenth century start to concentrate more on character and plot development, representing national debates and agendas through individuals instead of generalised national blocs. *All For His Country* has a cast of heroes and villains. Meade Stillman, his genius inventor father and his amour Bernice save America from the Japanese invaders by embodying the dynamic individualism quintessential to American success in the narrative, whilst father and son J. C. and Colonel Gotz are figureheads of corporate and political corruption stifling American invention and security, framing Meade's father and preventing production of the invention that ultimately defeats the Japanese. Haines' hero is Tom Blakesley, an adolescent boy far removed from the figures such as Edison that were protagonists in other invasion narratives. Cast in the form of a third person narrative, *The Last Invasion* concerns the plight of an average family in the midst of invasion rather than the attempts of national luminaries to save the United States from disaster. Tom is shown to be as much a part of the nation as protagonists

from other texts, 'Often before in his life he had felt some slight stirrings of that queer feeling which is called patriotism, but never before had he realized how powerful an impulse it was',[69] but unlike other figures is powerless to influence the outcome of the invasion. His position has much more affinity with that of the likely readership of these invasion narratives than the standard preparedness tract and is much closer to the everyman heroes of pulp science fiction than the earliest examples of the fiction.

**Examination of Invaded Territory**

Those subject to invasion are the primary concern of invasion narratives, more important than the invaders. The role of the invader in any invasion narrative is reflective; invasion is essentially a narative device to highlight perceived failings of the society subject to it. This is done via the mirroring technique of comparing the incumbents of the invaded territory unfavourably with the invaders who display some form of superiority, be it physical, intellectual, scientific, tactical, ideological or political. Whether successful in bringing ruin to the society or being a near miss that provides a potent warning, the result of the invasion represents a judgement applied by the author on the targeted territory as it is at the time of writing, a litmus test. In this way, invasion narratives make up a paranoid state-of-the-nation literature, an indirect expression of the all the underlying political and societal faults the text identifies through an invasion that succeeds by exploiting these hidden flaws. The judgement is invariably negative because for invasion to occur, there must be pre-existing weaknesses in the defence that allows the invader to breach it, although the degree of negativity varies in each narrative, depending on the narrative's agenda.

Early invasion narratives use historical events and legislation to anchor the extrapolations in fact, but the causes of weakness that make invasion such a threat are often only associated with these events and laws. In some examples of the literature, the events and laws – historical fact – are by-products of abstract political and social problems in the narratives; the extrapolation bestows authority on itself by suggesting that it arises from the same circumstances as the factual elements it contains and contextualises within itself. Thus, Britain's lack of a home guard in *The Battle of Dorking* is the fault of Britain's democratisation; Chinese encroachment in *Last Days of the Republic* is enabled by permissive jurisprudence and 'oozing ambition' of 'Young America'[70]; European invasion is facilitated in *Fall of the Great Republic* by the socialism of the American government; the German attack is facilitated in *The Conquest of America* because the American government were ignoring the role war plays in a country's evolution. A source of susceptibility to invasion common in all these narratives is the complacency of the prevailing government or embedded in the social psychology. Governments fail to prepare for invasion thinking their nation beyond danger; a mindset pertinent in American invasion narratives because of the way the country had defined itself against war and imperialism. Societies proceed regardless of the threat; in *The War of 1886* the danger is encouraged by 'a jingo administration' elected as a result of a 'campaign cry for a vigorous foreign policy'[71] that is not supported by a military force capable of withstanding the attacks that such a bellicose approach to diplomacy may invite.

Contemporary America is thus characterised by Reed as being politically naïve, insolent and insubstantial, invoking the Monroe Doctrine but being incapable of

enforcing it. The path of the nation in being boisterous but blustering, 'we had provoked war, and made our nation a general nuisance, yet we had made no preparation for war'[72] is toward downfall. Benjamin and Barnes observe similar traits in their representations of the United States. There is surprise in *The End of New York* that the diplomatic incident resulting in the invasion of America is the fault of Spain:

> ... the result of the dispute was a surprise to the world; especially as the overt act of rupture had come from Spain, and not from the United States, as had so frequently hitherto seemed probable.[73]

The global expectation in *The End of New York* is that America's international disposition in relation to the Monroe Doctrine was agitating other countries. Though making the nation an irritant internationally, the aggressive stance is contrived by the majority of early invasion narratives as being popular with the electorate. In Barnes, there is a patriotic fervour amongst the people in the country, 'rampant, but alas! without dignity or direction',[74] which causes problems when transferred to the international stage. Like Reed and Coverdale, Barnes cites the national press as being instrumental in causing consternation. Whalen, the newspaper editor in *The Unpardonable War*, is a sociopathic, Machiavellian figure who had no ties to and 'doesn't care'[75] for America but writes editorials to exploit popular nationalistic feeling and engender cries for war amongst the electorate. Proclaiming 'we know our dishonesty. We revel in it',[76] Whalen is shown to have an unhealthy influence over American national destiny. His ability to manipulate popular opinion without having the national interest at heart reflects poorly in *The Unpardonable War* on the American people. The war's popularity is unfortunate, being 'too popular to be

serious'.[77] Benjamin is equally condescending of the popular attitude to war; the evacuation of New York is hindered by 'the singular apathy--it was not fearlessness--of the people themselves. In the great tenement districts, it became necessary to send soldiers into the houses to drive people out of them'.[78] In other narratives, this apathy in facing possible threats is rooted in arrogance; in *The Battle of the Wabash* the Americans – 'Melicans' – do not fear the numbers of incoming Chinese because of 'the almost incredulous egotism of those people, who popularly believed that one Melican was a match for ten 'heathens' in any affair of personal daring'[79]

Portrayals of the general population in the United States as blithely ignorant of the consequences of war in *The End of New York* and *The Unpardonable War* reflect a narrative mistrust of the ability of the American people to govern themselves, a suspicion of the democratic process. The characterisations of America as lacking seriousness, its diplomacy not having the gravitas of more established nations is perhaps a vestige of aristocratic genuflection, particularly when – as in Reed, Coverdale and Barnes – it is the old colonial master Britain that invades and forces the United States to reassess its approach. Needing 'large doses of common-sense',[80] America's lack of seriousness when faced with invasion is equated by these authors to a lack of seriousness in politics, demonstrated in the narratives by the election in Barnes, Reed and Coverdale of socialist governments. In Coverdale, even the most admirable socialists 'were simply theorists who could not comprehend why their lofty ideals were in any way impracticable'. Others were 'fanatics', 'maniacs' and dishonest men seeking 'self-aggrandizement and self-enrichment'; together they 'worked harmoniously… in the common direction of social anarchy'.[81] Invasion becomes, in these narratives, a lesson in humility for America, an opportunity to

become less shrill and to embrace a wiser, more expedient politics. The invasion of *The War of 1886* leads eventually to beneficial change:

> The American man became sober-minded, less self-assertive, less given to brag, less subject to the leading of political demagogues, less bellicose. After a period of terrible depression, the country entered upon a rising course of prosperity[82]

Invasion in these narratives is a harsh, but necessary lesson for America in international diplomacy and statesmanship, a means of shattering idealistic illusions. It is a rite of passage for a young country that results in a more mature, successful nation. The main exception to this is 'The Stricken Nation', where it is the absence of 'patriotic statesmanship' in failing to fortify the border defences that brings about the 'dreadful calamity'[83] of invasion.

Though determining America to be politically naïve as a nation, early invasion narratives invariably allude to corruption in the nation's internal politics as being the chief reason for its susceptibility to invasion, a lack of moral leadership at the centre of the political process that weakens the national security. Politicians in *The Fall of the Great Republic* are 'embezzlers',[84] diverting money away from essential causes to enrich themselves. Dooner devotes a chapter of *Last Days of the Republic* to the workings of the American political system, concluding that party expediency was:

> … the tendency of the classes and factions – political, social and civil – while the State was menaced by dangers that only concert of purpose

> and of action, throughout every element of the people, could hope to avert.[85]

Though the parties lobbied for public support, this lobbying is hinted by the narrative to be disingenuous, as the system allowed 'provoking or repelling reprisals, slandering, falsifying, corrupting and debauching' and prevented the parties from having 'the leisure to devote to such matters as might determine the welfare of the whole people'.[86] *All for His Country* addresses business lobbying and political corruption where America's superweapon is held back by the moneyed interest of the Gotz family, who had become wealthy through the manufacture of arms and munitions; a source of income that would be made obsolete by the introduction of the invention. Financial corruption runs rife in *The Fall of the Great Republic*, where 'It came to be a common saying that it was safer to rob a bank of a million dollars than to steal five dollars from a merchant's till to buy food for a starving wife or child.'[87] Though suspicious of socialism, there is a suggestion in the narratives that the ruling classes are serving the working classes inadequately and unfairly. It is employer demand for cheaper labour in *Last Days of the Republic* that brings the Chinese into America in such large numbers, as China has a large source of available labour that would undercut the wage demands of the American. Dooner does not differentiate between employers that sympathise with the plight of the expensive American labourer and those that do not; the narrative affiliates itself with the plight of the American worker but also excuses the employers for being corrupt, reasoning that a man 'should not be condemned for the innate baseness of his nature' because he 'was in no sense a party to its original constitution'.[88] Indeed, the moneyed classes of America 'were not worse than their European prototypes'.[89]

*Last Days of the Republic* is unique among early invasion narratives here for its wearied acceptance of a cause of invasion that it has identified, directing its anger and frustration at the Chinese labourers instead of the corrupt employers that brought them into America. This is of stark contrast to the narrative condemnation meted out to the Fenians and socialists in Barnes, Reed and Coverdale for making America susceptible to an invasion by the British. Where the culpability of the rich for making the nation vulnerable to invasion is displaced on to the Chinese in Dooner, Donnelly accepts their disinterest in preserving the nation as instinctive self-preservation, 'naturally, the well-to-do were the first to fly', before indulging in lengthy descriptions of how 'the most desperate and vicious of the population'[90] remained to bring the nation to ruin. Though Congress is frequently identified by invasion narratives as engaging in conduct that leads to invasion, the same criticisms are not made of Presidents. Usually absolved from wrongdoing, Presidents in early invasion narratives are ineffectual figures, either agreeing with the real heroes or being an anonymous part of an administration that causes the country to fall. In *All For His Country*, Bernice is able to request an audience with the President and effectively tells him what to do. One of the few female figures in early invasion fiction, Bernice is used to represent all American women. Invasion fiction as a whole is predominantly a male-dominated body of literature and glimpses of women are even more fleeting in the early examples. Women are usually the unseen victims of rape, as in *Last Days of the Republic* or 'The Stricken Nation', or referred to obliquely during discussions of racial destiny. *All For His Country* also provides the Gotz family as an exception to the practice in invasion fiction of excusing of the undemocratic rich from their part in enabling invasion, but then the protagonists of Giesy's novel are all from the elite

classes. Meade is considered wild and unsophisticated because he grew up in Utah, but is the son of a professor who grew up with the national and political luminaries leading the nation at the time of the invasion.

Class divisions and the bourgeois inflections of the narratives become apparent as the invasion progresses. Society disintegrates as the rich flee and the poor plunder. The term 'dangerous classes' is used by both Donnelly and Reed, associating the working poor with criminals by the term's lack of specificity whereas Coverdale's aforementioned classification of socialists as working to bring about 'social anarchy' makes the link explicitly. Donnelly links the disintegration of the landscape with that of society; the destruction of the buildings mirrors that of community and the rule of law. Yet the English invasion acts only as a catalyst for the collapse of the country. It is the mob, not invading armies, that perpetuates the carnage, terrorising the attack's survivors and sacking the remaining buildings. In linking the chaos caused by the bombing directly to that caused by the mob with the assertion that 'the wretches aided the enemy in wantonly applying the torch to the finest residences in New York',[91] Donnelly associates the mob with the invasion rather than internal divisions, distancing them and what they represent from his idea of America and American people. He insists that 'the voice of the people was hushed to a whisper, as universal sadness and despondency prevailed among all classes of society'[92] despite describing evidence to the contrary. The 'frightful excesses' of the 'dangerous classes'[93] committed against the crumbling society are particularly notable because of how Donnelly repeatedly emphasises the unity of the American people, referring twice to their 'splendid unanimity'[94]. Members of the mob begin to prey on their compatriots not after the country is destroyed but as 'the danger became more imminent'.[95] That

people were not patient or faithful enough to see whether America could recover or retaliate is incompatible with the degree of unity Donnelly maintains in his Americans. Without the influence of the flown rich, America is at the mercy of 'wretches', acting 'drunken with fury and the feeling of absolute license'.[96] Where previously they had been part of the 'splendid unanimity' of the American people, these wretches are now othered as barely human, shooting men 'trying to defend their dear ones'[97] and attacking women and children.

Political and social complacency in the targeted territory allows the author to emphasise the urgency in the message of the narrative, suggesting that those with the responsibility to ensure that disasters like invasion are prevented from happening are not heeding the warnings or regarding them seriously. Invasion is a violent interrogation of the political or social conditions the narrative construes as disadvantageous; complacency is met with dynamism, peace is confronted by war. The disparity between the pre-existing state of the nation and its state when invaded suggests that the two are irreconcilable, impressing upon the reader that if the society does not change by its own accord then the changes will be forced upon it. This assertion implicit in the text makes the agenda of invasion narratives ambiguous. By demanding political or societal change the goal of an invasion narrative is similar to that of the invader it depicts. Read this way, invasion narratives can be interpreted as a displacing of national anxiety and frustrations, where loosely associated resentments are exorcised in the extrapolation, purifying the society through its annihilation. The outstanding example of the self-destructive subtext in an invasion narrative materialising into a self-fulfilling prophecy is *The Valor of Ignorance* (1909) by General Homer Lea. Lea's strategic analysis of America's defensive failings was

considered so accurate that it was made required reading in Japanese military academies; Franklin describes it as a 'detailed how-to-do-it plan for the conquest of America' and posits that it 'may have helped convince Japan's military leaders that if they did attack, victory would be certain'.[98] Whilst the anxiety over and frustration with the targeted sphere are created as the causes of its fall, the desire to purge the society is displaced into a terrible invader. This displacement disguises the ambivalence of the narrative to the survival of the society. To validate itself, the narrative *requires* the society's destruction.

**Topography**

As with plotting the trajectory of the invasion on arriving in the targeted territory, early American invasion narratives dispense with verisimilitude in determining a likely point of landing more quickly than European literature, partly because of America's lack of experience of invasion and the distance of the most likely invaders but also because of the greater cultural importance of commerce, technology and individualism. Instead, American writers use the unlikelihood of invasion to emphasise the threat posed by the invader and the lack of preparedness of the United States to meet it:

> We had fondly supposed that in case of a war with Great Britain, Canada, open to the great volunteer army which we could call out, would be her exposed spot. We had not thought that through Canada was a way to reach our lake cities.[99]

*The War of 1886* is a rare example of an invasion arriving from Canada. Logically determined, foreign invaders arrive at the point of the country nearest to them: Europeans on the East Coast, Asians on the West and Mexicans from the South. Landing points are attributed historic rather then tactical significance. For example, Dooner is able to revisit recent history by setting *The Last Days of the Republic* in California, whereas Long Island in *The Invasion of America* is described as being, 'Unimportant to the world, but famous in American history and legend',[100] maintaining the theme of invasion as a tool to highlight elements of the society represented by the invaded territory rather than an accurate extrapolation of a present danger. Later narratives involving conspiracies begin to develop the idea, with the invasion taking place on more than one frontier. In *The Year 1899*, the United States is attacked from the Gulf states by the West Indian and the West Coast by Asiatic forces, whereas in *All For His Country*, a diversionary attack is made by Mexican forces across the southern border to draw military attention away from the Japanese advance on California.

Invasions of the East Coast are usually mounted by the established European powers, most typically Great Britain or Germany, subduing the United States by destroying the financial centres, the source of the nation's pride. New York's bounty of landmarks is a frequent target. Park Benjamin's short story 'The End of New York' (1881) sees the city blasted to ruins by a Spanish fleet of ironclads, 'the Western Union building was shattered from cellar to roof; the City Hall was on fire; so also was St. Paul's Church and the Herald building'.[101] The destruction of New York in 'The Stricken Nation' is almost identical, the English guns bombard New York 'at

every point from Canal Street down to the Battery. St. Paul's Church, the Astor House, and the City Hall... then the great newspaper offices on Park Row'.[102] Samuel Barton's *The Battle of the Swash and the Capture of Canada* (1888) leaves it in a similar state, symbolised by the Brooklyn Bridge collapsing into the river below. Imbued physically and visually in the buildings, America's peaceful, commercialist national identity is razed when they fall; the assailing symbolises imperialism's indictment of America's insular pacifism just as the burning of the White House in the War of 1812 represented British disapproval at America's severance from the Commonwealth.

Being motivated at last partly by racial anxieties, invasions of the West Coast tend to involve less destruction, centring on the appropriation of key locations by the invariably Asian forces. Most, like *Last Days of the Republic*, begin the invasion with the Chinese immigrants, whose settlements act as the base for a fifth column preparing the way for a concerted effort arriving from China. The most extreme example of this is the century-long invasion plan from *The Battle of the Wabash*, starting in the west and expanding, 'Years rolled by, and our people kept coming until they filled up this coast and passed beyond the mountains, then barren wilds, and poured into the cotton and rice-fields of the South.'[103]

The Chinese acquire positions of authority as they progress, beginning with the Mayoralty of San Francsisco, then various offices through the South and the Pacific Coast. The importance of the positions gained by the Chinese escalates, with a major political breakthrough is heralded by the appointment of a Chinese Governor of California in 1940. Eventually the Presidency is won, with the Chinese moving the

seat of government to St Louis. A less protracted invasion plot is hatched on the West Coast by the Allied Asiatics in *The Yellow Peril in Action.* Manson's invaders prepare their attack by first making the strategic gains of the Philippines and the Hawaiian Islands which cuts off commercial route from Pacific Ocean. The focal point of the invasion of the mainland is the 'superb base at Pearl Harbor',[104] from where the Commander-in-Chief directs the offensive.

That there are divergent preoccupations of the narratives which determine the identity of the invader and the location of the invasion mean that the success of an invader in conquering the place that serves as the immediate landing point of the invasion is often enough to make the rest of the country fall with it. The destruction of New York in 'The Stricken Nation', for example, is enough to humiliate America into defeat. An aspect not often considered when determining the feasibility of the invasion is the size of the United States. Usually going further into the country increases the likelihood of success, but in Donal Hamilton Haines' *The Last Invasion* (1914), the opposite is true. Haines realises the tactical advantage for the invaded side in knowing their own territory more intimately than the invading force and the difficulty for the invaders in becoming more remote as they progress through the nation. Compared to Napoleon's army retreating from Moscow, the Americans make tactical retreats to cut off the supply lines of the Blues, eventually surrounding them:

> They did not know that for those two days the entire civilized world stood fairly thunderstruck at the spectacle of a conquering army absolutely lost in the midst of an invaded country... It was apparent that the Blue invasion had

> failed hopelessly, and that to persist in the war could mean only the complete destruction of the splendid force.[105]

A similar fate befalls the German invaders of H. Irving Hancock's four book series, *The Invasion of the United States*, comprising *The Invasion of the United States or, Uncle Sam's Boys at the Capture of Boston* (1916); *In the Battle for New York; or, Uncle Sam's Boys in the Desperate Struggle for the Metropolis* (1916); *At the Defense of Pittsburgh; or, The Struggle to Save America's 'Fighting Steel' Supply* (1916); and *Making the Last Stand for Old Glory; or, Uncle Sam's Boys in the Last Frantic Drive* (1916). Despite having superior weaponry and a more experienced army, the Germany invasion is met by American retreat, causing the invading army to overstretch; the country itself becomes its own defence against invasion, being too vast to invade.

**Mechanisation**

Due the effects of the industrial revolution of a century before, war in the twentieth century evolved drastically from its barely mechanised state in the nineteenth. Coupled with fear of foreign intentions, the capacity for mass production sparked a shipbuilding race between Britain and Germany towards the end of the nineteenth century; the anxiety over naval strength reached America and inspired writers such as Donnelly and Moffett to call for America to do the same. Yet as H. Bruce Franklin points out, the characteristics of the American imagination differed from those forged by the European experience of war:

> … unlike the typical British and Continental fiction, in which the leading industrial nations raced neck and neck to apply existing technology to new weapons of war, American writers often conjured up some leap in weapons technology that would suddenly transform the entire history of the world[106]

American writers compensate for the nation's absence of invasion history by using invasion as an opportunity to demonstrate its inventiveness. Franklin suggests that although they overestimate the impact science and technology would have on the morality of waging war, American writers at the turn of the nineteenth century understood the importance to future wars of applying scientific innovation to weapons and vehicles better than the majority of European writers. The trend in the fiction in the run-up to America's entry into the First World War is for narratives that declare the impossibility of invading America successfully. The significance for invasion narratives of this thematic development is the necessity to evolve beyond verisimilitudinous portrayals of the invasion of the nation by foreign armies toward the more fantastic ideas of invasion explored by *The War of the Worlds.* Scientific and technological developments did not herald the end of war, but helped bring about the decline in popularity of the future war style invasion narrative.

The key contribution of American writers to invasion fiction is the shift in technological innovation from the invaded to the invader. Whereas the European fiction progressing from *The Battle of Dorking* places the advanced technology in the hands of the invader, as a method to enable invasion, American writers come to reassign the ingenuity to those invaded, using science as a defence against invasion.

Initially, American writers followed the European lead. As advances in industrial techniques made it easier for nations to produce weapons, advances in science and technology helped the nations invent more powerful weapons, able to inflict mass destruction instantaneously. The invasions in the respective narratives of Benjamin and Donnelly are facilitated by the ability to attack at a remote distance. In *The End of New York* it is the Spanish ironclad El Cid that is able to wreak devastation on the city, whereas in *The Stricken Nation*, the superior technology is the English guns that are able to elevate to reach New York's landmarks. Both Benjamin and Donnelly realise the strategic advantage of avoiding direct confrontation; the long-range attacks help the Spanish and English invaders avoid the necessity of sending troops into America to conquer it. These authors anticipate Wells and future wars – particularly the shelling in World War I – more vividly than Chesney in relation to the correlation between advancement in technology and increased destructive power.

Common to all American invasion narratives is the lack of confidence in the existing coastal fortification to resist the power of the new weapons being developed by foreign powers. Donnelly claims that America's 'coastline of 4,000 miles was undefended at any point by a single fortification capable of successfully resisting attacks by modern warships carrying guns of the heaviest calibre'[107]. Elsewhere, Benjamin's Spanish ironclads are able to penetrate the American naval fleet without difficulty and Coverdale's forts at the entrances of the Atlantic harbours were, 'practically of no offensive or defensive value whatever. They could neither withstand the shot of modern guns nor reply with missiles likely to injure in the slightest degree the sides of modem armored vessels.'[108] The worst fortifications are exhibited in John Ulrich Giesy's *All For His Country*, where the Japanese invaders are able to turn the

West Coast guns against the Americans. In the most pessimistic narratives, once America's defences are breached, the destruction wrought by the weapons unleashes the nation upon itself; the social order collapses as the façade of American military might is obliterated. Later narratives use the failure of these defences to symbolise the collapse of the old methods of security and point towards the need for a new approach to war that incorporates America's innovative potential.

Invention becomes a way of representing America as a burgeoning superpower with revolutionary potential, employing technology in a novel way: to repel and not enable invasion. A particularly American feature is the role of the individual in conceiving and implementing the technology. In *War Stars*, Franklin stresses the influence of two iconic individuals, Robert Fulton and Thomas Edison, on the belief that newer, more powerful weapons needed to be developed because the ultimate weapon could end war. To Franklin, Fulton's importance was not in what he invented but what he inaugurated:

> ...the fusion of the ideology of emerging industrial capitalism, marked by its faith in mechanistic, teleological progress, with the 'improvement' of weapons as the means to achieve the goals of this ideology (*War Stars*, p. 18).

Fulton's vision of fusing industrial capitalism with weapons development is reflected in invasion narratives in the early Twentieth century as bringing about a significant change in the way war is conducted. This revelation for Barnes in *The Unpardonable War* is that invasion is no longer 'a military affair; it's commercially scientific – a sort of civilian manager business'.[109] While Fulton may have inaugurated the ideology,

Edison is shown by Franklin to establish it in the American imagination through his celebrity rather than his achievements; 'it was the great inventor's *cultural* prominence that helped sell novel weaponry'.[110] When this prominence manifests in the invasion fiction of the period, it is initially through scepticism over its significance. Park Benjamin's Edison suggests giant electromagnets to draw the ironclad vessels to the rocks, a notion that 'had been anticipated by one Sinbad the Sailor'[111], and would not be ready until long after the Spanish had arrived. Subsequent narratives, however, embrace the idea that America's key defence against the imperialism of a foreign invader is its individualism. Edison's modification of a seaplane helps America repel Germany in *The Conquest of America* whereas John Stewart Barney's *L.P.M.: The End of the Great War* (1915) features the creation of a forty-thousand tonne anti-gravity airship by a John Fulton Edestone. James Barnes's *The Unpardonable War*, Jack London's *The Unparalleled Invasion* and *All for His Country* are examples of imminent or occurring invasion being prevented or repelled by the invention of a defensive weapon by a lone genius. Also notable for the use of Edison but not depicting an invasion of America is Garrett P. Serviss' *Edison's Conquest of Mars* (1898), a response to *The War of the Worlds* that sees the inventor transformed into an imperialist leader that discovers the secrets of the Martian technology and appropriates them for a retaliatory attack on Mars by an American-led global force.

Above all other advances in technology, the most eagerly anticipated innovation in warfare was in the capacity for aerial combat. In Wells's short story *The Argonauts of the Air* (1895), the narrative speculates that 'in lives and in treasure the cost of the conquest of the empire of the air may even exceed all that has been spent in man's

great conquest of the sea'.[112] Adding another dimension to war, authors of invasion and future war narratives imagined air vehicles as the most significant technological development for war since the industrial revolution; many of the 'superweapons' Franklin identifies in the future war narratives such as Barney's L.P.M. and the anti-gravity radioplanes of Roy Norton's *The Vanishing Fleets* are airships. Yet although flight was potentially a major advance in enabling invasion, the use of airships and aeroplanes in American invasion narratives is largely consistent with the idea of innovative weapons as a defence against it. Norton's radioplanes and Moffett's seaplanes, for example, are invented and deployed only when America has already been threatened or invaded. For other narratives, the innovation of flight is quickly negated by a new invention to counteract it. In Frederick Robinson's *The War of the Worlds: A Tale of the Year 2000 A.D.* (1914), where America is invaded by airships but preserved by anti-aircraft guns, seeing American inventive genius maintained but the invasive potential of aerial innovation realised. The success of the Wright brothers in achieving flight in 1904 also dispelled some of the mystique surrounding flight, revealing the limitations when put to military use. Perhaps the most accurate speculator is Muller, who imagined flight less hyperbolically as merely an extension of existing methods of warfare. With flight becoming commonplace, writers were no longer able to present aerial weapons as uniquely American and equipped their invaders with machines that were their equal or superior. American airplanes in *The Last Invasion* are seen as inferior to the Zeppelin like balloons deployed by the Blues. In *All For His Country*, flight is proven ineffective as a defence against invasion because, 'The Japanese use planes, too, and they know how to use them'.[113]

The success of Giesy's Japanese invaders is due to their new weapon, the aerial bomb. It is described as being like 'a winged torpedo',[114] effective at a distance of ten miles. Upon learning of the new weapon being deployed against them, an American official curses, 'the cowardly dogs! They lie off and shoot us to pieces. They won't take a fair issue'.[115] Decrying the Japanese for being 'cowardly', Giesy's narrative implicitly raises a question posed explicitly by Barnes in *The Unpardonable War* of how the unwritten code of conduct, the rules of engagement in war, could survive given the escalating destructive capacity of the new weapons being developed. An accidental massacre is wrought by the excessive gunpowder discharge forming a cloud of poisonous gas, mistaken initially as a chemical weapons attack, offending the British by being a step too far for 'civilised' warfare:

> The widespread, unwritten, but well-understood, rules so-called, of civilized warfare, had been broken. The loosening of deadly vapours was as bad as poisoning wells, worse than assassination, lower than the murder of hostages[116]

The new weapons are seen in Barnes as being too hazardous to be used with any control. In addition, the Americans develop 'The Force', an electrical field capable of causing rifle cartridges to explode, preventing the British from advancing any further without killing themselves. The narrative declares that, 'Science had rendered military advancement worthless, fighting had gone back to first principles – and first principles were obsolete'[117], that war was 'to end, unless men wished to fight with knives'.[118] There is a distinct ambivalence towards this development, most evident when 'The Force' is temporarily disabled, 'Having relied on the ally that science had

given them, and counted on its all-powerful assistance, fear reigned over them when its help was found to be useless.'[119] Though invasion for Barnes is confined to an 'age of romance',[120] the narrative's effusing with admiration for the bravery of the British invader in a way that is not matched by that of the American invention to halt the invasion suggests a regret at the passing of this 'age', perhaps even betraying a lack of pride in the American approach to war given the American fear when faced with the malfunction of their technology.

The anticipations of writers such as Barnes that technology would make war and invasion impractical were confounded by the advent and course of the First World War, where destructive shelling, trench warfare and chemical gas attacks resulted in internecine conflict. Cleveland Moffett's portrayal of war in *The Conquest of America* attempts to incorporate the revelatory new weapons and tactics used in the early stages of the First World War such as machine guns, gas attacks and trenches but fails to realise their significance as they do not alter the manner by which the war is prosecuted. Barnes and Haines display romanticism over the unfashionable methods of battle, by showing cavalry charges succeed where technology fails. Ironically, Moffett uses cavalry charges to break trench lines; it was trenches and machine guns that made cavalry charges obsolete by the end of 1914. Key to Moffett's understanding of the connotations of trench warfare is their effect on the speed of war. Trench lines encouraged attritional combat where advances were limited and often negated, making for a long war. The idea that a war in the twentieth century could be protracted and slow moving was contrary to the general perception of modern warfare and its scientific influence, which suggested that wars would be faster and with fewer casualties. This perception failed to accommodate the changes in tactics that the

development of weapons would necessitate and also the potential for stalemate if both sides developed these new weapons at the same time. Another factor not considered when assessing the likely duration of future wars was the steady growth in national populations and therefore armies resulting from improving healthcare; more people needed to die in the a war of the twentieth century than in those previous in order for it to be over.

Though the advent of actual conflict the First World War meant a decline in the popularity of speculative future war fiction, the invasion narrative endured, developing beyond realism and into the fantasies of pulp science fiction. Central to this evolution was a British narrative reprinted in America depicting an invasion from beyond the globe, H. G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds*.

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[1] I. F. Clarke, ed., *The Tale of the Next Great War* (Liverpool: LUP, 1995), p2

[2] George Tompkyns Chesney, *The Battle of Dorking*, ed. by I. F. Clarke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) p. 9

[3] *ibid*, p. 6

[4] *ibid*, p. 47

[5] *ibid*, p. 47

[6] *ibid*, p. 3

[7] *ibid*, p. 47

[8] *ibid*, p. 45

[9] Charles Heber Clark, 'An American Battle of Dorking: The Conquest of America' http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/1318212#pstart62462 [accessed 20 8 2010]

[10] *ibid*

[11] *ibid*

[12] *ibid*

[13] *ibid*

[14] *ibid*

[15] James Barnes, *The Unpardonable War* (London: MacMillan, 1904), http://ia341205.us.archive.org/0/items/unpardonablewar00barngoog/unpardonablewar00barngoog.pdf [accessed 16 June 2010], p. 340

[16] Donal Hamilton Haines, *The Last Invasion* (New York: Harper, 1914), http://www.archive.org/stream/lastinvasion00brotgoog/lastinvasion00brotgoog_djvu.txt [accessed 23 June 2010] p. 265

[17] William Ward Crane, 'The Year 1899', in *Overland Monthly* (1893), pp. 579-90, p. 580

[18] *ibid*, p. 582

[19] I. F. Clarke, ed., *The Tale of the Next Great War* (Liverpool: LUP, 1995), p. 197

[20] Tom Shippey, 'The Fall of America in Science Fiction' in Tom Shippey, ed., *Fictional Space: Essays on Contemporary Science Fiction* (Atlantic Highlands: Oxford Humanities Press, 1991

[21] *ibid*, p. 163

[22] *ibid*, p. 181

[23] Cleveland Moffett, *The Conquest of America* (1916), http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext05/8conq10.txt [accessed 31 August 2005], VIII

[24] Barnes, p. 10

[25] 'Sir Henry Standish Coverdale', *The Fall of the Great Republic (1886-88)* (1885), http://www.archive.org/stream/fallgreatrepubl00covgoog/fallgreatrepubl00covgoog_djvu.txt [accessed 22 June 2010], p. 39. 'Sir Henry Standish Coverdale' is a pseudonym for an unidentified author.

[26] A similar idea to the WASP – White Anglo-Saxon Protestant

[27] Coverdale, p.32

[28] Haines, p. 4

[29] *ibid*, p. 104

[30] *ibid*, p. 284

[31] *ibid*, p. 276

[32] Coverdale, p. 29

[33] Samuel Rockwell Reed, *The War of 1886, Between the United States and Great Britain* (1882), http://www.archive.org/stream/warbetweenunite00reegoog/warbetweenunite00reegoog_djvu.txt [accessed 16 6 2010], p. 7

[34] Coverdale, p. 12

[35] *ibid*, p. 34

[36] *ibid*, p. 14

[37] *ibid*, p. 34

[38] P. W. Dooner, *Last Days of the Republic* (New York: Arno, 1978), p. 12

[39] *ibid*, p. 131

[40] *ibid*, p. 91

[41] *ibid*, p. 119

[42] *ibid*, p. 131

[43] *ibid*, p. 131

[44] *ibid*, p. 64

[45] *ibid*, p. 201

[46] *ibid*, p. 171

[47] Dooner, p. 23

[48] *ibid*, p. 204

[49] Crane, p. 583

[50] *ibid*, pp. 583-4

[51] Lorelle, p. 373

[52] Crane, p. 579

[53] *ibid*, p. 589

[54] *ibid*, p. 586

[55] *ibid*, p. 583

[56] *ibid*, p. 589

[57] *ibid*, p. 580

[58] Jack London, 'The Yellow Peril', in *San Francisco Examiner*, Sept. 1904 http://www.readbookonline.net/read/298/8662/ [accessed 22 June 2010]

[59] *Tale of the Next Great War*, p. 182

[60] *War Stars*, p. 24

[61] Park Benjamin, *The End of New York* (1881), http://www.readbookonline.net/readOnLine/9417/ [accessed 16 7 2010], VI

[62] Barnes, p. 45

[63] Dooner, p. 3

[64] *ibid*, p. 3

[65] Moffett, Preface

[66] *ibid*, Preface

[67] Crane, p. 579

[68] *Tale of the Next Great War*, p. 178

[69] Haines, p. 104

[70] Dooner, p. 12

[71] Reed, p. 3

[72] *ibid*, p. 3

[73] Benjamin, I

[74] Barnes, p. 90

[75] *ibid*, p. 20

[76] *ibid* p. 19

[77] *ibid*, p. 135

[78] Benjamin, III

[79] Lorelle, p. 369

[80] Barnes, p. 352

[81] Coverdale, p. 28

[82] Reed, p. 23

[83] *Tale of the Next Great War*, p. 192

[84] Coverdale, p. 19

[85] Dooner, p. 82

[86] *ibid*, p. 128

[87] Coverdale, p. 21

[88] Dooner, p. 167

[89] *ibid*, p. 166

[90] *Tale of the Next Great War*, p. 187

[91] *ibid*, p. 185

[92] *ibid*, p. 188

[93] *ibid*, p. 187

[94] *ibid*, p. 166, 174

[95] *ibid*, p. 187

[96] *ibid*, p. 185

[97] *ibid*, p. 185

[98] *War Stars*, p. 41

[99] Reed, p. 4

[100] Muller, p. 58

[101] Benjamin, IV

[102] *Tale of the Next Great War*, p. 184

[103] Lorelle, p. 369

[104] Marsdon Manson, *The Yellow Peril in Action: A Possible Chapter in History* (1907), http://www.archive.org/stream/cu31924006484392#page/n11/mode/2up [accessed 22 June 2010], p. 11

[105] Haines, p. 296

[106] *War Stars*, p. 26

[107] *Tale of the Next Great War*, p. 175

[108] Coverdale, p. 144

[109] Barnes, p. 327

[110] *War Stars*, p. 55

[111] Benjamin, I

[112] H. G. Wells, *The Argonauts of the Air*, in John Hammond, ed., *The Complete Short Stories of H. G. Wells* (London: Phoenix, 2000), pp.116-25, p. 122

[113] John Ulrich Giesy, *All For His Country*, p. 139

[114] *ibid*, p. 153

[115] *ibid*, p. 154

[116] Barnes, p. 226

[117] Barnes, p. 340

[118] *ibid*, p. 305

[119] *ibid*, pp. 309-10

[120] *ibid*, p. 340

## Chapter Three: The American Appropriation of *The War of the Worlds*

Not written by an American writer, H. G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds* (1898) is an exceptional influence in the American consciousness and the most important narrative of invasion in the tradition in terms of context and theme. Though Wells describes an invasion of southern England, *The War of the Worlds* is repeatedly appropriated by American editors and recontextualised as an American narrative. Wells's novel is rewritten, imitated, adapted and parodied at various points in history. The first instance of this is in the 'Yellow Press', where the text is re-edited without Wells's authorisation to depict the invasion of the United States instead of England by the editors of *The Boston Post* and *The New York Evening Journal* newspapers immediately after the serialised publication of *The War of the Worlds* in *Pearson's Magazine* in 1897. Marking a change in how the fiction was consumed, Hugo Gernsback reprinted the original novel with permission from Wells's American agent – but not Wells himself – in *Amazing Stories* in 1927, a magazine dedicated to 'scientifiction… a charming romance intermingled with scientific fact and prophetic vision'.[1] Firmly established in the American consciousness by this appropriation, the narrative was transposed to other media. Orson Welles and Howard Koch dramatised the narrative as a radio production in 1938 entitled *Invasion from Mars*, relocating the invasion to New Jersey, while in 1963, George Pal directed a Hollywood production of the narrative for cinema, detailing the landing of the invasion on the West Coast of America instead of the East.

**The Moment of Discontinuity**

Surveying American future-war narratives before the end of the nineteenth century, H. Bruce Franklin finds a collective portrayal of the nation at odds with the reality of the United States as a developing power:

> Contrary to what one might expect, although the earliest future-war novels customarily refer to the United States as "the Republic", this republic is seen not as an expanding but as a collapsing state, not as a newly emerging empire but as the feeble prey of old empires.[2]

America was not in a state of decline in the late nineteenth century; this is belied by its subsequent development into the world's richest nation and only military superpower after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Yet this perception is central to its early invasion narratives. Characterising America as a state in decline prepares the reader for its inevitable fall. Given the advancement of science and technology, the instability of Europe and the vague anxieties over the end of the century, those in America who feared invasion thought it a matter of perilous destiny rather than a problem to be avoided through the peaceful methods those governing the country had committed themselves to. Immigration, socialism, feminism and even economic prosperity are portrayed not as signs of progress from the nation's colonial past but as symptoms of an ailing nation. Ostensible strengths symbolised by commercial buildings are revealed to be financial and psychological diversions from security,

fleeting distractions that will crumble before the coming invasion where military fortifications would have stood firm.

Conversely, the reality of American expansionism suggests that much of the portrayal of American decline is inherited as a by-product of the jeremiad tradition and appropriation of the preparedness tract narrative fashioned after *The Battle of Dorking* from Europe. The idea of invasion as fate specifically because of American decline is undermined by the importing of the preparedness tract narrative frame, a structure based upon events relating to and the perceived failings of Britain, a much older empire and one with powerful neighbours that were historically and potentially hostile. In promoting a 'prepare or die' ethos, a crucial assumption is made by the writers of future-war invasion fiction: invasion is inevitable. This may be understandable in Europe, where war was commonplace, local and viewed gloriously. Yet in America consensus was anti-imperialist and anti-military as a deliberate ideological break from Britain after years of subordination as a British colony. As we have seen in the previous chapter, dangers are perceived from wildly different sources, the variety of potential invaders striking as a collective drive to cover all possibilities; the perceived imminence of invasion places the importance on predicting the identity of the invader so that if action is not taken to fortify against an attack, the literature radiates with the wisdom of prophecy.

With the advent of the First World War, narratives speculating about the occurrence of future wars may have seemed irrelevant, leading to the decline in popularity of invasion as future war fiction and the use of more imaginative types of invasion and more fantastical invaders. As the fiction shifts from the preparedness tract to

incorporate ideas more central to American identity such as the genius of the scientific individual, Franklin argues that the inevitability of the invasion the narratives imagined seemed so palpable that it helped forge US defence policy and a significant part of American psychology:

> To experience this period through its projections of future wars, dominated by imperialist illusions and fantasies of peace through technology, is to reexperience the formation of our own ideology and consciousness.[3]

Well-established as a sub-genre, the likelihood of possible invasion becomes unquestioned, shifting the focus of most narratives to the ability of the nation to repel it through scientific invention. The significance of this change in invasion narratives is that it leads the fiction away from realism towards the fantastic. The specifics of how invasions happen is less important than the imagination of both the invader and invaded; the more imaginative the invader, the more ingenious the scientific initiative needed to stop it.

The catalyst for the imaginative leap beyond realism in invasion fiction is H. G. Wells's novel *The War of the Worlds*, describing a devastating invasion of Earth by extraterrestrials from Mars, wielding advanced technology and being of a striking different physiology to the human being. Wells's narrator compares the Martian attack on Earth to the 'war of extermination' conducted against the Tasmanians by 'European immigrants',[4] imagining a reversal of role for the leading European superpower, Britain, from invader to invaded. *The War of the Worlds* is not the first narrative to explore this conceit; as shown in the introduction, Washington Irving

supposes an invasion by people from the Moon as a parallel to the European colonisation of America in *A History of New York*, characterised by superior technology and philosophy to that of the contemporary nation. Nor was Wells the first to describe an invasion of Earth by aliens, preceded by Robert Potter's *The Germ Growers* (1892) and Kurt Lasswitz's *Auf Zwei Planeten* (1897), though in both cases the aliens are of human appearance. Nevertheless, it is Wells's novel that initiates the change in emphasis for invasion narratives and heralds the development of the theme beyond the realism of future war fiction. Wells highlights the fallacy of the 'prepare or die' mantra that had become ingrained with alien invaders that could not possibly be prepared for but informed by the invaders of the future-war sub-genre proposed as verisimilitudinous. Constructed as reversed imperialism, the Martians are also a tacit identification of the unnatural appropriateness of all 'destined' invaders, their attack fashioned to cause maximum damage to the targeted territory. Subsequent writers of the future war style narrative acknowledge *The War of the Worlds* in a way that suggests that Wells's story was the future of invasion fiction. In *The Unpardonable War* James Barnes refers to 'an extravagant story by a chap named Wells'[5] and compares the eerie humming sound of the electromagnetic invention used to explode the British shells to the 'Ulla ulla' of the Martians, associating the technology with Wells's futuristic aliens, whereas in *The Conquest of America* Cleveland Moffett notes that the German invasion was nothing like 'one of those fantastic things from Mars that H. G. Wells would put in a novel',[6] allowing space for the inventive genius of Thomas Edison to save America from German rule.

Contextualised as a future war narrative, *The War of the Worlds* represents a break from the established pattern of cautionary tales concerning the failure to fortify the

borders of a country strongly enough. Martian superiority is such that the extent of the fortification discussed in future war narratives is inconsequential; their arrival from the air bypasses all naval defences regardless of their size, whereas a better-trained army reserve would be as impotent against the tripods with their heat rays and the black smoke. Yet Wells's Martians could not be argued to be a credible danger, since they lack a basis in reality shared by even the most ludicrously conceived foreign army. Presenting an invader that lacks plausibility removes the literature from its limited political context to realise fully that invasion narratives are essentially reflective, a judgement of contemporary society enabled by an invader but enacted by the narrative itself. Wells's revelation for invasion narratives in *The War of the Worlds* is that the instrument enabling this judgement – the invader – need not be based in reality despite the adherence to the stylistic approach of future war narratives with its verisimilitudinous setting and narrative framing as a retelling of future history. Wells's narrative provides the discontinuity that allows invasion narratives to expand beyond extrapolations of international conflict illustrating limited political contentions.

**The Martians**

Apart from its position in the tradition of invasion narratives, *The War of the Worlds* exacts discontinuity by estranging the reader from certainty, presenting the reader with a metaphysical unknown destroying a Victorian Britain that contemporary readers would perceive as a known reality. Invasion is an aggressive process and as such, *The War of the Worlds* is not unique in causing the reader intellectual

discomfort; Wells was drawing on an existing pattern in invasion narratives, designed to disturb the reader's sensibilities by inflicting horrors on those in the texts representing the reader's interests. The narratives unsettle the reader, encouraged by most texts to identify with the incumbent of the targeted territory against the invader, in four main ways: the alien nature of the invaders in relation to the incumbents of the targeted territory, established by place of origin, appearance and ideology; the advanced capabilities of the invaders in comparison to those they target, whether technological or strategic; the terrible consequence of invasion on the incumbents of the targeted territory; the assessed value of the particular preoccupations that left the targeted territory vulnerable in view of the consequence of invasion extrapolated by the narrative. *The War of the Worlds* maintains this four-shock pattern but enlarges the scale at each juncture, confronting the reader with a highly advanced alien invader apparently intent on exterminating humanity, too self-absorbed to know of the alien existence until the attack.

Alien invaders widen the scope of future war fiction by virtue of their alien nature, yet conversely their use in *The War of the Worlds* achieves a closer examination of humanity and human relations than in future war narratives with opposing human entities. An invading army in a future war narrative is invariably representative of the disastrous consequence of a government's failure to make what is portrayed as a relatively small political sacrifice, most commonly spurning proposals to increase military defence spending. Writers of future war narratives emphasise the imminent nature of the threat and its gravity, justifying the suitability of the invader and credibility of the narrative's contention by striving for verisimilitude in topography of the invasion and extrapolation of events. Unlike the foreign armies of prior future war

narratives Wells's Martians are not imagined from physical reality – though resembling the octopus – but are metaphysical constructions designed to be incredible, strikingly incongruous to the Victorian suburbs by their ugly, bulbous appearance, enhanced technological prowess and violent intent; they are also, in part, an evolutionary fantasy about the future of the human race. Martian incongruity is invasive in itself; its alien otherness challenges the paradigms of the known, creating chaos. Before *The War of the Worlds*, future war narratives were based upon the certainty that political failing caused catastrophe, motivating the reader to help prevent the failing that enables invasion out of fear of its imminence. It is the very idea of certainty that Wells confronts in *The War of the Worlds* with his Martians, inciting fear not through the knowledge of the consequences of inaction but through the obliteration of knowledge: the creation of an enemy that could not be prepared for.

The greatest shock provided to the reader's sensibilities by *The War of the Worlds* is the nature of the Martians as alien. Its importance is only realised upon the first glimpse of the Martians by the narrator when the cylinder opens and the Martian peeks out. The narrator tells of his expectations of the Martian appearance, preparing the reader for the surprise of the truth, 'I think every one expected to see a man emerge – possibly something a little unlike us terrestrial men, but in all essentials a man. I know I did.'[7] What does appear from the cylinder is certainly not a man. To build suspense, the Martian is revealed slowly, progressing from 'greyish billowy movements' in the shadows, then 'two luminous discs like eyes' followed by a tentacle, 'something resembling a little grey snake'.[8] It is the protrusion of the tentacles that causes the 'sudden chill' in the narrator, a 'loud shriek' from a nearby woman and 'a general movement backward'.[9] The motion is the outreaching of the

alien toward the people, representing the horror of the invaders through their aesthetic, puncturing assumptions about human-centrism and – through evolutionary biology – the idea of man being made in God's image. The importance of the unpalatable Martian appearance is emphasised by the reaction of the narrator's neighbour, ' 'What ugly *brutes*!' he said. 'Good God! what ugly brutes!' He repeated this over and over again.'[10] Having witnessed the existence of intelligent living beings from another planet with the capability to travel through space, the narrative preoccupation is with what they look like rather than with what they can do. All this initial information is gleaned from fleeting glimpses of the Martians; the portrayal is vivid despite the shadowy surroundings and that the narrator 'had the sunset in my eyes',[11] such is the horror the aliens evoke. Later descriptions mark a change in tone to a more detached perspective as 'the first nausea no longer obscured my observation'[12] – a somewhat disingenuous comment given that the narrative is reported as a journal written after the event – and divulge details of a Martian dissection made by human scientists after the invasion is thwarted and the Martians die.

Wells's Martians are not only alien to the humans by location but also because they have no basis in reality, 'the most unearthly creatures it is possible to conceive',[13] shocking by forcing readers to reconcile themselves to the events of the text after expectations of human-like aliens are confounded. Previous invasion narratives had only featured human or human-like invaders and the idea that the aliens were able to traverse through space was improbable in itself. When the Martian appears, the narrator notices 'astonishment giving place to horror on the faces of the people about me', gets 'a sudden chill' and is gripped by 'ungovernable terror'.[14] This fear is rooted

in the inhumanity of the Martian physiology which is described in resemblances to communicate its alien essence, its polyp-like body with 'Gorgon groups of tentacles',[15] suggestive of a grasp for power. Wells's narrator makes special mention of the 'immense eyes... at once vital, intense, inhuman, crippled and monstrous',[16] betraying both the intelligence of the aliens and the danger they represent to humanity. Communicating the supremacy of the Martians, the eyes overcome the narrator with 'disgust and dread',[17] whilst their not belonging on Earth is compounded by the struggle of the alien to cope with the strength of Earth's gravity; it salivated, 'quivered and panted...heaved and pulsated convulsively',[18] its movements characterised by 'painfulness'[19] or discomfort, with the 'writhing middle', tentacles that 'wriggled in the air towards me'[20] and a mouth that suffered 'incessant quivering'.[21]

Having invited the reader to be horrified by the Martian physical appearance, the narrative couples this with details of their methods of obtaining sustenance:

> They did not eat, much less digest. Instead, they took the fresh living blood of other creatures, and *injected* it into their own veins.[22]

Not only are they hideous, the Martians are parasitic, vampiric, a dying race that only survives by subsisting from the life-blood of more aesthetically pleasing, younger species. The italics serve to emphasise the gratuitousness of the description, that the appropriate response of the reader should be revulsion. Yet, having presented the reader with a revolting practice designed provoke a gut-reaction, the narrative then encourages the reader to consider the 'undeniable'[23] physiological advantages of

bypassing eating and digestion. Being 'heads, merely heads',[24] the Martian use of blood is entirely rational:

> The bare idea of this is no doubt horribly repulsive to us, but at the same time I think that we should remember how repulsive our carnivorous habits would seem to an intelligent rabbit.[25]

By priming the impulses of abhorrence and then asking the reader to overcome them by intellectual fascination, the text critiques human-centrism in terms of its 'organic fluctuations of mood and emotions'.[26] Emotion is constructed by the narrative as an inefficiency that the Martian evolutionary development has eliminated. Reproduction is asexual: the Martians bud 'as young lily bulbs',[27] which makes all notions of attraction and its associated distractions irrelevant and plays to paranoia as a vague suggestion that their numbers could be countless. Their absence of organs also makes them an effective worker, with 'little or no sense of fatigue, it would seem. On earth they can never have moved without effort, yet even to the last they kept in action'.[28] There is here a tacit comparison with Yellow Peril invasion narratives, taking to extremes the racist caricatures of the Chinese immigrant workers in the likes of Dooner and Crane as being aesthetically inferior, unemotional and tireless. As with racist fiction, the diminution of the Martians acts as justification for a genocidal desire, 'It ain't no murder killing beasts like that'.[29] Wells subverts this by reverting to detachment, reminding the reader that there is purpose behind the Martian development and that, from an outside perspective, humanity is itself less than perfect.

The 'disgust and dread' elicited in the narrator in the Martian appearance is initially determined by its grotesque difference to that of the human, but later in the text Wells confronts his readers with a different kind of inevitable invasion: the idea of a physical future radically different and aesthetically revolting. Assumptions about the imperfectability of the human body are undermined by the narrator's suggestion that the monstrous looking aliens are a prospective evolutionary state of humanity:

> It is worthy of remark that a certain speculative writer of quasi-scientific repute, writing long before the Martian invasion, did forecast for man a final structure not unlike the actual Martian condition.[30]

This reference to his earlier speculation on human evolution, 'The Man of the Year Million', is ironic given it is described as having a 'foolish, facetious tone',[31] but it also serves to re-evaluate the Martian relationship to humans, characterising the Martians intertextually as evolved beings. Conjecturing the Martian appearance as a human inevitability, Wells invites self-disgust and body horror in the reader, implying that a visually hideous Martian lies somewhere within the reader's genetic potential, representative of the inevitable, possibly desirable, evolutionary future of humanity. Alternatively, the disgust could be associated with the laziness of the Martians in allowing their bodies to degenerate because of an over-reliance on mechanical constructions. This evolutionary future is facilitated by the use of technology enabling the Martians to go far beyond the capabilities of the human body, defying gravity and embarking upon interplanetary travel; Wells imagines that the technology induces a hypertrophied brain and an atrophied body as the Martians became able to explore what their brains could conceive but their bodies could not achieve.

Though clearly being advanced by virtue of their ability to travel through space, the capabilities of the Martians are only revealed after Wells has disgusted the reader by their appearance. Wells confirms the appropriateness of the 'dread' in the narrator by unveiling the Heat-Ray in the next chapter, having the Martians deploy it after the consultation that resolves to appeal to the Martian intelligence 'in spite of their repulsive forms'.[32] The Heat Ray presents an irresistible weapon, a statement of intent to conquer. Like the German torpedoes in 'The Battle of Dorking', the Heat-Ray is totemic for the invasion because it acts in the narrative as the signifier of invasion, announcing to the reader both the invasive intent and capability of the invader, enabling the Martians to proceed by carving through the British resistance. Confirming the Martians as the heralds of discontinuity, Wells evokes Revelation 9:2:

> Suddenly there was a flash of light, and a quantity of luminous greenish smoke came out of the pit in three distinct puffs, which drove up, one after the other, straight into the still air.[33]

The Martian invasion is charged therefore with Biblical importance, a God-like judgement on humanity's self-absorption. The metaphor most commonly used in the passage to describe the Heat-Ray is death: 'death leaping from man to man', 'this flaming death, this inevitable sword of heat',[34] 'this mysterious death – as swift as the passage of light'.[35] The Heat-Ray is hellfire, symbolising the damnation of humanity wrought by the invasion.

Though terribly destructive, leaving 'blackened heather and ruined buildings stretched far and wide',[36] the Martian technology is not used by the narrative to evoke disgust in the reader, but instead inspire awe. The horrible flesh of the Martians is cased in 'a monstrous tripod, higher than many houses...a walking engine of glittering metal... articulate ropes dangling from it'.[37] Wells uses the rhetoric of size, each 'colossal mechanism'[38] impresses as an imposing threat, whereas the speed – 'as fast as flying birds'[39] – and the 'to and fro'[40] traversing of its movement is suggestive of its advanced sophistication, a development beyond human capabilities. The difference between the impression created by the flesh of the Martians and the machines is underlined by the reaction of the narrator's brother, who was 'more amazed than terrified'.[41] Struggling without them, the Martian machines enable the creatures to cope with Earth's gravity by shielding them from it. Martian use of technology prevents the actual Martians from being seen in most cases, as they are dependent on their machines for mobility due to their polyp-like bodies lacking sufficiently powerful limbs. Their crutch-like technology has determined the path of the Martian evolution to its state of physical atrophy; the technology's proficiency in supporting life is matched by its proficiency in taking it by means of the Heat-Ray and poison gas. Having displayed the horror wrought by invasion, the technological speculations serve to give the reader a glimpse of a potential future for humanity having survived the Martian attack, an example of the possibilities being created by the triumphs of engineering. Of particular interest to the narrator is the Handling Machine, compared to a 'metallic spider'[42] or 'crab-like creature',[43] comprising sliding parts over curved friction bearings that functioned as 'quasi-muscles',[44] an improvement on the wheel that enabled the Martian vehicles to make lifelike movements.

## The Invaded

Written from an exclusively human perspective, the Martian motive is speculated on by the narrator but left ultimately for the reader to deduce. The first chapter of the novel asserts that the Martians aspire to Earth because theirs is a dying planet and Earth is comparatively young. Due to the Martian failure in attempting to conquer Earth, the narrator alleges that Venus is targeted subsequently and attacked more successfully. Wells's use of the narrator misleads the reader into looking for a practical rather than symbolic reason for the invasion; Mars is named after the Roman god of war and is therefore the most likely source of alien attack. In addition, war in the nineteenth century needed little justification; the Martian attack could be seen as a brutal display of superiority in an attempt to acquire territory as readily as an act of a race in despair. Examining the motive in this way serves to question the reliability of the narrator, as it shows that the conclusions Wells has him draw are of dubious plausibility. Ultimately the Martians serve the narrative purpose which, for Wells, is of reverse imperialism, to interrogate the home nation in the way that it had interrogated the Tasmanians.

The significance of *The War of the Worlds* as an invasion narrative is due mainly to its recalibration of the literature's focus. Future war narratives since *The Battle of Dorking* had depicted struggles between opposing countries, using invasion as a consequence of political opportunism. Widening the scope of invasion narratives by defining the invaded territory on a planetary rather than national scale, *The War of the*

*Worlds* critiques British society in a way that previous examples of future war fiction were unable by identifying the very preoccupations authors of future war fiction were engaged in. Although Wells's Martians invade the nation of Britain, the attack they represent is on contemporary human civilisation rather than the British nation or any other:

> With infinite complacency men went to and fro over this globe about their little affairs, serene in their assurance of their empire over matter. It is possible that the infusoria under the microscope do the same.[45]

*The War of the Worlds* deflates the grandiosity of humanity. It dismisses the significance of countries as temporal intellectual or cultural constructions, comprising the 'empire over matter',[46] subjugating and arranging the Earth according to human will. Wells humiliates the 'empire' by destroying its most pompous representative, Britain. Wells makes nationality and the political preoccupations examined by the realistic future war fiction irrelevant in *The War of the Worlds* through the use of aliens from Mars as invaders, creating a war that would be impossible to prepare for. Paradoxically, Britain is important in the narrative because it is unimportant, unable to defend itself any better or worse than any other nation against the Martian onslaught; in this sense the narrative is a study in national humiliation as the import of British dominance over the world to the text relates only to the ease by which it is conquered. National security against invasion enabled by British naval superiority is neutralised by the Martian technology that projects the Martians beyond the Royal Navy, negating the source of British military and imperial dominance, and is resistant to virtually anything the humans use to hinder its progress. Nationally attributed prestige

is rejected as the events of the text occur in Leatherhead, Woking and Chipping Barnet as often as they do in London. Insistence on the pre-Martian order is rendered absurd, as portrayed in the hysterical thoughts of Mrs Elphinstone:

> She had never been out of England before, she would rather die than trust herself friendless in a foreign country, and so forth. She seemed, poor woman, to imagine that the French and the Martians might prove very similar.[47]

Mrs Elphinstone's inability to reassess hers and humanity's standing in the context of the known universe after the Copernican revelation of the Martian invasion is set against comparisons of the most dominant humans with supposed lesser beings:

> The Tasmanians, in spite of their human likeness, were entirely swept out of existence in a war of extermination waged by European immigrants.[48]

> So some respectable dodo in the Mauritius might have lorded it in his nest, and discussed the arrival of that ship of pitiless sailors in want of animal food. "We will peck them to death to-morrow, my dear."[49]

> This isn't a war… It never was a war, any more than there's war between men and ants.[50]

Wells sets a contrast between the parochialism of figures such as Mrs Elphinstone with the global dominance of the British Empire, critiquing the idea espoused in future war narratives that superiority could be determined by nationality. Martian

invasion in *The War of the Worlds* demands that people become self-aware as human beings in the context of the universe rather than defining and dividing themselves through the intrinsically worthless rationality of nationhood. These divisions and their connotative values are belittled by Wells's creation of an opposition to humanity as a whole that disregards sectarianism within the species, interrogating the logic of human society and disturbing its entrenchment in people's minds.

In this way, *The War of the Worlds* can be related to other preparedness tracts in invasion fiction; complacency in the security of human superiority is an extension from the complacency in the security of various nations from invasion. Also true of Wells's novel as with many of the early invasion narratives is the manner by which the actions – or inaction – of those in authority in the invaded territory contribute to the initial success of the invasion. Although the British are defeated with ease, they are given every opportunity to plan and regroup form their inconveniences by the relatively slow speed of the invasion. It lasts for a number of weeks, and it is over a week after the first Martian attack when the tripod machines appear. The British authorities have a considerable amount of time to prepare a counter-strike, but fail to do anything, a gap that would be addressed after the American serialisations by Garrett P. Serviss' 'sequel', *Edison's Conquest of Mars*. Part of the problem is the complacent attitude taken by those in authority to news of the incident. Reports are dismissed because of the unbelievable nature of the events. Evidence of the event is ignored until attacks have become frequent and the Martians have had time to ready their machines for the second phase of their attack. Another cause of the British failure is the speed at which the news of the Martian hostility travels. Reports need time to gain credibility, which means that information travels very slowly.

Consequently, communication between bodies that would counter the invasion is inadequate. As with *The Battle of Dorking*, the speed of communication and realisation that they face a very real threat inhibits the capacity of the British to resist. The story is initially a source of amusement, dismissed as the invention of local cranks, despite the suspicious movements on Mars noticed by respected astronomers.

The mocking of the narrator's 'broken sentences'[51] when he tries to warn people of the coming threat is representative of how invasion is a means of bringing out divisiveness in a hitherto unified society. The disjointedness here is symptomatic of a general lack of cohesion between the humans that contrasts starkly with the fluid, telepathic movements of the Martians, always purposeful and unified. Most of the measures implemented by the humans to counter the invasion are ad hoc, with the most successful retaliation being made by a battleship that just happened to be in the vicinity. Wells is suggesting by this that a planned, organised way of working that is geared towards a specific goal is more likely to succeed than reacting to random events as they happen, which requires a misplaced faith in the civilised person to persevere. British resistance to the Martians relies too heavily on the spontaneous acts of heroism, such as the attack on the Martian tripod by crew of the Thunder Child, and is easily quashed. Unlike the early narratives that treated members of the nation almost as homogenous group, Wells explores the reality of individuals in a collective, showing how disparate individuals are forced together by the invasion. Contemporary life is criticised by the reactions of people who realise that defeat is inevitable. Some flee to France, unaware that it may have been under attack too; that it is not suggests that Wells's novel is more concerned with the reaction of British people specifically rather than humans in general. Criticising xenophobic nationalism, Wells depicts

certain people that would sooner die at the hands of the Martians than escape to France, spurning a chance at survival because of an idiotic prejudice. At the opposite extreme from the snobbish bigots is the Artilleryman, who is convinced that humanity should forgo its high self-esteem and reassess itself as being equivalent to the stature of rats in order to survive. However, his plan does not convince even himself to the point where he can overcome his characteristic laziness to carry it out; as with the cleric, the narrator becomes bored with him and moves on. These two episodes show how fundamentally fractional human society is, as people become irritated with each other enough to part, even though they may be forced to depend on each other to survive.

**The Darwinian Metaphor**

Yet indeed it is the human race that survives the invasion, not the Martians. Despite all their advantages, the Martians are ultimately the losers, defeated by the Earth's bacteria. However, the invasion itself is successful. Earth's atmosphere is penetrated by Martian spacecraft and the British nation is defeated by the marauding Martian forces that quell all resistance with ease. It is the fact of Martian defeat where Wells's novel diverts fundamentally from the earliest future war stories, where invasion leaves nations irrevocably humbled by their enemies. Wells gives hope to readers by suggesting that fate may save them from even the most calamitous of defeats, yet does so by being pessimistic about human achievement in that the Martians are not felled by human ingenuity but Martian oversight. From a humanist perspective, then, the novel's overriding morality is not a constructive one. However, having survived the

Martians, the invasion is used to herald a possible future of science and technology, whilst presenting a parable warning against over-dependence on it:

> It may be that in the larger design of the universe this invasion from Mars is not without its ultimate benefit for men; it has robbed us of that serene confidence in the future which is the most fruitful source of decadence, the gifts to human science it has brought are enormous, and it has done much to promote the conception of the commonweal of mankind.[52]

Here, Wells playfully suggests a evolutionary purpose for his invasion, a modernisation of the standard jeremiad device of divine judgement. A prominent utopian, Wells was a proponent of the League of Nations, wrote *A Modern Utopia* (1905) and revisited ideas of how to improve humanity throughout his fiction. An alternative underlying message may be revealed from a more detached position. Wells, a student of evolutionary theory, knew that the lifespan of a species is insignificant in relation to that of the universe and that life on any given planet is subject to the whims of that planet, whether natural disaster or bacterial infection. The humans are shown to lack the power of the more highly evolved Martians, who in turn lack the power of the even more greatly evolved Earth. It is Earth itself that kills the Martians, who are not intrinsically linked to the planet as the humans are.

Wells characterises the British society as being resistant to change, a common attribute that is grounded in the lack of political revolution in the country during the nineteenth century and movements such as the luddites prevalent at the time of the industrial revolution. Darwin's theory was a recent development and dismissed by

many church groups as heretical despite Darwin's pronouncements that his theories proved the existence of God. Denying Darwin's rigorously researched study with absolutist zeal was a reaction of fear rather than rationality; Wells's Martians, representing evolutionary process, are designed to induce fear. John Batchelor observes that their saliva-dripping mouths are unnecessary, as they communicate telepathically and feed vampirically through blood transfusion.[53] Arguing that the mouths provide a purely respiratory function does not explain the saliva, so Batchelor, in arguing that Wells manages to avoid gratuitousness in this instance does so unsustainably. Human disgust at the Martian appearance is, in part, body horror, as the Martian form is the human destiny. In turn, the Martian attempt to destroy the humans, their former selves, symbolises regret for the past insularity that led to the necessity for such drastic action as the invasion embarked upon. Evolution's prominence in *The War of the Worlds* is somewhat contradictorily combined with Martian failure. Batchelor calls humanity the novel's 'evolutionary hero'[54] because it survives where the Martians fall. The ending suggests that the Martians are not as advanced as the narrative would have the reader believe, that the Martians are perhaps not the unavoidable fate of the human race as the reference to 'Man of the Year Million' invites the reader to conclude. Metaphorically, the conclusion suggests that evolution is not invasive or destructive but a natural process that works for the benefit of the human race. The future-human Martians do not belong in the past, and their untimely presence results in their deaths.

A comparison between the Martian attack on an unprepared British society and the effects of the findings of Darwin on an unsuspecting world is given credence by the aftermath of the invasion, reflecting ideas concerning the struggle for existence – the

naturalising of war – in *The Origin of the Species* (1859). Batchelor sees the lack of all but negligible change as a disappointment, but it symbolises perfectly the short-term effects of groundbreaking knowledge on the world. Darwin's revelation did little to alter worldwide church attendance, where gradual decline began over a century after it was published. Six years is too short a period to expect large-scale change and the knowledge accumulated about the Martians implies a societal shift towards understanding the importance of science and technology. The people who are affected by the knowledge of the Martians are the specialists such as those astronomers who observed the movements but were ignored and have been paid greater attention since the invasion. The other group of people affected would be those like the narrator, who have an amateur interest in science and wish to apply the new ideas to everyday life. Wells's use of negligible change, depicting children playing in the street as they had done before the invasion, shows that, for those not directly affected by a familial death, serious injury or loss of livelihood, life goes on. Indeed, Wells does not include a figure to represent someone who after six years remains severely afflicted because of the invasion. This omission suggests that the invasion, though far from benignly enacted, ultimately benefits the human race. Improvement through destruction is a mantra consistent with Wells's *A Modern Utopia*, where the narrator, after being in utopia, wishes to smash London upon returning and deeming it unfavourable by comparison. Batchelor suggests Wells is alluding to the book of *Revelation*, where the Earth is consumed by fire only to survive; the ferocity of the attack and the monstrosity of the attackers is worthy of Armaggeddon. One element that fails to realise this comparison is the scale of the invasion, which is limited to Surrey alone. Batchelor is correct to point out that the title of the second book, 'Earth Under the Martians', is an exaggeration of the Martian achievement. Wells's narrator does not

inform the reader that the Martians attacked anywhere other than a small area of Britain and had six years to discover any other incidents, so it must be assumed that no other part of the world was targeted. The title of the second book is not the only example of hype in the novel. *The War of the Worlds* own title aggrandises the ability of humanity to defend itself and the use of 'war' perhaps even hints that there is a potential to initiate a counter-attack on Mars, which was indeed explored in Garrett P Serviss' unauthorised sequel, *Edison's Conquest of Mars*, in which the American inventor leads an invasion force to Mars in retaliation. There is a neutrality of agency in Wells's chosen title, helping cloud the morality of the invasion and suspend invasion's negative association.

**From London to New York and Boston**

Interplanetary invasion strikes a new frontier for invasion narratives, bypassing the border defences that had previously been the point of contention for authors of future war fiction such as George Chesney, Samuel Rockwell Reed and Park Benjamin. Where the German, British and Spanish invaders in the texts arrive conventionally by sea, the Martians are shot from Mars to London across space, a birth metaphor involving seed-like invisible missiles shot from a 'huge gun',[55] gestating for a period when they arrive in the body of the Earth until they hatch as the tripods. Coming from space, Wells's Martians' ability to project themselves anywhere the author – or newspaper editor – wishes them to arrive negates any semblance of plausible possibility in extrapolation; the value of the choice of landing location becomes exclusively symbolic, marking a total mutation in the nature of invasion narratives

from verisimilitude into fantasy. The potential for this was realised immediately by American newspaper editors. *The War of the Worlds* was altered without Wells's permission in *The New York Evening Journal* in order to relocate the events to the immediate surroundings of the newspaper's readers. *The Boston Post* did the same for its readers but went further, changing the title to *Fighters from Mars* (1898) and employing a hack to add sections where Wells's text was deemed insufficient.

Of the two pirate versions in 1898 it is the Boston re-composition that is the more influential to the American cultural consciousness, helping associate Wells's text of invasion to an American response incorporating the use of scientific ingenuity to defeat a hitherto advanced race. Anonymously re-edited, *Fighters from Mars* replaces references of London in *The War of the Worlds* with those of Boston and shortens the narrative considerably. Ottershaw becomes Concord, Massachusetts, Winchester becomes northern Jersey and Berkshire, Surrey and Middlesex become Middlesex County. By changing the setting, the hack removes Wells's nuanced description of England, with it the local details and knowledge that marked the trajectory of Wells's Martian invasion and also the quintessential aspects of Middle England that epitomised the 'infinite complacency' of the social order of the human race's foremost nation. Features of the English countryside such as the heath and heather are replaced by the less picturesque long brown grass and similarly the common becomes the field. References to newspapers and magazines such as *The Daily Telegraph* and *Punch* are dropped, or changed to the nondescript 'the papers'. Fixtures of the villages that events occur in such as the public house by Horsell Bridge is changed to merely 'the road house',[56] which spoils the effect of specificity that was evident in Wells's original text. Other changes are to the ownership of the expert figures Albin and

Denning who Wells did not affiliate with any institution; Albin becomes 'Albin of Yale University' and Dennings 'our greatest American authority in meteorites'[57] from being simply 'our greatest authority in meteorites',[58] the latter alteration acknowledging obliquely that the United States would not necessarily be home to world-leading experts. Other modifications of the text such as the removal of some of the lengthier scientific speculation give it a more pulp-like pace, whilst the change of the time of the proceedings to 'the year 1900'[59] follows the pattern in American future war fiction of being set in the imminent future.

Relocating the text maintains the horror of localised destruction but sacrifices a grander allusion. The Martian invasion of London is a revelation of Copernican proportions, obliterating the idea that London is the centre of power in the universe, an idea that might have been entertained by some of those living there at the time. Wells's audacity in depicting such a revolutionary event is mirrored by his Martians displaying their strength through destruction. There is also a practical reason for Wells to choose London in that he lived there and knew it intimately; the invasion is most harrowing because of its verisimilitude, brought about by Wells's famously cycling around the city plotting its doom.[60] *The War of the Worlds*' Copernican element is lost in the pirate versions of the text; Boston and New York are emerging cities, not then having the same grandiosity as London. If the Martians had observed the planet as closely as the narrator insists, then they will have noticed that the Great Britain of Wells's setting is the most powerful nation on Earth and London the main focus of that power. Attacking the most concentrated area of population and civilised development allows for maximum devastation to be brought about. Attacking London seems more a method of flaunting superiority by inflicting severe damage to the

centre of human power, demoralising the entire race by neutralising the strongest force first. The attack on London thus serves as a demonstration of Martian power rather than an act of desperation; the invasion has an air of nonchalance and exhibitionism not usually associated with desperation. Wells's choice of London as the target of invasion allows him to show how superior his Martians are to humans, the logic being if London falls easily then the rest of the world should follow. London's falling represents the transitory nature of human power, following on from the idea in 'The Battle of Dorking' that no nation had the divine right to dominate the world forever and Britain's fall was inevitable. This idea is extended to species level in *The War of the Worlds* where the superior Martians destroy the confidence in human race of its position as the dominant species of the universe.

Heightening the impact of the extrapolations on readers' individual consciousnesses, authors and editors serialising early invasion narratives seek verisimilitude in the locations they choose as targets for their invaders. Narratives warning of the need to prepare for war manipulate the anxiety of the reader by ascertaining the close presence of the danger they identify. The danger's proximity to the reader stresses its imminence and the necessity for immediate action to prevent or mitigate the damage that it would inevitably cause. Unremarkable, almost anti-climatic locations such as Dorking and Chipping Barnet that are close to London gain prominence by becoming targets of the invaders. These places are cast as future incarnations of towns such as Hastings and Waterloo, where recognition and prestige is bestowed by battles that determine the nation's fate. The choice of location in the narratives could be affected equally by commercial factors as well as artistic or strategic. Serialised in *The Daily Mail*, William Le Queux's *Invasion of 1910* (1906) imagines German invaders

stretching their campaign from Preston to Chelmsford to incorporate 'every town and village where the *Daily Mail* was read'.[61] David Hughes notes in '*The War of the Worlds* in the Yellow Press' (1966) that chief among the additional passages added to Wells's text by *The Boston Post's* hack were descriptions of the Martian demolition of Boston's most prominent buildings. Selective targeting of this sort is absent from *The War of the Worlds*. Wells's narrator tells us that the Martians viewed Earth as being 'crowded only with what they regard as inferior animals'.[62] Portraying the Martians attacking buildings compromises this assertion because it justifies the importance attributed to the building attacked and concomitantly, the 'inferior animals' attributing that importance. For the editor of *The Boston Post* to commission a writer to undermine the text in this way suggests that the theme of the subversion of human dominance was diminished by those rewriting Wells's work. It also impresses that those producing invasion narratives in America place a greater importance in landmarks to national identity than British examples of the fiction.

In marking the qualitative transition of invasion narratives away from verisimilitude, Wells's *The War of the Worlds* realises the reflexivity of invaders to the spheres they invade in such narratives. Revealed in the symbolism evoked by the invasion topography, the reflexivity of the invader establishes an interstitial battlefield along the topographic trajectory on which the national and cultural identity of the sphere is negotiated. Places with historic or symbolic importance provide the backdrop to an invasion that initiates a process of redefining national or cultural identity. The outcome of the invader's challenge to the incumbent, redefinition must accommodate the existence of the invasion even if it failed to eradicate or subjugate the incumbent. Where verisimilitudinous texts imagine future importance bestowed on hitherto

unimportant towns, more fantastic invaders are used to reach places with existing iconic status, acknowledging and reinvigorating that status by challenging it. Wells inflicts his imagination on Victorian Britain through literature, understanding that the Victorian society of his setting is the collective projection of the imaginations of others before him, no more corporeal at its inception than his alien invaders. By maintaining the future war verisimilitude in topography the text is successful in achieving its conceit of the alien invasion; although the Martians and their technology are incredible, the application of a metaphysical construction to the physical realm is the basis of a society's reality and the incredulity of the locals to the aliens anticipates the scepticism of the reader, a literary device to make them seem believable. *The War of the Worlds* redefines reality in terms of humanity's context in the universe as a transient insignificance. Though incredible and purely metaphysical, the invasion undermines the reality of Victorian society by shattering the illusion of human solipsism, the 'serene confidence in the future' of the 'empire over matter', revealing it to be as metaphysical as the Martians that shatter it.

### *Edison's Conquest of Mars*

Wells's narrative of reversed imperialism was appropriate for Britain given that, as history was to prove, the dominance of the empire was waning. This important aspect of the narrative is lost when transposed into the American context, as the nation's emergence and increasing imperial ambition are not immediately reflected in the Martian Other. This discrepancy between the Wells original and the pirated version printed in the American 'yellow press' is addressed by Garrett P. Serviss in *Edison's*

*Conquest of Mars*, written as a corrective sequel to the *War of the Worlds* and serialised in the same newspapers that pirated the original text. Events take place after the original Martian invasion, with astronomers observing the same movements on Mars as had led to the first invasion. That the United States would not be paralysed by fear of the second wave or bowed by the humiliation described in the original narrative is quickly affirmed, naming New York as the centre of national resolution,

> Already a company had been formed and a large amount of capital subscribed for the reconstruction of the destroyed bridges over the East River. Already architects were busily at work planning new twenty storey hotels and apartment houses; new churches and new cathedrals on a grander scale than before.[63]

The word of hope travels around the world, along with admiration for the country and individual that made it possible, 'We shall be ready for them now. The Americans have solved the problem. Edison has placed the means of victory within our power.'[64]

Invasion by the Martians is, for Serviss, a problem that can be solved by scientific ingenuity and technological advancement, demonstrating the importance of the narrative as a precursor to American pulp science fiction. Edison convenes some of the world's leading scientists to pick apart the Martian weapons and vehicles from the first invasion, a group including representatives from the world's two leading imperial powers: Lord Kelvin from England and Herr Roentgen of Germany. He develops The Ship of Space, 'a flying machine much more complete and manageable than those of the Martians had been'[65] and the Disintegrator Ray – later used by the Martians in the

1953 film adaptation of *The War of the Worlds* – making all it targets disappear and leaving behind only a 'faint bluish cloud'.[66] The imperial positioning of America by the narrative shows how it projects the country's future role in global affairs, 'The United States naturally took the lead, and their leadership was never for a moment questioned abroad,'[67] and also the ambition it has for American ingenuity, as represented by Edison himself leading the counter-invasion force. It is America, through Edison, and not the Martians that represent the future for humanity in Serviss' sequel. Diverging from the octopus-like alien from Wells's narrative, Serviss' Martians are 'gigantic', 'monstrous',[68] and in being, 'Like men and yet not like men, combining the human and the beast in their appearance',[69] they strike as a less-evolved version of humanity. Resembling humanity's past rather than its future as in Wells, the Martians are equally symbolic of the imperial powers of the Old World, apt for conquest by Edison and America.

**The Panic Broadcast**

The pirating of *The War of the Worlds* by the *Boston Post* and *New York Evening Journal* demonstrates how the text can be rewritten into various contemporary settings, adapting the Martian technology so that they are applicably superior to whatever civilisation the author chooses as a target. In addition to Serviss' unofficial sequel, Wells's novel was plagiarised by the pulp science fiction writer Marius in his short story, 'Vandals from the Moon' (1928). Here, Los Angeles is invaded by spider-like aliens that arrive on Earth in a spacecraft that resembles a dragon. Where Wells's Martians use tripods, the Lunites use vehicles that look like metallic gargoyles,

destroying Los Angeles and killing its inhabitants with a Decay Ray instead of a Heat-Ray. As in *The War of the Worlds*, the invasion fails when the Earth's bacteria kills the aliens. A more significant transposition of the text into American culture was in the play written by Howard Koch, *Invasion from Mars* (1938) on Halloween of 1938. Thousands of Americans were sent into panic by a CBS radio broadcast of Orson Welles's production of the play as *The War of the Worlds*, an interpretation that saw the Martians landing at Grovers Mill, New Jersey, rampaging through New York until stopped by Earth's bacteria. Though the scenario and events of the play are preposterous, the verisimilitude of the presentation of the play as a news report disguises its implausibility, fooling casual listeners overly reliant on radio conventions and the veracity of authority to provide aid for thought and judgement, into believing it to be true.

Radio is a medium where the listener is entirely dependent on the broadcaster's integrity in providing accurate information because the listener cannot make visual verification of the evidence presented. Told that Martians had invaded Earth, the listener who is unaware of the fictional nature of the play must attempt to verify the information using an outside source or accept what is presented as fact. Aware of the alienation of the listener because of the difficulties in assessing incredible information, Welles's play moves quickly to prevent the listener from being able to stop to consider the plausibility of what is happening. The incredibility of the events pose a problem for the players in that they have to decide what the Martian spacecraft sounds like and present it so that the listener is able to believe that an extra-terrestrial vehicle has landed on Earth. This was achieved by employing unusual means; one instance being the sound of the unscrewing of the top of the Martian spacecraft, made

by twisting a grapefruit squeezer in a toilet bowl. There is an attention to detail that enables the verisimilitude of the play, such as Phillips's struggles with the length of the microphone wire and the mistakes in speech that interrupt the speakers' rhythms. Once the play has given the listener an impression of authenticity associated with news reports, the listener is inclined to suspend critical faculties that normally differentiate fact from fiction. Hence, the play is given potentially the same credence as a news report; its figures are trusted as presenters of factual programmes and newsreaders. In achieving a suspension of critical faculty, Welles is able to present the ludicrous to the listener who accepts it as truth; the listener has become over-dependent on the integrity of the broadcaster and is open to manipulation by Welles or agencies with more sinister motivation.

That people should depend on the radio as a provider of information and their authorities to help maintain their national wellbeing is a nigh-universally accepted necessity of life. Information must come from somewhere and, in practical circumstances, people must delegate responsibility for certain aspects of their lives to people who have a specialist understanding of those aspects. For example, a political delegation in a democracy is an election, where, in principle, a voter entrusts his/her share of constitutional power to a candidate deemed most capable of using that power the way the voter would wish it used. That people are able to choose to depend on an authority is an example of democratic freedom, those that wish to be delegated to can stand for election themselves. In America, it is this constitutional freedom that those wishing to appeal to American national identity cite as a fundamental American national characteristic. Americans call theirs the 'land of the free' in their national anthem, celebrating Independence Day on July 4$^{th}$ every year to commemorate the

date when their freedom from the British Empire was recognised constitutionally. American national ideology associates 'freedom' and 'independence' closely, perhaps synonymously. As 'dependence' is the antonym of 'independence', then for an American to depend in any way is, to a certain extent, to compromise a nationally held ideal, however impractical the alternative. Over-dependence, then, suggests a total absence of a freedom eroded by an increasing reliance on an external source intended initially to make life more comfortable. In an interdependent relationship such as that of public and authority, listener and speaker, the more reliant a public is on its authority, the greater the authority's margin for error in attempting to maintain and justify its status. An authority's role can become so entrenched that, barring a major crisis, that authority can be perceived as being perpetual, untouchable. It is at this state that the America of the play is in when we as listeners are introduced to it. Order is so established that:

> 'with infinite complacence people went to and fro about their little affairs, serene in the assurance of their dominion over this small spinning fragment of solar driftwood which by chance man has inherited over the dark mystery of time and space'.

The thrust of the play determines that America of has become too comfortable with itself, accepting readily the erosion of the autonomy of its citizens. The above extract includes a subtle but significant change from Wells's novel that re-emphasises the significance of the invasion. Wells used the word 'complacency', rather than 'complacence', and although either word is acceptable, for the playwright Howard Koch to make this change suggests that he is punning the word with 'complaisance',

as in polite deference. An infinite amount of polite deference suggests the presence of over-dependence; if the authorities have in turn become over-dependent on the weakness of the public to maintain order then an event rendering those depended on impotent would ensure that those dependent were left in turmoil, unable to fend for themselves. Public and authority are thus symbiotically over-dependent, reliant on each other in a negative manner and to a dangerous extent. The public need the authorities to provide information they are incapable of obtaining themselves, whereas the authorities need to maintain public ignorance to remain in a position of power, lest the public discover how incapable they are of the role they have undertaken for themselves and have been entrusted with.

Rather than attempting to break this vicious cycle of excessive reliance, the authorities perpetuate their impression of authority and listener ignorance. Though the providing of information is a positive function of the radio, the providing of misinformation is less commendable, done by the drawing of pre-emptive conclusions discouraging the listener from independent thought. Any useful enlightenment provided by the factual content of the specialist expertise is amalgamated with speculation, undermining the role of the radio as a provider of information. On occasion, speculation may be unavoidable, even desirable if the information requires its expert provider to clarify the significance of the information provided with a considered conclusion or opinion due to its specialist nature and lexicon. The expert figure in the broadcast is Professor Richard Pierson. He is introduced as 'the world famous astronomer', signifying the fictional nature of the broadcast and propagating the listener ignorance characterisation simultaneously, because the listener will not know who Pierson is due to his being an invention of the Mercury Theatre. Pierson

asserts his authority early in the programme by denouncing 'popular conjecture', perpetuating the idea of listener ignorance. Yet, his opinions are based on his own speculation, as he admits repeatedly that he has no insight into what is happening on Mars. His lack of knowledge compromises his role as expert, because he has as little idea of the significance of events as those he deems inaccurate in conjecture. His affirmation that there is 'a thousand to one' chance against life on Mars is meaningless and could be made by anyone with but a passing interest in astronomy. The Martian arrival proves Pierson wrong, the culmination of what is suggested implicitly since Pierson's introduction.

Pierson's failure as an expert incriminates the radio broadcaster for promoting someone so ill fitting the description. However, a greater source of compromise on the radio's credibility is made by the role of Phillips, the linkman and personification of the attitude of the radio: arrogant in its self-perceived permanence and importance in society. He interjects his thoughts and opinions, no more valid than those of the listener, with Pierson's. However lacking Pierson's analysis is, the bulletin denotes him the expertise that the listener is deferred to. Phillips' intermingling his opinion in with Pierson's invalidates the integrity of the deferral, because Phillips is not qualified to speculate on events in the way Pierson is established to be. Phillips is portrayed as being more aloof from his surroundings than Pierson, losing patience quickly with the farmer he asks for an eyewitness account and asking police to clear a space in the gathering crowd so that he can get a better view. Picking the farmer for the account allows Phillips to demonstrate the power at his disposal: he directs the broadcast, controlling who is allowed to speak and for how long. Even Pierson, having been chosen by Phillips or someone representing him, is limited in expressing his expertise

by Phillips' choice of questions. The information made available to the listener is controlled therefore by someone who has as little expertise as the listener, who has to depend on Phillips' asking the right questions to at least give Pierson the chance to make optimal use of his expertise. The denials of a connection between the landings at Grovers Mill, a small town on the outskirts of New Jersey, and the explosions seen on Mars suggest that the possibility that the two are connected has been mooted by someone and that the events have been anticipated to some extent. Phillips' questions to Pierson, particularly his asking Pierson the distance between Earth and Mars, also reflect this possibility; the play builds up dramatic tension by making an agency involved in passing of the information to the listener, whether Pierson, Phillips or those behind the broadcast, at fault for misleading the listener by not presenting a balanced view.

When events fail to placate listeners, the radio authorities attempt to create a mood of calm artificially by playing easy listening music as an aural soma. Before the bulletin, the choice of programme that the listener had decided upon was the Ramon Raquello concert, gentle Spanish music suggesting that the listener projected by the play is someone who wishes to relax and needs the radio to aid this desire. With the mindset of a person wishing to switch-off critical faculties in order to relax, the listener is framed by the Mercury Theatre as the final destination of the advancing Martians, punishment for failing to be vigilantly alert at all times. The intermittent news interventions contrast starkly with the feel of the music, being frantic and chaotic. There is an attempt to reassert the feeling of calm interrupted by the reports forcibly by returning to Raquello's concert. By then, the mood of calm has been disturbed; the more frequently the concert is interfered with, the less enjoyment the listener will

have, being too distracted by events at Grovers Mill. The drive to restore normality amongst listeners by returning to the programme becomes increasingly irritating, with events at Grovers Mill being of greater interest. Irritation soon becomes bewilderment, as the cutting to piano music when events are obviously significant suggests that the radio has lost all control of what it is reporting on and there is a grave danger that is proving unconquerable. Intended to instil a mood of calm, the piano music achieves the opposite; in the process of performing its role as a provider of information, the radio is inexplicably cut off. The piano music fails to compensate, causing a growing realisation that the authorities are not in control of the situation that they have been employed to control. The insistence of the piano music, even though it is obvious that events are occurring outside the listener's sphere of consciousness, portrays a society failing to cope with what it is confronted with and the impotence of the radio in handling the situation. The world is ending yet the radio, by playing the piano music, addresses the problem as it would a technical fault. Panic is created rather than dispersed by the radio's continued belief that the music can ease the listener's mood, because the listener realises that the radio has exhausted its range of measures, a recap of Wells's juxtaposing normality with invasion. The manic assertion of calm shows the self-importance of the radio in attempting to maintain a relaxed mood in a chaotic situation. Panic is an appropriate reaction given the devastation caused by the Martian invasion. By attempting to prevent this panic the radio supersedes its role as provider of information. Listeners are denied knowledge by the radio, having depended on it to provide them with information. Experts, whether scientific or military, are employed to give reassurance to the listener rather than to inform. Listeners in the play depend on the radio to shield them from the truth rather than to tell them what is actually happening; problems are taken care of

automatically so the listener needs only to feel the benefit of the solution and not to partake.

When the Martians come, they expose the inadequacies of the system of authority hinted at by the preceding events. Society's breakdown is reflected by the increasing desperation of the radio programmers to reassure the listener that the dependence on those represented by the radio is in no jeopardy. Measures to counter the Martian advance grow in intensity until the final, kamikaze effort proves unsuccessful. Each transfer brings fresh optimism that the order will be restored. Events become harder to discern after each failure; the more desperate the attack, the less concern there is with explaining it to the audience. Each change in perspective is an act of deference, as the listener is passed on in bureaucratic fashion to another group promising to rectify the situation. The system of deferential reliability is one that leaves the human forces divided, contrasting with the unified fluency of the Martian assault. Consequently, when the Martians fall, they fall as one to the same cause, but the ease with which they are able to topple humanity is a sign of the vulnerability of the human system. There is arrogance in the attitude of the armed forces, revealed in their seizing control of the radio. Intending to dominate, the military is dominated humiliatingly, being as incapable of protecting humanity from the invasion as Pierson was in identifying it. As the system breaks down, the authorities become more reliant on people relying on them to maintain public order rather than doing anything that actually helps. With their ability to handle the situation proven inadequate, those controlling the radio resort to empty reassurances of control in a vain attempt to prevent public panic, the key signal of an order thrown into disarray. Only a tool of authority rather than the authority itself, the radio is intrinsically powerless and as dependent on the scientists

and soldiers as the public, as it is they who attribute it the power it has over the listener, a point emphasised by Welles's production in the silence following the gas attack. This silence is all that separates the listener from the Martian advance. Listeners depend on the radio for information to preserve their well-being, but by failing to monitor its control and accepting the integrity of its experts and authority figures at face value they are offered nothing but reassurances as empty as the silence that follows the fall of the military.

Welles uses the medium of radio for two seemingly contradictory yet concurrent roles. Listeners unaware of the fiction of the play esteem the radio as an ally, informing them of the ongoing crisis and forming the last barrier between the listener and the Martians. When the radio goes blank, listeners are made aware that it is a pillar of civilisation that has fallen, a fixture in society that conveys its permanence until the society is destroyed by invasion. Being fiction disguised as a news report, the radio medium as used by Welles invades the listener's uncritical, absorbent mindset, exploiting the lack of preparedness for fantastic events. Like a disciplinarian schoolteacher, the broadcast assaults the listener for not paying attention or for arriving late, humiliating by sending the offenders into a futile panic before a bemused nation. The broadcast may have been successful in identifying the presence of over-dependence in American society, but Hadley Cantril's study shows that the play is askew when locating it. Although the panicking by sections of the American public shows that the play is accurate in gauging the reaction of people, gearing the play to frighten those most comfortable in society is a fallacy, based on the misconception that those most comfortable in the society are those most dependent on it. The study shows that those most susceptible to panic were those with the greatest

anxieties, the poor and the socially disadvantaged. It is these people who are most reliant on the reassurances made by the society protecting them, as they are the least capable of living independently of it. As a result those who the play is trying to warn, those with enough power and rationality to help bring an end to the perceived over-dependence in American society, are not those who would be most affected by the broadcast. Ironically therefore, it is those going about their little affairs most busily that will have been least troubled by the Martian invasion, perhaps not even noticing.

### ***The War of the Worlds*, dir. Byron Haskin (1953)**

Byron Haskin's film *The War of the Worlds* (1953), produced by George Pal, is a rendition of Wells's novel that is informed by Orson Welles's broadcast. Once again, rampantly destructive Martians attack human civilisation on Earth – this time, Los Angeles – without warning, proving irrepressible to all manners of human resistance but vulnerable to the Earth's bacteria that kills them just as conquest seems inevitable.

Film enables a significant difference from the earlier incarnations of the subject in the visual realisation of the aliens and what their invasion does to the Earth's landscape. In both Wells's novel and Welles's broadcast, the reader or listener was required to construct a mental picture of the Martians and their vehicles from descriptions given by witnesses. Though the revelation is paced on Wells's novel, the ships and the aliens are projected definitively on screen in film, meaning that the audience can see the aliens for themselves. Although the appearance of the alien in novel, broadcast and film is structured to induce the fear of the unknown in the audience, reactions to

the visually realised aliens are necessarily different than to aliens portrayed in text and the radio broadcast, however subtly. Ideas communicated by language alone can only suggest images rather than realise them, a detachment that forces the reader or listener to analyse the information in order to follow events. Whilst the description communicated prompts the creation of the terrifying image, it is the reader or listener that constructs the alien from personal experiences as the images are suggested, not projected; ultimately, the text and the broadcast manipulate their readers and listeners into frightening themselves. In film, this strategy is employed to a lesser effect in using suspense by withholding the Martians from the audience, giving fleeting glimpses of a Martian until eventually it is encountered. Where the uncertainty concomitant with text and radio is lost by the visual encounter, film achieves in the audience a visceral reaction to the unknown that non-image media is incapable of in that the alien appearance of the Martians is an invasion of the audience's sensibilities, tearing it away from the intellectual comfort of verisimilitude. A scream on sight by the female lead, Sylvia van Buren (Ann Robinson), indicates the appropriateness of horror at this juncture. In text, broadcast and film, the appearance of the actual Martians is delayed and staged, offering only a glimpse and mostly concealing them within their technological constructs. A key difference in Pal's film to Wells's text is through the representation of the Martian vehicles, capable of flight rather than perambulation and resembling manta rays instead of octopi. Rather than being another tentacle of the tripod like the Wells's Heat-Ray, the Disintegration Ray appears cobra-like, its venom incorporating nuclear technology.

Achieving a reaction of shock in the audience to the invasion was impossible for Pal given that the source material was nearly seventy years old at the time of the film's

release. Invasion was an oft-revisited theme in the previous decade during the rise of the science fiction 'B-movie', featuring in films such as *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and *Invaders from Mars*. Audiences for the films had grown used to the film's generic sequencing, meaning that the thrill from the invasion came in its anticipation rather than as a surprise. Where listeners to Orson Welles's broadcast in 1938 feared the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, audiences for *The War of the Worlds* had anxieties concerning the Cold War and the looming threat of nuclear war. Where future war invasion fiction uses elements of fact to support the thesis of speculation, library footage of troop movement is used to cement this association. Pal's film reflects Cold War and nuclear anxieties in the suddenness of the conflict and Martian deployment of weapons that utilise nuclear technology, the heat ray and disintegration ray. As Susan Sonntag notes in 'The Imagination of Disaster' (1967), these weapons not only kill, they obliterate, the instantaneity of death mirroring the perception of death by nuclear explosion. Readings of the film as an anti-nuclear proliferation allegory are given credence by the wistful hindsight of Dr. Forrester, the protagonist, wishing the military had attacked the meteor when it first landed. Conversely, the film does not reflect concerns over the deployment of nuclear weapons exclusively but also the dread of what happens if nuclear weapons don't work; the military uses the bomb as a last resort, only for it to fail without causing any damage to the Martians.

In reflecting nuclear anxiety, it may be argued that the film is more concerned about the Martians destroying humanity rather than dominating it. This contrasts with most invasion narratives in that the weapons are most commonly a means to achieve control, to subjugate rather than exterminate. Produced at the time of the Cold War, the film also plays on American nationalist anxieties associated with the fear of the

bomb. The film links the Martians to the Soviet Union implicitly by only showing pro-Western cities invaded and omitting Moscow; the interlude notes that 'a great silence fell over half of Europe', implying that it is no coincidence that Mars is known as 'the Red Planet'. This ethos is continued more subtly by the choice of people killed ruthlessly and unceremoniously by the heat ray. The first three men to die speculate on how they will make money out of the discovery and become famous as the first people to make contact with the aliens, representing ambitions of capitalism and celebrity that were opposed by Soviet communism. The next to die is a priest; Christianity was perceived as the main American counter to the atheist Soviet principles. However ridiculous the priest looks in approaching the Martians, Christian faith is given a recurrent importance; after the scientists calculate that the Martians will take six days to complete their destruction of the world, Sylvia notes that the number is as many days 'as it took to create it', followed by a poignant silence rather than a debate on the validity of creationism. Martian death is caused by bacteria that, we are told, 'God, in his wisdom' had placed on Earth. It is God therefore, not science or weapons, that defeats the Martians; where humans destroy, God preserves, as the Martians fail only after the humans have exhausted every offensive strategy and retreat to congregated huddling in church. Politically expedient, the covert prompting of anti-Communist anxieties in the audience enhances the danger and immediacy of the invasion and, in turn, the impact of the film. The importance of Communism to the film may only be in its contemporary perception as America's enemy rather than representing an abiding and intrinsic danger to American ideology, the latest enemy for the model of invasion narrative to represent.

Welles's broadcast associated the national significance of its invasion with the personal through the figure of Professor Pierson, the eminent authority challenged and broken by the Martian attack. In *The War of the Worlds* the scientist-protagonist figure is Dr. Clayton Forrester (Gene Barry). Like Pierson, Forrester is world-renowned in his field – astrophysics rather than Pierson's astronomy – a medium for the narrative to communicate information or informed speculation to the audience. He comes to the town as an outsider, detaching him from the naivety that the film associates with the small-town locals epitomised by their commemorating the landing of the meteor with a square dance. Unlike Pierson, whose certainty in judgement and identity as a source of knowledge is placed in turmoil by the Martian invasion, Forrester is infallible. There is no dissenting voice to his speculating on the meteor's alien origin, cementing Forrester's indelible authority to the audience. He is required because of the invasion and flourishes under it; he finds love with Sylvia against the backdrop of chaos and destruction. Though they were brought together because of the invasion they act on occasion as though in denial that the invasion is happening, at one stage finding time to sit down for a relaxing breakfast to talk through Sylvia's childhood traumas. The use of status is conservative, even the height difference allows Sylvia to be presented as looking up to him. After their breakfast is interrupted by a Martian attack, Forrester is given opportunity to display his qualities as an alpha male, protecting the shrieking, terrified Sylvia by beating an advancing Martian away with a stick. Forrester's physical prowess, social advancement and sexual success in the face of the invasion impresses as Darwinian when contrasted with Pierson, whose role in society and very identity were deeply disturbed by events. Bar Forrester and Sylvia, there is little exploration of the significance of invasion on individuals in the film. The only dissenting from the ideological position represented by Forrester as an

orderly, organised resistance to the Martians is a panicking mob stealing supplies intending to attack the Martians with and commandeering vehicles. Amorphous, the mob are dismissed as 'idiots' by Forrester, acting out of short-term self-preservation that fails to understand the value of what they plunder, reinforcing Forrester's intellectual authority by virtue of their collective stupidity.

The mob's primitivism sits uncomfortably with other examples of group behaviour in the film, such as the square dance, the crowd viewing the meteor and the church congregations. The former two, taking place before the first deployment of the heat ray, represent the people and the town as idyllic, based on traditional customs and innocence; the square dance in particular is oddly old-fashioned for the 1950s. Conflict in any form – quarrelling, tension, resentment, crime – is absent from the film's portrayal of the town. The latter is an attempt to restore what has been lost to the invasion, gathering in the church and praying for deliverance, hiding from the Armageddon outside and wishing away. The film mythologises small town America through this idyllic presentation, othering discordance as represented by the mob as a product of the invasion, not something revealed by it. Like the invasion, the mob is destructive, irrational and loud, a stark contrast to the quiet of small town. Through the quiet/loud dichotomy the film perhaps displaces notions of working class revulsion; the loud mob are poor, desperate predators surfacing in conditions of chaos that target the middle-class scientist authorities doing their utmost to save humanity. Forrester's rejection by the mob in getting punched in the face expresses how similar they are to the Martians, attacking without listening what he has to offer, choosing their own authority over his. A key difference between the other groups and the mob is the presence of Forrester, a patron that imbues the groups he is a part of with his

rational authority, justifying them to the audience. It is significant that, by ambushing the scientific equipment, the mob doesn't allow Forrester and the scientists a chance to attack the Martians beyond their common thriving on chaos; it is the military that fails humanity, not the scientists, preserving Forrester's authority to the audience throughout the film.

That Pal and Haskin should choose to transpose and contemporise Wells's novel rather than invent their own film is curious considering Orson Welles had done so twenty-five years previous for his broadcast. America's revisiting the subject is again symptomatic of neurosis, a parallel to those suffering trauma that relive harrowing experiences continually in order to come to terms with them psychologically. This idea of needing to correct what had happened surfaces in Forrester's wishing they had done more whilst the Martians were below ground. Susan Sonntag writes of science fiction films portraying disaster as expressions of a general hunger for a 'good war' that 'poses no moral problems, admits of no moral qualifications'.[70] Yet the invasion in *The War of the Worlds* goes further, expelling uncomfortable elements of humanity such as the mob cathartically by conveying them as a product of the Martian invasion. This process of transferring the undesirable reduces humanity as the film portrays it as much and as masochistically as it does the Martians, an othering that results in the destructive reconciliation of invasion.

The centennial anniversary of Wells text was celebrated in literature by *War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches* (1996) edited by Kevin J Anderson, based on the premise that the Martians invaded all over the world and not just London. Another writer honouring this anniversary was Robert Silverberg with *The Alien Years* (1997),

describing a fifty-year occupation of Earth by superior aliens, The Entities. It chronicles the cross-generational struggle of a Californian family, the Carmichaels, against the invaders. Recurring at numerous points in American history, most recently by Steven Spielberg in 2005, the revisiting of the narrative of *The War of the Worlds* by writers and directors demonstrates its lasting appeal and also how the invasion narrative is used to articulate anxieties that have built up over decades, signified by the referent of the recurrent narrative. Another narrative, Jack Finney's *The Body Snatchers*, has been revisited even more often than Wells's and is an example of the next classification of invasion narratives, stealth invasion.

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[1] Mike Ashley and Robert A. W. Lowndes, *The Gernsback Days: A Study of the Evolution of Modern Science Fiction from 1911 to 1936* (Holicong: Wildside, 2004), p. 77

[2] *War Stars*, p. 21

[3] *ibid*, p. 20

[4] H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds* (London: Pan, 1975), p. 11

[5] James Barnes, *The Unpardonable War* (1904) http://ia341205.us.archive.org/0/items/unpardonablewar00barngoog/unpardonablewar00barngoog.pdf [accessed 16 June 2010], p. 294

[6] Cleveland Moffett, *The Conquest of America*, http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext05/8conq10.txt [accessed 31 August 2005], Chapter 18

[7] *War of the Worlds*, p. 24

[8] *War of the Worlds*, p. 24

[9] *ibid*, p. 24

[10] *ibid*, p. 27

[11] *ibid*, p. 24

[12] *ibid*, p. 132

[13] *ibid*, p. 132

[14] *ibid*, p. 63

[15] *ibid*, p. 63

[16] *ibid*, p. 63

[17] *ibid*, p. 63

[18] *ibid*, p. 24

[19] *ibid*, p. 25

[20] *ibid*, p. 24

[21] *ibid*, p. 25

[22] *ibid*, p. 133

[23] *ibid*, p. 134

[24] *ibid*, p. 133

[25] *ibid*, pp. 133-4

[26] *ibid*, p. 134

[27] *ibid*, p. 135

[28] *ibid*, p. 134

[29] *ibid*, p. 43

[30] *ibid*, p. 151

[31] *ibid*, p. 151

[32] *ibid*, p. 66

[33] *ibid*, p. 66

[34] *ibid*, p. 29

[35] *ibid*, p. 31

[36] *ibid*, p. 74

[37] *ibid*, p. 50

[38] *ibid*, p. 51

[39] *ibid*, p. 67

[40] *ibid*, p. 51

[41] *ibid*, p. 117

[42] *ibid*, p. 131

[43] *ibid*, p. 132

[44] *ibid*, p. 138

[45] *ibid*, p. 51

[46] *ibid*, p. 9

[47] *ibid*, p. 134

[48] *ibid*, p. 52

[49] *ibid*, p. 73

[50] *ibid*, p. 171

[51] *ibid*, p. 37

[52] *ibid*, p. 191

[53] John Batchelor, *H. G. Wells* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985)

[54] *ibid*, p. 28

[55] *War of the Worlds*, p. 11

[56] *Fighters From Mars*, http://www.war-ofthe-worlds.co.uk/fight_2.htm [accessed 11th December 2007]

[57] *ibid*

[58] *War of the Worlds*, p. 16

[59] *Fighters From Mars*, http://www.war-ofthe-worlds.co.uk/fight_1.htm [accessed 11th December 2007]

[60] Wells's bicycle is mentioned in preface to the Atlantic edition of *The War of the Worlds*

[61] (*Dorking*, p. xvii). Clarke explains that Le Queux was commissioned by Baron Northcliffe (Alfred Harmsworth) to write an invasion of England for *The Daily Mail* following the Tangier incident of 1905. Seeking the advice of Lord Roberts, a former Commander-in-Chief of the British army, Le Queux imagined the Germans landing on the south coast of England and attacking London with a pincer movement. This did not please Northcliffe, who ordered a revision based on his newspaper's sales demographic.

[62] *ibid*, p. 52

[63] Garrett P. Serviss, *Edison's Conquest of Mars* (Los Angeles: Carcosa House, 1947), p. 9

[64] *ibid*, p. 9

[65] *ibid*, p. 10

[66] *ibid*, p. 14

[67] *ibid*, p. 14

[68] *ibid*, p. 39

[69] *ibid*, p. 40

[70] Susan Sonntag, 'The Imagination of Disaster' in *Against Interpretation*, (London, Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1967), pp. 209-225, p. 219

## Chapter Four: Invasion by Stealth

Published in 1848, *The Communist Manifesto* presented a system of ideas that its author, Karl Marx, believed would eventually supersede capitalism. Founded on capitalism, Marxism was held in suspicion in the United States. The national self-image of the United States as a free democracy meant it was the revolution; any set of ideas that were radically different could upset the hitherto successful trajectory. Though a set of universal principles, communism was linked to Eastern Europe by the Russian Revolution in 1917, providing a physical source in the American imagination for these ideas. Negatively reinforcing the idea of authentic American values without declaring what they were, this enabled the presentation of communism as a foreign ideology and communists as hostile alien invaders. Conversely, attempts were made to deport American-born leftists and anarchists to Finland during the Palmer Raids of 1919-20, illegally conducted by the United States Department of Justice under the authority of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer and supervised by the future head of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover. The raids ended after their being denounced by Massachusetts District Court Judge George Anderson when discharging seventeen arrested aliens in June 1920; the practice of deporting people with intellectual objections to the national status quo is satirised by the fate of Bernard Marx and Helmholtz Watson in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932).

Anxieties that have built up over decades concerning immigration and the arrival of ideologies and religious practices very different to those included in the dominant strands of Christianity are consolidated in the work of H. P. Lovecraft. Though not invasion – Lovecraft's protagonists routinely explore a source of horror that does not

encroach on familiar territory beyond a limited area – Lovecraft's work effectively prepares the climate for stealth invasion narratives by presenting a proximate, imminent fear, identified by Farah Mendlesohn as 'the sense of things that happen off the edge of the page, horrors that are to come, rather than the horrors that happen within the purview of the tale'.[1] It is this sense of a lurking horror that later writers of stealth invasion evoke, coupling it with the immediacy of threat characteristic of the invasion narrative. As with the examples of racist invasion fiction the superficial difference is a signifier of an even greater horror that is explored by the protagonist as the text unfolds. The technique that Lovecraft commonly employs is progressive estrangement, the gradual immersion of the reader – through the perspective of the protagonist – into an unfamiliar environment from a familiar starting point. The Other is a continuing source of horror throughout Lovecraft's fiction, set as an unquantifiable, immeasurable mysticism against the clinical rationality of the narrative perspective. Evil in Lovecraft is irrational, unscientific, dirty, poor, lawless, old and either demonic – as in the Cthulhu mythos – or alien. Described as a 'fever-dream of prejudice' by China Miéville,[2] 'The Horror at Red Hook' (1927) reinterprets the tired, poor, huddled masses welcomed to America by the Statue of Liberty as a collective of repulsiveness and terror, parodying modern America's utopian aspirations by conjuring old world paganism, a 'cancerous evil dragged from elder worlds' and remaining poor despite the economic prosperity offered by the country known as the land of opportunity, with 'squat figures and squinting physiognomies, grotesquely combined with flashy American clothing'.[3]

Imagined by Lovecraft as blighting the new American landscape, the denizens of Red Hook comprise the superficial manifestation of a lurking evil reprising the link with

the underworld drawn out by Cotton Mather in *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, the dark territory exempt from civilisation. This evil is immense but also elusive; the further Malone delves into Red Hook, the more vague the descriptions become, the less definable the objects he witnesses. The adjectives used evoke insidiousness and disgust, but the nouns are unspecific: 'half-formed shapes of hell'; shapeless elemental things with eyes'; 'a naked phosphorescent thing'. Similarly amorphous is the colour from 'The Color Out of Space' (1927), which is not even really a colour, 'it was only by analogy that they called it color at all'. Coming from 'some place whar things ain't as they is here', the colour is described in assorted, indefinite ways: as a 'ghastly miasma'; an 'unholy iridescence'; and a 'luminous amorphousness'. Prolonged exposure to the colour results in effects similar to exposure to radiation, a greying and a 'highly singular quality of brittleness' that leads to a 'crumbling to a greyish powder'.[4] Again, the otherness of the threat is explained and emphasised, resisting the attempts of the scientists to measure it and the narrator to describe it. Both narratives conclude with their respective horrors unexplained and still threatening; the anxiety each has provoked is left unquelled since the source of evil remains at large.

With Britain and Germany bearing the bulk of the costs of two expensive wars, the USA and the Soviet Union were the only remaining world superpowers in the middle of the twentieth century. Animosity between the two countries existed before the Second World War due to the drastic divide between their national ideologies. Post-war national anxiety in America – in addition to the residual anxiety remaining after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour – manifested into a heightening of anti-Communism, resulting in initiatives such as the National Security Act of 1947 which

'mandated a major reorganization of the foreign policy and military establishments of the U.S. Government' and 'created many of the institutions that Presidents found useful when formulating and implementing foreign policy, including the National Security Council'[5]. The act also saw the establishment of America's first major intelligence gathering agency, the CIA, and the merging of the War and Navy Departments into the Department of Defense. National anxieties over potential threats to the country from Communism saw the rise to prominence of Senator Joseph McCarthy, whose zeal in pursuing suspected Communists was satirised as witch-hunting by Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953). Expectations that friends, neighbours or members of the family could be Communists were raised by lurid public information films, whilst Broadway saw repeated runs of the Patrick Hamilton play *Angel Street*, brought to cinema in the United States by MGM Studios as *Gaslight* (1944)[6]. The narrative centres around a young bride, deliberately driven to the brink of insanity by her ostensibly American husband, who has changed his identity to conceal his murderous past. A lone psychopath rather than a secret Communist, the husband's indeterminately European real name of Sergius Bauer nevertheless provokes anxieties regarding foreign Others with a hidden agenda operating close to home. For invasion narratives, Communists working surreptitiously to subvert American rule or McCarthyites demanding the curbing of freedoms in the name of security became, in hive-minded collective organisms, plotting invasion from the inside by taking on human form or possessing people in order to fulfil their goal of domination.

Paranoia in contemporary America is reflected by the use of invaders that enter into the country undetected by the incumbents. Their influence grows unnoticed and

unchecked until it reaches a point where it endangers the nation's stability. When noticed, the size of the alien presence needs to be assessed before it can be calculated; the gap between the identification of the existence of the alien presence and the identification of the danger they represent to the territory allows for speculation that obscures the scale of the threat until its precise nature is determined. Paranoia is extreme speculation: either the exaggeration of an existing threat or the invention of an imaginary one. Drawing on paranoia to heighten the tension of proceedings, parasitic invasion fiction serves also to endorse the paranoid by imagining the realisation of nightmare. The Chinese immigrants in P. W. Dooner's *The Last Days of the Republic*, the formative stealth invasion text, are removed from their basis in reality as virtual slaves in a hostile alien environment and are contextualised as an amorphous collective, a Trojan Horse that enables an attack by a unseen danger, unknowable until the attack has commenced. Thus the paranoid are empowered; despite having no basis in reality from which to argue that Chinese immigration will destroy American civilisation, those warning against it are not only vindicated by the events of the text but are portrayed as most perceptive members of the incumbent society because of their ability to see what others cannot.

The post-war fatigue following the Second World War made the invasion narrative an unlikely vehicle for articulating anxiety at the time, yet Ray Bradbury's short story 'Zero Hour' (1947), a satire on intergenerational anxiety, sees war reintroduced into a peaceful world by a surprise alien invasion. The invaders arrive unopposed on Earth through interdimensional portals that lead to the suburban back gardens of New York, Scranton and Boston. Their passage is facilitated by their co-ordination of the young children living there through a game called Invasion; the children build a gateway for

the aliens using pipes, tools, cutlery, geometrical equations and their collective imagination. The difficulty for the reader in ascertaining the exact details of the invasion comes from the source of the information being Mink, a seven year-old girl who has trouble repeating her instructions when asked about them by Mrs Morris, her mother. Confirming the symbolism of Mars as 'the war planet' established in invasion narratives by *The War of the Worlds* and subsequent pulp science fiction, the invaders are first called Martians but are 'not exactly Martians', being 'I don't know. From up!'[7] The name of the children's alien contact, Drill, can be used in both a military and a building context. Mink explains that Drill's idea is 'to have a new way of surprising people. That way you win. And he says you also got to have help from your enemy'.[8] Using the energy and imagination of the children, Drill – and Bradbury – re-imagine the possibility of invasion as a stealth attack, overcoming the obstacles of post-war resilience to armed combat by circumventing them.

Mrs Morris's lack of comprehension of the Invasion game sets up a disparity between the adult world and that of the children, exploited in the story by the invaders. The inattentive adults are too preoccupied with their own concerns to notice Mink's development. Mink not only helps the invasion, she leads it, taking revenge on the 'tall and silly dictators'[9] that force her to take baths and stop playing when she's in the middle of a game. Like a Lovecraftian protagonist, Mrs Morris goes further into the children's game until she is overwhelmed, a crescendo effect of the gradual build-up leading to hysterical release:

> She was babbling wild stuff now. It came out of her. All the subconscious suspicion and fear that had gathered secretly all afternoon and fermented like a

> wine in her. All the little revelations and knowledges and sense that had bothered her all day and which she had logically and carefully and sensibly rejected and censored. Now it exploded in her and shook her to bits.[10]

Where Mrs Morris's horror may be expected by the reader due to the conventions of the invasion narrative, the difference heralded by 'Zero Hour' is that the location of the threat is in America's back gardens, providing a new frontier to be secured at a much more intimate level and an extension of the constant vigilance demanded by the Jeremiad tradition. Foreshadowing future stealth invasion texts, the adults fail to uncover the invasion because they fail to examine their gardens closely enough, looking under rosebushes and thorns 'only for snails and fungus'.[11]

Using science fiction metaphors, writers created parasitic invaders that reflected and encouraged paranoia by being virtually indistinguishable from the incumbents and potentially omnipresent. In these fictions, the agenda of the invader is furthered practically by representatives who share the appearance of the members of the existing society. In Robert Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters* (1951) and Murray Leinster's *The Brain Stealers* (1954), the invaders appropriate the bodies of the inhabitants by controlling their minds whereas in Jack Finney's *The Body Snatchers* (1955), the members of the small town community of Santa Mira, California are replaced by exact physical alien duplicates. The use of a small town environment plays to the paranoia in the reader through the idea that everyone residing there is supposed to know everyone else. In most examples of the fiction there is little material evidence of the invasion left by the invader; the presence of the alien is only evident in minute changes in behaviour. Therefore, the basis for the belief of the

existence of the threat is mostly, if not wholly intuitive, on a perception of reality rather than material reality itself, much like the rationale of the paranoid. In *The Puppet Masters* the Old Man, head of the agency charged with defending America from invasion, uses hunches rather than evidence to gain sufficient understanding of the alien. When challenged, he defends this practice as 'the result of automatic reasoning below the conscious level on data you did not know you possessed'.[12] Tellingly, this process is not bilateral; when asked to consider a possible scenario contrary to his position by the scientist Rexton, the Old Man counters, 'You've got no basis for an estimate'.[13] Invasion narratives depicting invasion by stealth can hence be said to justify the paranoid mind, articulating and realising anxieties that were hitherto exaggerated or non-existent.

**Psychological Significance**

Invasion by parasites rather than large armies changes the dynamic of the fiction. Citizens, like the territory, are invaded physically by parasites. This represents an extension of the reach of invasion from that of a standard invading army, able to enter the physical space of the country but not that of its inhabitants. Narratives of parasitic invasion focus more on the effects of invasion on individuals than those depicting invading armies while continuing to place events in a national or societal context. Consequently, the destiny of the individual is more closely aligned with that of the society or nation because the invading enemy seeks to gain control of the territory by targeting individuals. Intertwining the fate of the nation and the individual brings together the general and the specific, heightening the immediacy of the danger by

bridging the precedent distance between the national and the personal; the threat of physical invasion posed by a parasite is applicable equally to individual as territory. As the threat is common and palpable to both territory and individual, so are the anxieties associated with its presence. Providing an enemy that endangers the individual as readily as the territory, parasitic invaders personalise general anxiety by making it the concern and the responsibility of the individual. The role of the individual in narratives of parasitic invasion is thus more pronounced, with individuals such as Sam in *The Puppet Masters* and Miles in *The Body Snatchers* being idealised representatives of their respective territories acting to preserve the nation as it is or implement changes to it in order to achieve the ideal they project. Given the binary structure of invasion narratives, the parasite becomes more threatening on a personal level, less to the nation as it is for the duration of the text than the ideal of the nation held by the individual.

In narratives where the parasites are hive-minded entities with no discernible personality or motive beyond the desire to subjugate and control, readers are primed to configure the invader around their own personal anxieties. This is encouraged by the alien's ostensibly human appearance but is also helped by the vagueness of the actual alien entity; an amorphous space that allows the reader to transfer related and also unrelated fears on to. Perhaps because of this, writers using parasitic invaders invariably characterise them as stealthy intruders, avoiding exposure and creating uncertainty by being elusive and indistinct. Whereas invading armies attempt to gain control of a nation by attacking the hierarchy at the top – the centres of governing, industrial and military power – parasitic aliens operate in the opposite manner by controlling the minds and bodies of members of society, a creeping movement that

has the same aims and ambitions of societal control as those of an invading army but executes them via subversion rather than direct antagonism. The ultimate effect of this is total control of the nation; resistance that could foment beneath the attention of an invader seeking to gain control of the territory from the top of the hierarchy is quelled by parasites working upwards from the bottom even before control is achieved.

## Modern Demons

Perhaps the most important factor in determining the success of an invasion narrative is the credibility of the invader as a threat. Being an entity that survives at the expense of another entity, parasites are perceived unilaterally as detrimental to the health of the nation. Parasitic invaders have little verisimilitudinous merit; instead they are developed around psychological and religious fears of demonic possession. Such fears are historically acute, providing the basis of the notorious Salem Witch Trials of 1692 where nineteen people executed after spurious accusations of witchcraft, linked to the fiction explicitly in *The Puppet Masters* in its use of the term 'hagridden'. Traditional accounts of demons portray them as inhuman and otherworldly, a template of Otherness that lends itself to narratives of alien invasion. Like demons, aliens in parasitic invasion narratives are a corrupting influence, preying on weaknesses in those they seek to possess in order to defile and ultimately destroy their hosts. In other aspects, however, parasitic aliens have more in common with debilitating diseases[14] than traditional demons. Whereas 'like someone possessed' is an idiomatic expression used to describe a particularly energised individual, those acquired by alien parasites in invasion narratives are more sullen and lethargic than usual. Absence of emotion

being a symptom of alien control in Joseph Millard's *The Gods Hate Kansas* (1941), repeated in both *The Puppet Masters* and *The Body Snatchers.* Indicating a shift in morality, sexual desire is transformed from being a symptom of demonic possession to designating a person's freedom from parasitic control. Mary in *The Puppet Masters* identifies males subject to the parasites by their failure to react to her sexually, while Miles and Becky are told by the assimilates in *The Body Snatchers* that their vibrant love will not survive the process of duplication. There is a partial reversion of this shift in the cinematic renditions of *The Body Snatchers* where, upon assimilation, the female love-interest takes on the characteristics of a succubus, reapplying traditional demonic stigma to sexuality and divorcing sex from love.

Implied in the invaders' antagonism towards romantic attraction is the idea that they aim to destroy humanity by purging its quality and beauty, eradicating the potential for love, art, idiosyncrasy and meaning. Appropriately for entities symbolising anathema to the beauty in humanity, parasitic aliens are often hideous in various ways. Leinster's 'Things' in *The Brain Stealers* are ugly, acrid-smelling creatures, described to evoke revulsion, 'Its bloated belly had shrunk. The pinkish, hairless skin was flabby now. It hung in sickening folds.'[15] The parasites of *The Puppet Masters* are similarly vile, described as slugs to evoke a slimy, unsightly form and becoming pungent when killed to impress total sensual reprehension on the reader. Making the parasites visually and physiologically distinct from the human and therefore exacerbating delineation between invading and invaded entity, the ugliness of the alien appearance dispenses with relativism and heightens the negativity of the alien, casting the unknown Other as not merely dangerous but disgusting. Siphoning the splendour of humanity without providing anything in return despite knowledge of

advanced technology and intergalactic travel, parasitic aliens are worthless to humans. Since their presence is harmful, humans are given justifiable cause to kill them. *The Puppet Masters* is most explicit in advocating murder as the primary means of repelling the invasion although *The Brain Stealers* posits that violent fury is 'an excellent defence'[16] against the alien mind control and Miles and Becky in *The Body Snatchers* help fend off the invasion by setting fire to fields of seed pods.

Given that invaders conventionally represent ideas, movements and ideologies in the fiction, parasitical invasion narratives suggest implicitly that, being dispensable, the ideas, movements and ideologies manifested in the form of the alien are dispensable also. Where the enemy in early invasion fiction was represented by a recognisable Other – imagined as foreign armies from the likes of Germany, Britain and China – these parasitic invaders mark a change in the terms of reference of the fiction, presented as distinct images such as slugs and spores but representing something more vague than the traditional associations of national ideology, creating a margin of uncertainty that feeds into the reader's paranoia. Through the metaphysical potential of fantasy and science fiction, writers are able to make undesirable thoughts and ideas tangible, bringing them to life in order to have them killed or, more appropriately, cured. When the alien presented to the reader is a virus or disease, the assumption that it is harmful to a human and can – and should – be eradicated by modern American medical science is automatic. Eric Frank Russell's *Three To Conquer* (1955) features an alien virus that 'cannot think for itself any more than you can drive a non-existent car' but is extremely dangerous 'when in possession of a brain',[17] making a distinction between the merits of an idea in theory and the repercussions of putting it into practice. That the idea most requiring vaccination was communism is most thinly

veiled in *The Gods Hate Kansas*, where the alien Crimson Plague haemorrhages the brains of its victims. They remain in a hypnotic state until the American hero of the novel is able to travel the alien base and convince the invaders of the superiority of American reasoning, at which point the victims of the plague are released from their mental paralysis. Afflictions brought about by some parasites, however, cannot be undone. The antidote to the virus in Russell's novel is meningocci, cerebral spinal meningitis, which kills the parasite but also the host.

**Bugs and Detection**

Bugs and slugs as invaders invite various symbolic connotations that are particularly pertinent given the Cold War context of the fiction. A bug is a device used to conduct surveillance, the name given as a metaphorical comparison to insects to suggest the size and the tendency to hide in nooks and crannies. Like intelligence gathering agencies, surveillance devices were a fairly new development at the time of the publication of the narratives; bug-like invaders also embody the fear of the new and also an authority that is omniscient and omnipresent, able to watch and study at all times and know people with a horrible intimacy. Surveillance bugs destroy privacy, forcing those being listened to or watched to modify behaviour to prevent any sensitive information being revealed. With the absence of privacy, actions when under surveillance become a performance for the devices rather than an accurate representation, a parody of existence rather than a reflection. The use of the informal term for insects ensures the intertwining of the associations of insects with surveillance – proliferation, swarming and infestation – and also the processes

required to eliminate these elements: extermination. Killing the invader is acceptable because the lives of insects are valueless, even of negative value given that exterminators are paid to kill life identified socially as a pest. Invasion narratives using a bug-like invader become concerned with discovering an effective method of exterminating the invader, studying the invader's pattern and biology – a level of detail comparable to the invader's study of the incumbent when planning the invasion – to find mortal weaknesses. The bug symbol is metonymic, simplifying the reader's response so killing the invader is not stigmatised, being equated morally to the use of household pesticides.

A concurrent development in invasion fiction that helped shape the narratives alongside the social and political context was the development of pulp magazine stories and novellas into full-length novels. From being uncomplicated, action-oriented conceits, writers began incorporating more intricate plots, suspense and characterisation into narratives. In the science fiction-based narratives, this can be seen as a late realisation of Hugo Gernsback's conception of the ideal science fiction narrative as being along the lines of Wells, Verne and Poe. The main protagonists are invariably figures like Poe's M. Dupont: single men with either highly proficient or superhuman abilities in their fields of expertise. The use of stealthy, secretive invaders draws comparisons with detective and spy fiction because the plot requires the protagonist and any accomplices to first discover the existence of the invasion, then the motivation behind it and finally the means by which it can be repelled; they must possess the expertise to identify, diagnose and treat the invasion. Though, invaders adopting a human appearance are recognised as not being human by others in *The Puppet Masters* and *The Body Snatchers*, the efforts of Sam and Miles are essential in

the determination of the invader. In *Three to Conquer* the invaders are discovered by Harper, an amateur detective, only because he happens to be psychic. Both *The Puppet Masters* and *Three to Conquer* entertain the Nietzschean through their protagonists' extraordinary abilities, although this trait is faintly evident in all invasion narratives where the hero is a relatively isolated figure faced with adversity and a threat much larger in number. This commonality of essentially a lone figure thwarting the schemes of an amorphous mass of invaders is culturally symbolic in view of the American setting of the narratives; the texts endorse the outstanding individual able to rise above the masses and can therefore be said to prize individuality –perhaps individualism – as the antidote to the forces of conformity represented by the invaders, whether Communism or McCarthyism.

Not all portrayals of stealth invasion are paranoid. Algis Budrys's short story 'Silent Brother' (1956) reverses the expectations of the uncertainty period, the moral being that alien 'parasites' do not necessarily have to be invaders. Investigating an unexplained phenomenon around the vicinity of the Earth's atmosphere, the crew of the exploratory spaceship lose control and are about to crash, repeating 'this is invasion!' until the very end when they are saved by an invisible hand that guides their ship to safety whilst bringing to mind economist Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776). Also featuring benign aliens that interfere with humanity, Theodore Sturgeon's novel *The Cosmic Rape* (1958) identifies the recurrent fears of the hive-minded alien and the loss of autonomy in stealth invasion fiction and personifies them in the figure of Gurlick, a cowardly, stupid, self-interested vagrant. Sturgeon's novel preaches liberation through invasion and freedom through loss of autonomy as humanity only reaches its potential when the world lives and works as one, and it

takes an alien invader to bring this about. Humanity's transition in *The Cosmic Rape* is not a smooth one; the sacrifice of a child, Henry, is required for it to happen, a metaphor conveying that a loss of innocence or naivety of principle is necessary for the nation to develop. Sturgeon also reverses the gender expectations of invasion by making the alien entity female and naming her Medusa after the snake-haired woman in Greek mythology whose transfixing gaze was capable of turning any man meeting her eyes to stone.

**Significance for Invaded Territory**

Typically hive-minded and seeking to expand a totalitarian philosophy to prospective colonies, parasitic invaders are set against American ideals of individual freedom and democracy. Through this opposition, totalitarian systems are characterised as parasitic, destructive and unnatural, able to exist in America only if imposed by external forces. Following this logic, invasion fiction projects a revisionist view of American history, implying that individual freedom and democratic rule is the result of an organic process. This implication serves to justify the European settlement as part of the organic process – as manifest destiny – that deemed the land to European ownership by God's will. Therefore, parasitic invasion narratives are underpinned by the contention that America is protected from totalitarianism by God, a conceit inherited from early invasion narratives and maintained through fifties science fiction despite the atheism and Darwinistic influences of many of the genre's writers and editors. Increasing the emphasis of the negativity of parasitic totalitarianism, invasion narratives are usually set in small town America, the emotional 'heartland' of the

country's ideals of freedom and individualism. Writers draw an exaggerated comparison between totalitarian hegemony and libertarian self-determinism by portraying America through the pastoral microcosm of the small town where individuals and community are more conspicuous and important than in the amorphousness of big cities. After invaders have penetrated the town to gain a degree of control, the closeness of the small town community becomes a means of alienating those not yet subject to control, turning insiders such as Miles and Becky into outsiders and insisting on submission to invasion via peer pressure.

Relayed through the perspective of figures alienated from their communities, invasion narratives draw upon fears of conspiracy and being conspired against to impress the severity of events on the reader. For reasons of which they are unaware these figures become increasingly estranged from their communities as more people they had understood to share values with alter in a way that becomes hostile to the previous mode of existence and those – like the figures – continuing to adhere to it. Narratives are informed in this by real or perceived conspiracies throughout American history: the 'satanists' threatening the moral health of America in Salem or the Confederate plot to assassinate President Lincoln. In the context of *The Body Snatchers*, anxiety over being conspired against brings associated fears of abandonment by friends and acquaintances and no longer belonging to the community. Though presented altruistically as working for the greater good of the human race, Miles and Sam have selfish reasons for reacting against the invasion as both perform roles that are of central importance to their pre-invasion societies. In the event of successful invasion, these roles and therefore their personal status would diminish. Like the totalitarian-democratic distinction, the effects of conspiracy in invasion narratives are more

pronounced because of the small town setting. Changes in lifestyle for people in a small town with a strong community identity are more obvious than in a city where divergent, parallel existences are common. Unlike a city, most people in a small town are known to each other; there is greater horror in a conspiracy against a person by friends, neighbours and relations – the manifestation of the hostile and unknown in people though to be friendly and familiar – than by strangers who are unknown to begin with.

***The Puppet Masters***

The most prolific of America's nationalistic science fiction writers was Robert Heinlein, who had two serialised pulp novels depicting America invaded published after the war: *The Puppet Masters* and *Sixth Column* (1949).[18] Heinlein begins *The Puppet Masters* by dichotomising invader and invaded from the first paragraph, immediately defining the terms of the text. Written in the first-person, the text affiliates the reader with the narrator by using 'us' and 'we' and defining 'our' side as the 'so-called human race'.[19] Siding with the invaders is, from the narrative perspective, 'so outrageous, so damnably disgusting that I hate to mention it'.[20] The narrator is Sam, 'all-American' secret agent intensely loyal to his country. While his codename suggests Uncle Sam or a Sam Brown army belt, his birth name is Elihu, a biblical name taken from the figure in the Book of Job: a young man who is righteous without being considered wise, who remains quiet until his opportunity to express himself arrives. The invasion is his rite of passage; he discovers his purpose, and with it his identity, because he is possessed, defining himself against his 'master' and all it

represents. His boss is his similarly patriotic father, the Old Man, who 'would bury us alive, too, if he thought there was as much as a fifty-three percent probability that it was the Tree of Liberty he was nourishing'.[21] 'We', therefore, stands for liberty and its defence, and the invaders represent forces that seek to deny it.

Breaking from the common pattern of invasion narratives, the location of the first sighting of the alien presence in *The Puppet Masters* is inland rather than a coastal town or city. Heinlein's slugs arrive in Iowa – America's largest state – near Grinnell. Their entering the nation at its centre from space demonstrates the change in the dimensions of warfare in invasion narratives, nullifying the effectiveness of border defences by bypassing them completely. The size of the state where the saucer lands emphasises the stealth of the small invader, strategically away from central government and defence agencies in an area easy to hide in. Having landed, the slugs strategy is to expand their influence, concealing their presence by positioning themselves to control the flow of information. Spotted and reported, the landing is investigated by an undercover agent who loses contact with the agency after encountering 'little creatures'.[22] The landing is 'revealed' to be a hoax constructed by two farm boys at the instigation of a 'stereocasting' station's announcer, but this explanation is refuted by the Old Man. He leads a subsequent investigation that finds the two boys – now using the site of the hoax as a pay-to-enter attraction – to be possessed. Later, when the President and the Old Man is attempting to monitor the progress of a counter-offensive on a state-by-state basis, they are presented with a message from Iowa purporting to be in compliance with the wishes of central government. Inspecting it closely, the Old Man decides that it is faked:

> The explanation is simple; the Des Moines station picked up a Schedule Bare Back street scene from some city not contaminated and rechannelled it under their own commentary. They chopped out anything that would localize it.[23]

Heinlein's invaders act also to possess the Assistant Secretary to the Treasury and thirteen members of a Congressional hearing. The invasion is an infiltration of the nation, beginning at a low level and progressing to the higher echelons of human authority, targeting the media to conceal the invader's existence and government to further its agenda via the appropriation of power and influence. The spread of the invasion is viral; humans are 'infected' at close proximity to those who are possessed, with parasites needing an organic host in order to survive, whether human or animal. As with new, dangerous viruses, agencies 'contaminated' by the invader are susceptible to epidemic, meaning that once infiltration has occurred, the invader's presence grows quickly, subjugating the target group if allowed to proliferate.

After a captured specimen of the invader is met with scientific curiosity rather than trepidation when presented it to the head of the biological laboratory, the Old Man commands, 'be afraid of it! That's an order'.[24] Curiosities regarding the biology of the aliens are partially satisfied by discussions between scientists Vargas and McIlvaine, with McIlvaine believing the invader to be 'a four dimensional worm in spacetime, intertwined as a single organism'[25] and conjecturing its duplication as 'not reproduction, but a single organism availing itself of more space',[26] a subtle echo of the Nazi expansion as *Lebensraum*. Excepting such asides, Heinlein strives to present his invaders as something to be feared rather than understood. This fear is encouraged

through the appearance of the aliens - encouraging unease in the reader - and their ability to possess. Described initially in purely objective terms, 'greyish, faintly translucent, and shot through with a darker structure, shapeless',[27] the reader is presented with information to draw a conclusion about what creature the alien closely resembles. Clarifying the inference beyond doubt, the agents begin to refer to the aliens as 'slugs', a description that, at each mention, conjures an image of the ugly garden pest. Heinlein proceeds to draw attention repeatedly to the disgusting nature of the aliens, providing the detail and then using it to propagate the repugnance. This is done commonly through the accounts of their movements: attention is frequently drawn to their pulsating and palpitating; a detached slug 'oozed away'[28] from harm; their fission is 'opalescent horror'.[29] Slugs are slimy to touch, and the thought of such a creature pulsating on its victim's back compels the reader to feelings of revulsion. Even in death the slugs remain abhorrent, becoming a 'stink of decaying organic matter',[30] reducing the humans' satisfaction of killing them to a 'monstrous and nauseating'[31] experience. Later, the aliens are given the name Titans in relation to their base on one of Saturn's moons, also connoting the scale of the invasion as large and looming, compensating on a primal psychological level for the unthreatening diminutive size of the slugs. America's Calvinistic history is invoked by *The Puppet Masters* in its use of possession as the means of invasion; the invaders are characterised as demonic by inference. This elliptical comparison is perhaps also informed by *Dracula* (1897) and the myth of the vampire; the slugs possess through necessity, 'the drive to survive',[32] just as vampires crave blood. There is a difference between the possessed humans and the non-possessed that those involved in the situation are able to discern, varying from the slightly unusual behaviour to the physical markers; slugs that have abandoned or been forced off their hosts leave red

marks all over the host's back, vaguely akin to the punctures that indicate a vampire bite but more relevantly recalling the needle piercing left after experimentation with mind controlling drugs. The greatest difference in physical appearance of a possessed human in *The Puppet Masters* is the 'unnatural', 'soft and undulating'[33] hump between the shoulders, although this is very difficult to spot, resulting in incidents of people with hunched backs but no slugs being accosted embarrassingly by Sam. Ultimately, the slugs prove so difficult to detect that the humans have to discard their clothes indefinitely, allowing for a suggested contrast between the human body and the 'naked and ugly'[34] form of the alien.

Parasitical possession is a further degree of invasion than mere territorial, as the invasion is extended to a personal level. Heinlein creates terror in the reader by using an invader that removes the autonomy of the individual internally rather than externally by political means. After demonstrating the danger of the invaders through the reaction of the agents to their appearance, the full effects of possession on the humans is presented explicitly to the reader by the assimilation of Sam. Passages depicting Sam's possession provide a stark contrast stylistically to the usual fluent, passionate, often idiomatic description to create an 'absent-minded'[35] effect. From the moment of possession, Sam suffers from a lack of clarity, performing 'necessary' actions without conscious reason and seeing 'with a curious double vision'.[36] Possession is abundant with 'conscious' absences: he 'felt no surprise and no curiosity' and barring 'the contentment of work that needs to be done',[37] no emotion. Heinlein is quick to reaffirm that this is not a natural state of being by unravelling Sam's psychological layers of consciousness:

> Someplace, more levels down than I understand about, I was excruciatingly unhappy, terrified, and filled with guilt, but that was down, way down, locked, suppressed; I was hardly aware of it and not affected by it.[38]

This repressed agony informs the reader that the contentment of possession is not inner peace, and that though seemingly favourable – the 'hagridden' Old Man tells Sam 'I had no idea a man could feel such peace and contentment and well-being'[39] – the effects of subordination are detrimental, psychologically and physically. Sam endures 'ever-repeating, claustrophobic nightmares' and chronic hunger because 'the reflex cut off',[40] the latter only remedied when he nearly collapses. Heinlein suggests through Sam that it is only 'custard heads' that could fall for the illusory benefits of Titan control, 'surrender their souls willingly for a promise of security and peace'.[41] *The Puppet Masters*, written in a post-war period, is perhaps expressing scepticism at the New Deal and the optimism it garnered. A similar theme is raised in *Sixth Column*, where Ardmore attacks members of his own side for adopting the same attitudes of those composing the Treaty of Versailles in believing that peace can be achieved 'once and for always'[42]. The mantra promoted by these two narratives in this instance is essentially an equivalent to the future war pamphlet fiction published before and during the First World War, updating the message from 'prepare for war' to 'remain prepared for war'. Whilst the slugs are unnatural, acceptance of and belief in what they offer is cast as the product of delusion, a conceit to lull America back into a pre-war false sense of security and unpreparedness.

To understand more about the possession process, Vargas and McIlvaine subject a chimp, Satan, to the alien. Sam describes the scene as 'like watching an execution'; usually aggressive, once placed in the cage with other possessed gibbons and chimps Satan 'shrank back against the door and began to whine',[43] then tries desperately to escape being possessed until a 'squad' of two gibbons, a chimp and a baboon grab him and hold him down. This passage illustrates the instinctive reaction to the invader. After witnessing the possession, Sam is intent on vengeance, narrating, 'I wanted to smash something – for me, for Satan, for the whole simian race'.[44] Heinlein relies on this excerpt to portray the aliens' primordial repellence, providing no similar example of a terrified citizen to reflect the appropriate response to the alien. Due to the absence of individual citizens from the narrative perspective, anxiety in the text stems from and is articulated by the government agency, particularly Sam. The significance of this is that Sam interprets the invader for the reader. He qualifies his fear of the slugs to the reader frequently in an attempt to convey the severity of the situation; perhaps a necessity given the lack of variety in the human perspectives depicted. The narrative accuses the sceptical reader of not being capable of understanding the threat having not experienced it:

> The thought of that *thing* right behind me all the way from Iowa was more than my stomach could stand. I'm not squeamish – but you don't know what the sight of one can do unless you yourself have seen one while knowing what it was.[45]

Here, the narrative is insisting that the reader relinquish objectivity and accept the authority of what is being relayed. The narrative stresses that the potency of the fear

in *The Puppet Masters* comes from how possession alienates because it is an experience that cannot be empathised with fully. Readers are dependent on the narrator for information in all narratives; a weak or unreliable narrator inhibits the reader by presenting a flawed or incomplete assessment of the mood or significance of events. By asserting his inability to convey the experience to the reader, Sam increases the reader's dependence on his judgement because Sam can understand what the reader cannot. Referring to the alien as 'that *thing*' obscures the reader's objective understanding of the invader in order to provoke a negative association. The term is vague to elicit the primal and irrational, allowing the projection of proximate anxieties to secure a strong, fearful response to the invader. Possession estranges Sam further from the reader, who is asked to accept the increasingly intense attitudes towards the invader. Being possessed alters his perception as it is only after the possessor is removed that Sam develops an uncompromising hatred of the slugs. Sam's reaction when asked about how much he could remember is to feel 'a sudden wild fear'.[46] His rationality as a judge is distorted by this primal instinct overwhelming his intellectual control, yet this is not presented as a hindrance to his ability to convey the appropriate mood. Juxtaposed with the two scientists when observing the possession of Satan, Sam is affected by the 'contagious'[47] hysteria of the chimp whereas Vargas and McIlvaine were talking excitedly, apparently unmoved'.[48] Though the expert figures provide the reader with statistical data and biological information for the invader, it is Sam – not the scientists – that draws the conclusions. His perspective is the conscience of the text; Americans should hate and fear potential enemies and use that extreme emotion to energise efforts to defend the nation, trusting the authorities to direct and channel that energy by identifying the source of threat and developing strategies to counteract it.

Perhaps the most significant uncertainty regarding the slugs is their reason for invading. Portraying the aliens as anonymous group creatures allows Heinlein to project his characters' fears on to them. The exact motive of the aliens is never revealed, but this does not prevent the inclusion of speculation by the humans as to what it is. Described by David Seed as 'transparently a Cold War allegory'[49], *The Puppet Masters* speculates as to where the slugs were most likely to succeed:

> Too big to occupy and too big to ignore, World War III had not settled the Russian problem and no war ever would. The parasites might feel right at home there.[50]

Excepting America, Heinlein refers to Russia in *The Puppet Masters* more often than any other country, commonly to reinforce the antagonism towards the Soviet Union. After speculating on whether the slugs had invaded Russia, Sam concludes, 'I wondered what difference it would make'[51] and after recovering from being attacked on his honeymoon Sam is given choice between missions to either the slug controlled area of America or Moscow. Hive-minded collectivism was a common way to represent communism unfavourably, whilst the plot to assimilate the President is indicative of the suspicion of political subversion. However, though the aliens are associated with the Russians, and anti-Communist fear is used to establish the terror of the invaders, the invaders are made distinct from the Russians, most explicitly when Sam comments on the spread of the 'Asiatic plague':

> The Russians were crazy, granted. But their public health measures were fairly good; they were carried out 'by the numbers' and no nonsense tolerated... The Russian bureaucrats had even cleaned up China to the point where bubonic plague and typhus were endemic rather than epidemic.[52]

The specific mention of the 'public health measures' is an example of the Titan system acting differently to the Communist system of the Russians, marking the distinction between nationality and ideology at a time where 'Russian' and 'Communist' were often regarded synonymously. That the two are not necessarily intertwined marks the change in the perception of war as something to be fought over psychological rather than physical territory, for 'hearts and minds' rather than land. Accordingly, Sam proposes that for this type of war 'what I thought and felt may be more important than what I did'.[53] Heinlein thus promotes America as an ideology rather than a nationality. Heinlein's American ideology is oppositional, requiring an Other to define it in relative terms. Separating 'Communist' from 'Russian' demonstrates the permanency of 'the enemy' as an idea and the transience of who specifically 'the enemy' is; America's enemy could be slug-like aliens as readily as Russians, with the only certainty being its presence, which is a reflective necessity for American identity. Despite this paradigm shift in approach to war, America is reduced to a display on a tactical computer screen where green indicates human military safe zones and red a severe Titan presence. After a major offensive that disturbs the status of the zones, Martinez remarks to the President, 'A little like election night, eh chief?'[54] The text remains bound by the material, seeing success and failure in war in terms of physical territory won and lost.

By positing that humanity is invaded and degraded through the aliens' inhibiting of human freedom, *The Puppet Masters* suggests elliptically that an ideal society would provide an alternative to control. Yet, the America invaded by the aliens becomes one subject to the level of control perceived to be such a vice in the slugs. As an agent of a top-secret government intelligence agency, Sam as a subordinate to the Old Man is not representative of the public at large. His decision to marry Mary under the name he was given by the agency for this mission shows how much he is controlled by the agency; the assigned identity becomes more important than his 'real' one as it is the one he takes. The Old Man is his father, which is suggestive of the dominance of hereditary patriarchy in 'free man' Sam's career path and even his love life; Mary is compared closely to Sam's mother and Sam wonders whether his father orchestrated their meeting and marriage. On first seeing Mary he explains, 'I had noticed that there was another person in the room, but when the Old Man is present he gets full attention as long as he wants it'.[55] Heinlein encourages doubt in the reader over the consistency of such a position by having Sam doubt the integrity of the Old Man, but there is an attempt to assuage these doubts by his claiming 'the most I ever do is lead a man on the path he wants to follow'.[56] Whilst subordination may be a necessity within military organisations, the narrative does not condemn the extension of this control to the entire country. The Old Man announces that 'the safety of all of us – of our whole race – depends on complete co-operation and utter obedience'.[57] The President is 'straightforward and rational' in announcing that 'grave invasions of civil guarantees will be necessary, for a time'.[58] Yet, as in *Sixth Column*, the length of this time is unspecified and potentially indefinite, given Colonel Kelly's assessment that 'we are going to have to learn to *live* with this horror, the way we had to learn to live with the

atom bomb'.[59] Tolerant of certain restrictions, regulation becomes problematic again when it restricts the freedom of movement of the agents. In addition to accusing the scientists of 'trying to play God', Sam criticises 'all wise statesmen and bureaucrats' for exercising a 'Mother-Knows-Best-Dear' policy'[60] in regards to information. Ironically, it is democracy, the very thing Heinlein's narrator claims to be defending, providing the largest obstacles. Sam derides a congressional hearing he is present at as 'a joke',[61] insisting that the President 'should declare martial law and get action'.[62] The British system of electoral government is portrayed with equal contempt, obstructing the unelected King who had 'wanted to set an example'[63] and declare a ban on clothes. Here, the text negotiates between promoting freedom as being worthy of preservation and resorting to authoritarianism by attacking institutions representative of freedom for being weak and inept.

Sam's complaining is most vociferous when restrained from unremitting violence. After his master is tortured and killed by the Old Man, Sam begins to shake because he can't kill it himself, believing he needed to kill it 'to make me a whole man again'.[64] Believing that he was in a position to kill it, Sam was earlier 'warm and relaxed, as if I had just killed a man or had a woman – as if I had just killed *it*'.[65] Murder in *The Puppet Masters* is acceptable, even desirable. Sam sympathises most keenly with those 'who wanted to shoot first and study later',[66] and hopes for a weapon to kill slugs without killing humans, recalling the aimless blasting enabled by the Ledbetter Effect in *Sixth Column* of lethal atomic rays able to discriminate by race, killing PanAsians but not white Americans. Heinlein uses italics to convey Sam's glee at any slug death and this drive to vengeance culminates with the triumphalist post-narrative, ending in the words '*Death and Destruction!*',[67] italicised,

capitalised, exclaimed and given a separate paragraph. The wanton violence unleashed in this reaction to the slugs shows that it is ultimately the humans that are to perform the role of devastating invader introduced by *The War of the Worlds*.

In *Sixth Column*, Heinlein seems to explore the meaning of what it means to be a 'free man' independently of an oppositional definition against the invader, with figures such as the itinerant hobo Jeff Thomas and the anarchist Finny emphasising the potential available to the American citizen for diversity in lifestyle and ideology. By contrast, *The Puppet Masters* focuses on one individual, Sam, who leads a regimented life as an intelligence agent subject to the strict authority of his boss, his father. Sam justifies his rage against the slugs as a yearning for autonomy, reacting angrily to people and things that attempt to take that autonomy away. Yet Sam's freedom is as subject to the agency as it would be to the slugs. The invasion in *The Puppet Masters* serves to highlight this level of control endemic in Heinlein's Earth society; the freedom championed by Sam is one that comes with heavy restrictions. Sam comes to represent something more terrifying than the invaders themselves, being a member of 'the toughest, meanest, deadliest, most unrelenting – and ablest form of life',[68] the narrative delighting in the survivalist aggression that it condemns the invaders for. Ultimately, the moral of the narrative compares to the pre-First World War future war narratives: America must adopt the characteristics of an invader in order to defend itself from invasion.

### *The Body Snatchers*

Invasion narratives dwell in the adversarial. Typically, such fiction is a negotiation of values between opposing agencies: the invader and the invaded. As the territory upon which this negotiation takes place is occupied, the starting point for the negotiation is the set of values represented by the incumbent. The role of the invader is to challenge the inhabited territory. It confronts the known and familiar represented by that territory, threatening to alter the existing environment to better suit its presence or even replace the environment entirely. In Jack Finney's *The Body Snatchers*, the invader is characterised as an alien entity that steals the human form in order to replace humanity, remaining aesthetically true but to the original but leaving it without 'strong and human' emotion, only 'the memory and pretense of it'.[69] This assessment is presented to the reader through the first-person narration of Miles Bennell. Miles is the local doctor of the invaded location, the small Californian town of Santa Mira. His status means he knows all the town's residents, granting him the authority to diagnose the town as the invaded territory, perpetuating the common thematic metaphor in invasion narratives of invasion as disease, invaders as parasites subsisting at the expense of a healthy but vulnerable organism. Represented in the novel primarily by Miles and his companion Becky Driscoll, humanity resists the invasion by rendering the environment 'fierce and inhospitable',[70] driving the alien away by sheer determination, a facet of the essence of humanity that the aliens cannot reproduce.

Although they appear human, the invaders in *The Body Snatchers* are not humanoid aliens from another planet in the pulp science fiction tradition. Indeed, using the term

'invaders' is misleading; 'they' are a collection of spores that have drifted to Earth from an undetermined part of the universe and 'their' corporeality is a reflection of those who have been invaded. Having entered the Earth's atmosphere the spores go through a process that results in their supplanting human beings. Landing in rural areas, the spores germinate into pods which, when placed in close proximity to a sleeping human, transform into the physical duplicate of that person. When the copy is complete, the duplicate steals the life from the subject in order to animate itself, leaving the original to crumble to dust. It replaces the original, pretending to the unassimilated that nothing has changed yet secretly working with other duplicates to ensure the spread of the invasion. Duplicates retain everything of the original apart from what the novel characterises as the most important aspect of human life: emotional quality. Without it, the duplicated human race is destined to die out a mere five years after replacing the original. There is no purpose to the invasion other than genetic survival, as Miles is told:

> The function of life is to *live if it can*, and no other motive can ever be allowed to interfere with that. There is no motive involved... We continue because we must.[71]

These features of the invasion process evoke numerous psychological and contemporary social anxieties. Published in 1955, the use of spores in *The Body Snatchers* could be interpreted as a play on Cold War anxiety with its concomitant fears of the next super-weapon after the atomic bomb; specifically the research into biological warfare. Cold War angst is more transparent in the motif of an externally forced implementation of a restrictive mode of existence on members of an ostensibly

free society, whether a Communist dictatorship or the McCarthyist erosion of civil rights. That the pods can only assimilate when people sleep quite transparently conveys the message that inaction is complicity – that conformists must be resisted with absolute and unwavering vigilance – although perhaps also triggers dormant anxieties from childhood over monsters under the bed. Published against a background of anti-Communist propaganda, the novel exploits the paranoia of the era that the enemy could be anywhere. Seeing a reflection of one's relatives, friends and neighbours in the invader is a nightmare of peer pressure and isolation, coupled with the seduction of ceasing resistance to the suspicion that those enforcing the conformity may be right, that submission is inherently desirable. This reflection is, at times, revealed to extend beyond physical appearance. Humans in the novel are defined against the duplicates through their conviction that there is more to people – specifically 'human' emotion – than the pure function of genetic survival, but they too act out of necessity rather than morality or ideology as the human race will cease to exist in five years if the assimilation is allowed to take place.

Following a pattern common to American invasion narratives, the invasion takes place in a small, rural town: Santa Mira, California. Small towns in American culture are often portrayed as being simultaneously detached from and central to the nation, built upon the 'mom and apple pie' ideal of pastoral family life and innocent of the complications and ambiguities of industrial capitalism and international politics. A coastal town, Santa Mira is drawn with only one road leading out to the rest of America; the social isolation of the American small town is reflected physically, exaggerated by the lack of maintenance after invasion that leaves the road unusable. A doctor born and raised in the town, Miles works as a plot device that allows Finney to

introduce characters without needing to elaborate extensively on incidental background whilst confirming Miles as a pillar of the community, someone who can represent the town's consciousness and identity having come to know the residents intimately. From his role in the town, Miles is able to notice its degradation due to the disinterest of the duplicates for maintaining it. He argues that 'it's inexpressibly sad to see that place die; far worse than the death of a friend, because you have other friends to turn to',[72] emphasising that the invaders represent death and not just change. This suggestion of having a greater emotional connection to a place than a person helps prepare the reader for the encounters with his assimilated friends and acquaintances and also interpret figures strongly identified with the community such as the policeman Nick Grivett and the librarian Mrs Wyandotte as human – or alien – manifestations of the town's consciousness. When Miles punches Nick Grivett or challenges Mrs Wyandotte aggressively by informing her that he knows what is happening, he is raging against the changes in the town and his increasing isolation in it. Finney increases the narrator's sense of alienation gradually through his encountering fewer humans and more duplicates as the text unfolds. Miles narrates a progressive estrangement, seeing the town's slow metamorphosis from the familiar place he grew up into somewhere unfamiliar, alien-controlled with a sterile atmosphere. His sluggishness in realising the change is reflected in his failure to realise that his close friend Mannie has already been assimilated when he calls him where others are described as knowing almost immediately when their friends or relatives have altered. The change is fully realised in the decline in social interaction in the town; people shop only for essential goods, whilst cleanliness of the street is not considered important enough to be maintained. Finney compares the increasing reluctance to maintain the cleanliness and quality of life in the town to the

technological improvements made by the telephone company in mechanising the switchboard. Although the older system was slower and less efficient, the text contends that the quality of the service has declined due to the removal of the human element.

Readers discover the how the pods develop into duplicates of people through Miles's three successive encounters in dimly lit rooms with part-completed copies, revealing respectively the presence of the duplicates as blanks awaiting transmutation, their ultimate form and the hatching of a blank from a seed pod. The first two are key to Finney's establishing the horror of the invasion on a primordial, biological level. Thought initially to be a corpse, the blank Miles observes at the house of his friends is 'unused',[73] having no fingerprints and a face that 'really wasn't a face, not yet. There was no *life* to it, it wasn't marked by experience'.[74] Realising the significance of the unnatural presence prompts an automatic, emetic response:

> I think we all felt sick. Because it's one thing to speculate about a body that's never been alive, a blank. But it's something very different something that touches whatever is primitive deep in your brain, to have that speculation proved.[75]

This nausea serves to convey both the innate wrongness of the process and delineate the opposition between these revolted humans and the impassive alien entity, to which the process is entirely natural. The second key encounter takes place in a scene that inverts the invasion dynamic because it involves Miles intruding surreptitiously on Becky's assimilated father's basement; unfamiliar and resonating with alien presence.

Literally and figuratively, Finney places Miles in the dark; he is able to see 'nothing beyond a step or two ahead', having only a 'fountain-pen flashlight' and a vague idea of what he is looking for. The duplicate he stumbles across is compared to a partly developed photograph, 'vague and indefinite' yet 'unmistakeably recognizable'[76] as Becky. The sickening horror at how unnatural the process is entangled with an intellectual fascination of how the pods develop. Witnessing the sight of the part-completed copy of his sweetheart, Miles's instinctive reaction is to close his eyes in denial. Looking at the developing duplicate requires effort, 'a state of cold and artificial calm',[77] but nevertheless this is achieved, resulting in a lengthy passage reporting the minute detail to which the duplication had extended, so precise that Miles discovers physical details about Becky from the duplicate than he had previously been unaware of: a mole on her left hip and a scar beneath her right kneecap. Here, the horror relates to seeing the human form reproduced so successfully. Taking place at Miles's house, the third encounter sees the four friends watch the seed pods germinate. The associated nausea from the first two encounters only occurs when the pod had developed into something unmistakeably human yet not; the malignancy in the pod is its convincing, compelling illusion of humanity that disguises a deep inhumanity, triggering the automatic, primordially based response of emesis.

Having outlined the aesthetic precision of the duplication, *The Body Snatchers* determines the difference in substance between humans and their copies by countenancing how they are constructed beneath the surface of the skin. Appraisals of Becky impress as architectural examinations, noting her 'beautifully fleshed skeleton',[78] her face with 'bones prominent and well-shaped under the skin'[79] and that

'nothing in her construction had been skimped or neglected'.[80] Points of tension in the text feature descriptions of the associate changes in Miles's blood circulation, the automatic responses of the body to excitement. Completing his dispassionate observation of Becky's duplicate, Miles comes 'to life once more, my heart swelling and contracting gigantically, the blood congesting in my veins and behind my eyes'.[81] Recalling Wells's narrator's reactions to observing the Martians in *The War of the Worlds*, That this may be a displaced sexual excitement is suggested by the similar automatic reactions he has to kissing Becky:

> My heart was suddenly pounding away, and I could feel the tightness of blood in my temples… it was a silent explosion in my mind, and through every nerve and vein in my body… My head yanked back – I couldn't breathe.[82]

Here, the links the essence of humanity and being alive explicitly to these processes against the analytical, dispassionate mindset that Miles is forced to adopt in order to look at the developing duplicate. Where blood red, pulsating emotion is portrayed as the intrinsically human apotheosis of life, metaphors and similes used in relation to the pods evoke ideas of death, lifelessness and silence, evoking the essence-draining substance in Lovecraft's 'The Color Out of Space' in that they are all coloured dull grey; containing a seed of 'grayish horsehair',[83] the pods are compared to tumbleweed, the membrane in their centres to a dead oak leaf and the grey fluff substance growing and compressing into human form to a doll made by a 'primitive South American people'.[84] Finney's use of the grey motif makes the assimilation itself symbolic of the invasion as a whole: a patch of grey surfaces on the subject and

begins to spread 'like an animated-cartoon sequence in which a picture is sketched impossibly fast'.[85] When totally grey, the subject assimilated is suspended for an instant:

> '...composed in perfect completeness – of a grey weightless fluff. The instant ended – a puff of air would have done it – into a formless little heap of dust and nothingness on the floor'.[86]

The dull, lifeless grey consumes the subject totally; vibrant red meets grey death as a result of the invasion.

When interpreted allegorically, the invasion itself conveys a new idea of 'normality' that achieves cultural significance in a society at the expense of existing ways of life, as represented by Miles. At the beginning of the narrative, Miles considers himself to be normal. In contrast to his appraisal of Becky, his description of himself is rushed and functional, added 'just to get the record straight':

> I'm five-foot eleven inches tall, weigh one-sixty-five, have blue eyes, kind of wavy hair, pretty thick, though already there's the faintest beginning of a bald spot on the crown, it runs in the family... I play golf and swim when I can, so I'm always pretty tanned.[87]

The horror of the invasion relates to Miles's discovery that everything he represents is being undermined by something he is not and can never be a part of, fully realised when he is confronted visually by the difference in physical constitution between

humans and pods when observing the semi-completed duplicate. As the text progresses, it becomes increasingly clear that Miles is in a minority; his normality is no longer the normality of the town. Finney explores both the reductive and exclusive impact of the invasion on the concept of existing normality in two passages: Miles's visit to Budlong and his recollection of Billy, the local shoe-shiner. Budlong collects newspaper stories of freak happenings such as UFO landings in order to preserve the bizarre as a fundamental and desirable part of normality. The newspaper stories are presented as possible truths that are discarded by the 'commonplace' in society, a fascist conformity to the mundane that, like the pod assimilation, reduces the quality of life by ignoring crucial aspects, an inadequate replacement for true experience. Whereas this instance examines what is lost by reduction of normality to a median average, another involving Billy, an ostensibly friendly black shoe-shiner segregated racially from 'normal' society, shows the consequences of alienation from normality. After hearing the invaders mock the conversation of people he knew, Miles compares the sinister tone of voice of the duplicate to Billy's pretence at enthusiastic civility masking contempt for his servile role in the society and the people who patronised him. With this anecdote, Finney highlights the exclusivity of such a society and the ignorance of those who perpetuate it in how the excluded relate to it; theirs is an identity kept secret from those who have given them a subservient role, a culture not acknowledged by 'normal' society. The excluded are free to conduct themselves only in a reduced capacity; whether through Billy's adopted gregariousness or by being unemotional.

Where ideas of grey and greyness are symbolic of the invasion itself as dullness and death, other connotations of the colour are evident in the narrative's translucence. The

reader is left to guess where the invasion came from and, given the immobility of the pods, how the very first assimilation took place. Similarly, Miles's loyalties extend no further than Santa Mira; the wider nation is ignored after Miles is thwarted in his efforts to call the National Guard for assistance. The isolation of the human protagonists is greater in the novel version than in the serialisation, where the invasion is repelled with the help of the FBI.[88] The severance of the tie between the protagonists and the national authorities for the published novel ensures that it is a more open text than its earlier incarnation, a shift of emphasis conveying the maxim that invasion can come as readily from within as without.

**Appendix: *Invasion of the Body Snatchers***

*Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), dir. Don Siegel

*Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978), dir. Philip Kaufman

*Body Snatchers* (1993), dir. Abel Ferrara

*The Invasion* (2007), dir. Oliver Hirschbiegel

Though based on Finney's novel, it is the cinematic transpositions of text that have made the more lasting impression on American culture; later editions of the novel changed the title to *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* to tie with the films. Perhaps to emphasise their divergent treatments of the narrative, the later films use other titles. The narrative's recurrence in various remake is likened by Gary Westfahl to 'going to a performance of a Shakespeare play: already knowing what is going to happen, one wonders how the story will be adapted and interpreted for its current audience.'[89]

Released among a spate of other alien impostor films such as *It Came from Outer Space* (1953), *Invaders from Mars* (1953) and *I Married a Monster from Outer Space* (1958), the first film version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) begins with a man raving 'I'm not insane!' at doctors in a hospital. The man is revealed to be Dr. Miles Bennell (Kevin McCarthy), informing viewers that have read the novel that despite the apparent insanity of his behaviour, it is understandable given the events set to be relayed. Bennell is given opportunity to tell his story of how his town was changing since his return from a medical conference when a psychologist arrives, the recounting of the story forming the main body of the film. This format is as close to first person narrative as is possible in mainstream cinema to retain Bennell's narrative personality in transition, an example of this being the camera's dwelling on Becky Driscoll (Dana Wynter) when she enters the room. After the story is told, the film reverts to chronological sequencing that sees Bennell committed and then believed after a hospital worker tells of similar events to Bennell's story happening elsewhere. The tempo of the film alternates between two extremes; the presence of the pods inspires running, chasing and dramatic music, yet the scenes involving the relationship between Miles and Becky are slow, with romantic background music and surroundings implying 1950s American domesticity such as Becky washing the dishes or the two talking to Wilma whilst Uncle Ira mows his lawn.

Departing from the first film and Finney's novel in structure and characters, the second version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978) runs chronologically without a narrator, focusing mainly on Matthew Bennell (Donald Sutherland), an official for the Department of Health and to a lesser degree on Elizabeth Driscoll (Brooke Adams), a biologist. Disorienting the audience through the use of partial faming

techniques, the setting for the film is San Francisco, where estrangement from others is evident from the beginning in that it is a city and not a small town. Bearded, lanky and bespectacled, Sutherland's Bennell has a more paradigmatic academic or regulatory authority appearance than Kevin McCarthy, who resembles the description given in the novel. His strength lies in his conviction; he is introduced by condemning a restaurant as unhealthy despite facing physical intimidation from catering staff smashing his car windscreen with a wine bottle. It is this mental fortitude, the belief in his own convictions, which endures through his increasing isolation as those all around him are assimilated.

Despite reinstating the central figure as a narrator, *Body Snatchers* (1994) is almost unrecognisable from Finney's novel, shot with a different setting and cast of characters. Effectively, Bennell's role in the novel and the first two films is split across three figures; rather than a man, the third film follows Marti Malone (Gabrielle Anwar), a teenage girl staying at a military base whilst her scientist father (Terry Kinney) inspects chemical weapons. It is at the base where she meets Tim (Billy Wirth), a helicopter pilot who inherits Bennell's physical exertions and status as male lead. Marti incorporates some attributes of the Driscoll role as female lead in her nigh assimilation and emotional incontinence, unable to pretend to be a duplicate for long enough to escape undetected.

Received poorly by critics on its release, Hirschbiegel's *The Invasion* (2007) returns to the novel for the name and occupation of his protagonist, Dr. Bennell, but his update changes the gender and medical specialisation of the character. Dr. Carol Bennell (Nicole Kidman) is a Washington psychiatrist rather than a small-town

doctor, employed to diagnose and treat the mental condition of her patients. Commenting on the underlying assumptions behind the American institutional approach to medicine in that certain psychological conditions are inherently wrong and can be cured with appropriate drugs, Carol Bennell prescribes anti-psychotics and anti-depressants to her first patient as a reflex in attempt to manage the patient's distress. When it is revealed that her patient's distress is not imagined and caused by the appropriation of her husband by aliens, the anguished response of the patient to the face of invasion is, on reflection, appropriate. Bennell is forced to turn to American medicine to transcend her natural state later in the film, raiding a pharmacy for the caffeine-imbued drink Mountain Dew, stimulant drugs and an Epipen adrenaline injection to prevent the onset of sleep and the possession that follows it.

Based on the *Colliers* serialisation of *The Body Snatchers* rather than the novel, there are a few major differences between the first *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and the novel. However, it is not the lack of a resolution that is most significant, but that the director passes the responsibility for thwarting the invasion from Bennell to the authorities, 'every law enforcement agency in the state'. This change reverses the alteration made by Finney from the serialisation, where Bennell involves the FBI. Unlike the novel, the problem of the invasion is left unresolved. Diminishing Bennell's importance by reducing his part in repelling the invasion reduces the sense in Finney's novel that individuals can bring about or resist social change through force of will. It is the authorities and not individual members of the public that are the true instruments of change or resistance; the Bennell of the 1956 film is a diagnostic witness, a herald to the conquest rather than an agent of its prevention. Another major change from the novel is the assimilation of Becky, a change that works in tandem

with the emasculation of Miles. A key element in Miles's ability to help repel the invasion was his enduring love for Becky and the idea that this would not survive the assimilation process. By having Becky duplicated, a major motivation for Miles to fight against the invaders is removed, isolating and weakening him further. This change in turn leads to another: the town of Santa Mira isn't as isolated from the rest of mainland America in the 1956 film as the novel. After losing Becky to the invaders, Miles flees into the busy road, allowed to leave as the invaders are under the impression that he won't be believed, an impression disproved only by the coincidence of the hospital worker's patient having a similar story to Miles's. The effect of isolation in Finney's novel is bestowed more upon Miles in the film rather than the town.

In addition to giving the characters more popular contemporary names (Matthew and Elizabeth), the 1978 version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* makes occupational and status changes to the characters that reflect the era of production. Elizabeth is still married, albeit to a now duplicate, when she and Miles become involved romantically, which would have been perhaps less acceptable for cinema in the more socially conservative 1950s despite being part of the novel. Moving the location of events to San Francisco, a city renowned for its tolerance and counter-culture being the centre of the 'flower-power' movement in the 1960s, perhaps reflects the change in social attitudes between 1956 and 1978, although this change lessens the effectiveness of the isolation motif; alienation from large cities is common without subversive invaders, making events considerably less sinister than those depicted in small towns with close communities. Most significantly for the second version further changes are made to the presentation and abilities of the aliens. The film begins with scenes somewhat akin

to a nature documentary on plants in depicting the spores' journey through space, their threat becoming apparent only when Earth is shown in conjunction with ominous sounding music. Although the presentation is initially seemingly innocent, the duplicates are more aggressive in assimilating people than the novel and first film, able to drug humans to sleep without preventing duplication and pointing and screaming at those known not to be duplicates to alert other duplicates to the presence of targets. The breadth of the alien influence may be wider than in previous incarnations, as the greenhouse Matthew stumbles across that grows pods is located on to a port; a ship arrives to collect pods for distribution, suggesting a worldwide alien presence.

*Body Snatchers* is set on a military base far removed from the rest of society, building up the inevitability of assimilation and the futility of resistance. Whereas previous renditions evoked themes of social threat by centring on a local figure watching his home town change around him, the Malones arrive at the base as aliens in unfamiliar, surroundings, being civilians at a military institution. The incongruity of the family to the severity of the events to come is shown in Marti's adolescent sulking because she considers living with her six-year-old brother Andy a hardship and her father's distrust of her friend Jenn for having short hair, wearing a studded leather jacket and listening to generic rock music. The setting invites comparisons between the conformity asserted by the aliens and the mindlessness of the authoritarian culture engendered by the military and the adults; Jenn is puzzled that the soldiers 'actually volunteered for this crap!' when watching them go through a drill. *Body Snatchers* begins with Marti reading Ian McEwan's *The Cement Garden* (1978) a novel about the urban alienation of parentless children, allowing the invasion to be interpreted as

the inevitability and realities of adulthood. As with little Jimmy Grimaldi in the first film, it is Andy who is aware of his mother's change before anyone else. Marti narrates, 'they get you when you sleep, but you can only stay awake so long', emphasising the futility of their actions, with pods being sent to military facilities all across America. Marti and Tim remain unassimilated at the end, having fled and destroyed the base, but escape only to arrive at another military base to be greeted by another anonymous, unemotional figure whose humanity is questioned by darkening skies and an ominous, artificially deepened voiceover, 'Where are you gonna go? Where are you gonna run? Where are you gonna hide? Nowhere, 'cause there's no-one like you left.'

These words were earlier spoken by Marti's stepmother's duplicate (Meg Tilly) after Marti and her father prevented their assimilation. Informing him of the pointlessness of trying to escape, she then tries to tempt Marti's father sexually, imploring huskily, 'let's go to bed, Steve; let's go to bed'. Invasion is used here as a metaphor for the how the biological realities of sex interfere with adolescent idealisations of love and relationships. Marti is confronted by the reality of her parents' divorce, the idea that is her stepmother and not her mother who is the object of her father's affection. Resorting to sexual temptation is characteristic of the menacing and aggressive presentation of the aliens throughout *Body Snatchers*. Showcasing the film's special effects, one scene involves Marti falling asleep in the bath, triggering activity in a pod stored in the false ceiling directly above. The audience is left voyeuristically to watch the horrific assimilation; the pod's tentacles slither over her as they explore her body before entering through a nostril. This graphic depiction of Marti being exploited combines fears of being vulnerable in sleep with those of sexual violation, but is also

suggestive of the discomfort of adolescent sexual awakening and hormonally charged dreams, externalising the internal biological turbulence as an invasion.

Most of the cinematic intertextuality in the third film is taken from the 1978 version: the duplicate pointing and screaming at escaping humans; the crumbling corpses of newly assimilated humans in the hospital; the military refuse collection lorries coming daily; the explosive vengeance wrought by Tim for Marti attacking the base in the helicopter. Another visual echo is of the second film's awakening of the duplicate Elizabeth: the animation of a naked duplicate of Marti in the hospital that pleads with Tim to leave the pod draining Marti's essence attached. The scene highlights again the sexual dimension of the third film, the sexual temptation present here was absent from the duplicate Elizabeth's commanding Matthew to 'Come. Sleep', a departure from the novel where sex was rendered unnecessary or impossible by assimilation.

Essentially a transposition of the serialised text, the 1956 adaptation of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* borrows heavily from the dialogue and shares its ending with the serialisation rather than the 1955 novel. In having Bennell describe the invasion as 'a malignant disease spreading through the whole country', the first film refers obtusely to anti-Communist narratives; the subversive imperialism, unified purpose and lack of emotion in the duplicates tallies with other representations of Communists in American literature and film throughout the 1950s. The tone of the second film is less urgent, with the slower pace reflected by quiet scenes featuring little movement other than the growth of the pods. It is also less morally austere; although marketed as a generic science fiction film with emphasis on the terrifying qualities of the aliens, the 1978 adaptation approaches the generic conventions ironically. Some examples of this

approach are the descending spores at the beginning, a cliché from 1950s B-Movies; Jack's asking 'why do you always expect metal ships?' – another science fiction cliché – and Nancy's conspiracy theorising that the rationalises the existence of the pods as conclusive proof that the human race was created as a crossbreed of monkeys and space men. There are other references that are straight takes from the earlier film, such as Jack's duplicate greeting them in the office and Matthew's attacking growing duplicates with a spade but recoiling at Elizabeth's.

Other direct references to the earlier film in the 1978 version are knowing; Kevin McCarthy makes a cameo appearance running in the road, run-over whilst trying to warn people of the danger as he did in the first film, whilst Elizabeth is unable to contain her shock at seeing a dog, except that instead of nearly being run-down as in the first film, it is a hybrid of the local busker and his dog after Bennell destroyed one of the two pods intended for them. Proceeding at a slower pace than the first film, the second *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* makes references to the novel that the first omitted, such as Bennell's saving newspaper clippings of odd events – done in the novel by Jack – and the refuse lorries full of grey dust that only a reader of the novel would know was the remains of those assimilated or aborted duplicates. *The Invasion* retains the ability to fool the invaders by displeaying a lack of emotion from Finney's novel, with Carol Bennell remaining unnaturally calm whilst knowing that anyone she encounters could be trying to destroy her. She makes a transition from being a figure of authority over the mental health of the community accredited as able to determine normal behaviour to being identified as abnormal, requiring correction through invasion. This is marked by the revisiting of the scene at the end of the 1956 film where Kevin McCarthy's Bennell rushes out into the interstate, screaming warnings at

passing cars about the alien presence. Carol Bennell first witnesses an unidentified stranger repeat this, but is herself later put in the position of manic, unheeded messenger.

Of the townspeople of Santa Mira in the first film of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, only Bennell avoids assimilation. His escape is permitted because he won't be believed; his raving in trying to warn people of the danger almost results in the opposite to his intention: total disregard for the problem. Bennell's near incarceration reverses the principles behind institutionalisation in that he is the only one who has the knowledge to initiate a response to the invasion that will uphold human identity – or national 'sanity' in maintaining the American way of life – yet is almost imprisoned, perhaps evoking Foucault's ideas on the dubious morality and accuracy of sectioning. Confined to Santa Mira, the invaders are able to exert control and gain information quickly; the plan seems to be to target other small communities that will act as a springboard for total domination of the country. After convincing them of his sanity Bennell is able to get help from the neighbouring authorities. Though the cost of resistance is severe, losing his hometown, his job, his friends and his lover for his strong convictions, the film has an optimistic ending because the authorities finally intervene, validating his course of action. By contrast, the second film sees all assimilated; the revelation at the end is Bennell's pointing and screaming at Nancy Belicec – who survives longest by being able to blend in – after a sequence where the audience is unsure whether Bennell is a duplicate or a human pretending to be a duplicate. The shipping of pods implies that there is no limit to the invasion; the surmounting of all local resistance and suggestion of a worldwide presence makes the outlook of the film is unremittingly bleak.

The audience of the 1956 adaptation is left not knowing whether the authorities are capable of repelling the invasion, leaving the ultimate destiny of America open to the interpretation and faith in authority of each audience member. When interpreted as an anti-Communist allegory, it implores the audience to do all it can to alert the authorities of the presence of Communism in society, however unlikely the location and at whatever personal cost is necessary. Without the presence of the Communist menace the allegorical purpose of the second film is more vague. It is hinted at when Nancy protests to Kibner, 'they're becoming less human. It's happening all around us'. Seemingly, the duplicates represent a sense of dehumanisation perceived in city life 1970s San Francisco, perhaps as a response to disillusionment with the failure of the social revolutionaries in the late 1960s to achieve any lasting change, their subsequent insignificance indicated by the location of the setting. The age of those resisting the invasion most strongly – Matthew, Elizabeth, Jack and Nancy – suggests that they would have been part of the movement; flowers germinating from the spores implies that the invasion is itself a new revolution, the resistance from the main protagonists expressing the opposition in values between it and the movement of the late sixties.

By contrast, the fourth film ends with Bennell's best friend-cum-boyfriend Ben Driscoll (Daniel Craig) reading stories of international conflict in the newspapers, concluding the invasion to be over for 'better or worse'. Craig's casting unavoidably recalls his more prominent role as James Bond in *Casino Royale* (2006). Conceding an admiration for the invaders' offer of perfect security, the fourth film is less partisan in its discussion of the balance of freedom against security than is usual for an

invasion narrative. Noting the significance of the film's setting in Washington D. C. as identifying the government as the main source of fear, Westfahl also observes of the fourth film that the spacecraft brought crashing to Earth that introduces the invading entity is named *The Patriot*, recalling the Patriot Act introduced by the Republican government after the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in 2001 that permitted agencies responsible for national security greater legal powers to infringe on civil liberties in pursuit of keeping the country safe. Yet, in the film, it is the authorities that have first succumbed to the invaders, setting up a fake vaccination programme against a hoaxed disease that they use as means of their proliferation. What they present as the cure is actually the disease, expressed to the audience by the changing the method of transfer from pods in the novel and earlier incarnations to luminescent green ooze. Making the point gratuitously, Bennell is infected when her ex-husband, vomits in her face. The government spreading of disease to control the nation that is presented as a cure is a plot device used in Jerry Sohl's *Point Ultimate* (1955), discussed in the next section as a post-invasion narrative.

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[1] Farah Mendlesohn, *Rhetorics of Fantasy* (Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2008), p. 135

[2] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSxm_nhqDyw [accessed 27/04/2011]

[3] http://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/hrh.asp [accessed 27/04/2011]

[4] http://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/texts/fiction/cs.asp [accessed 27/04/2011]

[5] US State Department Website: http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/cwr/17603.htm [accessed 11/12/07]

[6] MGM attempted to suppress the British film version of the play produced three years earlier in 1941.

[7] Ray Bradbury, 'Zero Hour', *The Illustrated Man* (New York: Bantam, 1967), pp. 169-77, p. 172

[8] *ibid*, p. 172

[9] *ibid*, p. 175

[10] *ibid*, p. 176

[11] *ibid*, p. 172

[12] Robert Heinlein, *The Puppet Masters* (London: Pan, 1969), p. 187

[13] *ibid*, p. 94

[14] It has been suggested that the symptoms of vampiric possession in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* are strikingly similar to those of tuberculosis.

[15] Murray Leinster, *The Brain Stealers* (New York: Ace, 1954), p. 110

[16] *ibid*, p. 19

[17] Eric Frank Russell, *Three To Conquer* (London: Methuen, 1987), p. 198

[18] Published in Britain as *The Day After Tomorrow*

[19] *The Puppet Masters*, p. 5

[20] *ibid*, p. 161

[21] *ibid*, p. 6

[22] *ibid*, p. 10

[23] *ibid*, p. 95

[24] *ibid*, p. 41

[25] *ibid*, p. 130

[26] *ibid*, p. 128

[27] *ibid*, p. 16

[28] *ibid*, p. 39

[29] *ibid*, p. 216

[30] *ibid*, p. 17

[31] *ibid*, p. 211

[32] *ibid*, p. 128

[33] *ibid*, p. 15

[34] *ibid*, p. 175

[35] *ibid*, p. 50

[36] *ibid*, p. 47

[37] *ibid*, p. 47

[38] *ibid*, p. 47

[39] *ibid*, p. 214

[40] *ibid*, p. 48

[41] *ibid*, p. 215

[42] Robert Heinlein, *The Day After Tomorrow* (London: New English Library, 1972), p. 133

[43] *The Puppet Masters*, p. 129

[44] *ibid*, p. 130

[45] *ibid*, p. 40

[46] *ibid*, p. 53

[47] *ibid*, p. 129

[48] *ibid*, p. 130

[49] David Seed, *American Science Fiction and the Cold War: Literature and Film* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), p. 30

[50] *The Puppet Masters*, p. 99

[51] *ibid*, p. 134

[52] *ibid*, p. 189

[53] *ibid*, p. 220

[54] *ibid*, p. 209

[55] *ibid*, p. 6

[56] *ibid*, p. 64

[57] *ibid*, p. 43

[58] *ibid*, p. 87

[59] *ibid*, p. 208

[60] *ibid*, p. 159

[61] *ibid*, p. 86

[62] *ibid*, p. 84

[63] *ibid*, p. 134

[64] *ibid*, p. 63

[65] *ibid*, p. 64

[66] *ibid*, p. 164

[67] *ibid*, p. 220

[68] *ibid*, p. 219

[69] Jack Finney, *The Body Snatchers* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1955), p. 161

[70] *ibid*, p. 188

[71] *ibid*, p. 165

[72] *ibid*, p. 106

[73] *ibid*, p. 32

[74] *ibid*, p. 33

[75] *ibid*, p. 38

[76] *ibid*, p. 52

[77] *ibid*, p. 53

[78] *ibid*, p. 8

[79] *ibid*, p. 9

[80] *ibid*, p. 41

[81] *ibid*, p. 55

[82] *ibid*, p. 83

[83] *ibid*, p. 85

[84] *ibid*, p. 85

[85] *ibid*, p. 173

[86] *ibid*, p. 173

[87] *ibid*, p. 12

[88] http://homepage.mac.com/cssfan/jackfinney/col541224062.htm [accessed 27th April 2011]

[89] Gary Westfahl, 'Review of *The Invasion*', http://www.locusmag.com/2007/Westfahl_Invasion.html [accessed 08/09/2010]

## Chapter Five: Post-Invasion Narratives

Narratives constructed around invasions of America by stealth show how a conspiracy of invaders is working surreptitiously to subvert the authority of American institutions, with the ultimate goal of secretly transforming the United States into an alien society. The next thematic development in invasion narratives, post-invasion, explores the state of the nation after an invader has conquered the physical territory, America having surrendered institutional authority to a foreign or alien power. Despite having control of the nation, the invaders in this type of narrative do not cease their activities, continuing the invasion process as eradication, turning the American state departmental authority against itself to crush the very idea of America out of existence. For Edward Said, this is the logical course of imperialism, invading 'by predisposition, by the authority of recognizable cultural formations, by continuing consolidation within education, literature, and the visual and musical arts',[1] which is here directed against the home nation. The power of the American state is used to mutilate the idea of the American nation until it ceases to exist. America is represented in this type of narrative by a minority voice in the new country, resistance fighters or outlaws conspiring against the imperial power that as assimilated the nation. Post-invasion narratives are centred on such figures, embodying what are proposed as the truly American qualities essential to national strength that endure despite conquest. They strive to reaffirm American identity by regaining control of the nation whilst simultaneously preserving it by resisting the invaders' attempts to extinguish it.

**A New Frontier**

Identifying a definitive point where invasion takes place becomes increasingly difficult as the tradition develops. Whereas in early invasion narratives the beginning of the process is marked by the sinking of a battleship or the firing of a heat ray, protracted strategies depicted in narratives of stealth invasion complicate the process by making the point of entry ambiguous. In Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters*, Earth has been infiltrated before events in the text begin; set a few decades into the future, the narrative suggests that UFO sightings – a phenomenon occurring at the time of publication – were the slugs arriving. Similarly, *The Body Snatchers* begins with the anecdotal evidence of people complaining of changes in close friends, partners and relations; the invasion is already underway at the start of the linear narrative. The initial point of hostile intersection between the invader and targeted agencies – whether the arrival of the spores or the first assimilation of a human – isn't documented but implied by the later revelations of how the spores assimilate. How the invaders achieved the entry into their targeted territory is left largely to the imagination of the reader, which marks a change in emphasis on the process of the invasion from the arrival of the invaders to the discovery that they are already here. Post-invasion narratives change the emphasis again, being set in a nation conquered and occupied by foreign powers. In these narratives the process of invasion has either already occurred or is mentioned almost in passing, serving merely a perfunctory part of the text. For Tom Shippey, the fall of America in post-invasion narratives is 'a datum, a way to get the real story started'.[2] Rather than resisting an outside influence or discovering an enemy within, the protagonists in this type of fiction are cast as insurgents, dislocated and dispossessed within their own country. This is a reversal of

the roles in stealth invasion, as those invaded have to plot in secret to subvert the dominant authority, the successful invaders, and reclaim the territory they have been usurped from.

Despite the semantic suggestions of this collective label, post-invasion narratives are significant in the invasion tradition not because they mark an end to invasion fiction but a change in frontier. The predictions of irrevocable doom in earlier novels like P. W. Dooner's *Last Days of the Republic* or Samuel Rockwell Reed's *The War of 1886* are not realised even though America's military might proves incapable of protecting it from territorial conquest. Though the land is occupied and under foreign control, American idealism and culture is resilient and sustained in the protagonists of post-invasion narratives and the perspective of the narratives, consistently pro-Western democracy and anti-Communist, though interpretations of these ideologies or practicalities vary between novels. Post-invasion narratives establish physical invasion as only the first stage of invasion. They document the second stage, which is cultural invasion, the attempted obliteration of American values and ideals. Nations persevere under occupation by retreating from the physical territory into the hearts and minds of its loyal citizens; post-invasion narratives portray the attempts of occupying forces to invade this cultural space. Invasion is, in post-invasion narratives, implicit as the literal component has already been achieved and is reduced in the text to a passing mention or a historical context preceding the narrative's events. The ellipsis of the physical process of invasion is particularly significant given that America is, in post-invasion narratives, literally occupied by foreign armies that are human. This contrasts with alien invaders, overtly representational and metonymic when exemplified by creatures such as Heinlein's slugs. Having become a permanent

fixture in post-invasion society, the conquerors are familiar to those they oppress; they are less an Other than those exposed in stealth invasion narratives, hence the lack of a necessity to exaggerate their differences from the incumbents.

The transition in emphasis from physical to cultural invasion can be explained in part by reader expectations. Early invasion fiction stressed the importance of verisimilitude in order to convince the reader of the possibility that America could be invaded. Although to this day no serious attempt to occupy the country has been made since it was colonised by Europe, the articulation of the idea of the physical invasion of America through literature and film engendered an evolving tradition. What was previously unthinkable became commonplace; the possibility of America being invaded by a foreign entity had been so thoroughly explored that writers were able to move beyond the necessity of describing the invasion procedure and on to the aftermath. Another possible cause is the Cold War background to the novels. Earlier invasion fiction perceived armies from amongst others, Germany, Britain, Japan and China that failed to arrive; the Soviet Union was an open threat to America and writers had no reason to spend time establishing it as such, instead focusing on how the nation would cope under the control of its rival. Furthermore, the arms race and the pursuit of super-weapons that could destroy countries made the debates over border fortifications that charged earlier invasion narratives irrelevant. Invasion in this context has no strategic importance because of the destructive power of the new weapons; the America of these narratives is faced with the choice to surrender or be destroyed and its power to prevent occupation is disabled, so the physical invasion of the country is met without resistance.

With the Cold War remaining as the historical context for the production of this fiction, examples of the post-invasion narrative most commonly imagine the United States under the control of a totalitarian Soviet regime. Reports of the brutality of Stalinism and the relentless surveillance of the KGB were becoming readily available in America by the time of the fiction's publication and is particularly evident in the progressively oppressive invaders of C. M. Kornbluth's *Not This August* (1955). America's reinvention by the conquering powers in these narratives mocks the the nation, its symbolism violated for the purposes of humiliating the national ideology as inferior to that enforced by its new masters. Coming after George Orwell's *1984* (1949), the fiction draws on ideas of dystopia, showing either the invaders' efforts towards creating dystopia or the realisation of it, depending on how well established the occupation is. The conspiring of the American resistance groups in these novels against their imperial masters reverses the idea of a conspiracy against America popularised through paranoid anxiety over the Soviet Union and other subversive elements within the nation; the obverse expressions of which were mainstream political conspiracy thrillers such as Allen Drury's *Advise and Consent* (1959) and Richard Condon's *The Manchurian Candidate* (1959) that also followed on from stealth invasion but used an internal rather than external enemy, Communist agents obtaining high office in the United States Government.

***The Day After Tomorrow***

Philip Nowlan's pulp novellas, 'Armageddon 2419' (1928) and 'The Airlords of Han' (1929) introduced the character of Anthony 'Buck' Rogers into science fiction and

also played on yellow peril anxieties through the Han, a conglomerate Asian power that has come to dominate the world centuries into he future. Robert Heinlein's *The Day After Tomorrow* (1949) imagines America conquered by the PanAsians, an invader recalling Nowlan's Han that had also previously accumulated the Soviet Union, synthesising yellow and red peril fears. First serialised in *Astounding Science Fiction* in 1941, the narrative was originally titled *Sixth Column* in reference to the resistance group formed to subvert the invaders; a 'sixth column of patriots' being the antithesis of the 'fifth column of traitors, bent on paralysing a free country'[3] that the narrative attributes the conquest of Europe to; the term 'fifth column' being coined in the Spanish Civil War. Its later title acknowledges the ellipsis of the invasion process in post-invasion narratives explicitly, where 'tomorrow' is the invasion and subjugation of America, implied as imminent by the title. There is also a critical aspect to the narrative in that it was a reworking and moderation of John W. Campbell's unpublished story *All*, an extremely nationalist response to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Campbell is satirised in the figure of the technocratic Calhoun, whose name recalls the pro-slavery Vice President John C. Calhoun[4].

With the focus of the narrative being on events after America has fallen under PanAsian control after defeat in war, the reader is unable to chart the exact fashion by which this came about. Details of the invasion are mentioned in passing throughout the text, remaining vague even when compiled together but indicating a failure of defensive measures to cope with an ever-changing threat. Complicating matters further, events occur after the formation of PanAsia as a world power after the Soviet defeat by China in a subsequent war. When China 'digested' Russia, America was left with 'a system even stranger to Western ways of thinking than had been the Soviet

system it displaced'.[5] American military and political ignorance coalesced, leaving the Americans vulnerable to the smart strategy of the PanAsians, 'We met the Asiatic threat by the Nonintercourse Act and by big West coast defenses – so they came at us over the north pole!'.[6] The Nonintercourse Act is cited as being particularly counter-productive for making America 'completely out of touch'[7] with the PanAsian mentality and consequently military strategy. How or by what means the PanAsians 'came at' the Americans is left to conjecture. Both sides possess nuclear weapons; America is unable to deploy them after being 'caught flat-footed'[8] by the PanAsians although precisely what this means isn't explained. There are neither destroyed cities nor nuclear wastelands, but that 'the atom bombs of PanAsia weren't any more powerful than our own' yet Americans 'had never gotten to use a one'[9] implies that the PanAsians were able to utilise their arsenal in some capacity that facilitated the invasion.

The state of disarray typical to invaded nations in post-invasion narratives is keener in *The Day After Tomorrow* because begins with the death of the American government – working seditiously to avoid detection by the PanAsians – due to an explosion caused accidentally by American scientists at the beginning of the text. With America already under occupation by the PanAsians, the government has no capacity to govern and so the term 'government' seems inappropriate. However, it reinforces the idea of invasion, that despite occupying the land the PanAsians remain invaders and not owners. In this government, there is still an 'America' beyond their control, a part of the nation that hasn't fallen to invasion. This America is represented primarily through the narrative's protagonist, Major 'Whitey' Ardmore. Receiving orders from his commanding officers to prosecute the war against the PanAsians before the

destruction of the government, Ardmore is able to assume total command as the highest-ranking officer. His decisions are always presented as being in the interests of the dead government, of American democracy; the events of the text are a result of him following the orders given to him by an elected government rather than being the product of his own initiative. He is acting constitutionally by following these orders, illustrating his honour in duty by carrying out the dying wish of his superiors rather than exercising his aggression had he been placed in charge by default without any orders. Keen to remind readers of the patriotic necessity of the military rule, Heinlein stresses through Ardmore that this governance is a temporary, wartime measure; touting populism, Ardmore rejects Calhoun's proposal of installing a technocratic dictatorship after the war is over, insisting that 'our sole duty is to that constitution. If the people of the United States want to streamline their government, they will let us know!'.[10] Whilst the text, through Ardmore, is categorical here, other situations make the message regarding the extent of the role of the military after the war more ambiguous. The narrative seems argue for a greater role for the military in the normal running of the country when it claims that a 'ridiculously inadequate military intelligence' was not merely a problem but 'the prime characteristic of the United States as a power throughout its history'.[11] There is a sense of joy in the narrative at the retaliation against the PanAsians, 'they were free men again, free and fighting',[12] that America is most free when defending itself against an oppressive enemy.

Born as the result of a failed Soviet conquest of China that enabled China to conquer Russia, the PanAsians are imagined as a worse threat to American freedom than the contemporary one of the Soviets. They amalgamate political anxiety over Communism with racial fears of the yellow peril, the latter heightened after the

Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The PanAsians implement restrictive policies on Americans used to individual freedoms, primarily a master and servant structured government that relegates the white Americans to an underclass status: ruled and oppressed, if not enslaved. The tyranny is epitomised by the deployment of one uniquely PanAsian weapon, the epileptigenic ray; 'Bodies bounded into the air in bone-breaking, spine-smashing fits. Mothers threw their infants from them, or crushed them in uncontrollable, vise-like squeeze'.[13] This weapon serves no strategic purpose but provides a metaphor for the way America and all it represents is crushed by the PanAsians and casts the invaders as unscrupulous war criminals that execute women and children in horrendous, excruciating ways alien to the moral standards of the civilised society they control. The attack on non-combatants, particularly infants, impresses the need of the Americans to restore themselves to rule because no-one, however unthreatening, is safe in the PanAsian regime. As horrifying as this and the PanAsian repaying acts of violence against them 'by other men, women and children at unspeakable compound interest',[14] the invasion by the PanAsians into metaphysical, cultural territory is deemed worse:

> Even more distressing than the miseries he saw and heard about were the reports of the planned elimination of American culture as such. The schools were closed. No word might be printed in English.[15]

Though the country is under PanAsian domination, the idea of America as a free, democratic society remains. By restricting education and dissemination of the written English word, the PanAsians would prevent, 'communication on any wide scale',[16] strangling the American identity and checking the ability of Americans to revolt

against their oppressors. Any hope of an American revival would be, under these circumstances, quashed. It is only through the form of post-invasion narrative that these permutations of invasion to indigenous culture are explored; it requires the loss of self-governance for the invasion to extend to cultural territory and for the holistic threat represented by invasion to be articulated.

Combining yellow and red peril fears in the PanAsians enables Heinlein to present an updated yellow peril narrative to a contemporary audience in 1949 more concerned with the threat of Communism and the Cold War; by the time of publication, the Communists had achieved effective control over mainland China. Unfortunately merging of nations diminishes the cogence of the invaders' identity. Effectively a composite text using ideas from two writers in Campbell and Heinlein with ideological differences, *The Day After Tomorrow* presents the PanAsian invaders in an inconsistent way with regards to their racial identity and its significance to their being the alien Other. The PanAsians also include Soviet Russians so the use of the white – yellow opposition inherited from yellow peril literature is an over-simplification, particularly as the ethnic mix of post-war America was greater than at the height of the popularity of yellow peril fiction at the turn of the nineteenth century. The text at times both critiques and validates racist thought. Suggestions that the PanAsians thought all white people looked alike and all Western religions were 'equally screwy'[17] satirise attitudes typified by white supremacists, whereas the lack of English-speaking PanAsians reflects the colonial arrogance of the British Empire that America descended from. Elsewhere, however, Heinlein uses other oriental stereotypes as weaknesses exploited by the Americans to repel the PanAsians. Fervent materialism amongst the PanAsians is used to the advantage of the Americans in their

bribing the police to prevent attempts by the PanAsian officers to enter the temples. The Americans are able to gain advantage despite the overwhelming numbers of PanAsians through the exploitation of appearance; because 'everything is face'[18] strategic victories by the Americans lead to mass PanAsian suicides at the shame of defeat. The inclusion of the mixed race Frank Mitsui impresses as a counter to accusations of racism, set-up to interrogate the binary opposition by being outcast from both sides. Described as being 'as American as Will Rogers, and much more American than that English aristocrat, George Washington',[19] Mitsui unnerves even his old friends with his 'flat, yellow face'.[20] He is 'damned both ways',[21] viewed with scepticism and suspicion by his allies and considered by the PanAsians to be 'a danger to the stability of the pattern'[22] of overlords and serfs. Having championed his nobility and worthiness of American identity, the narrative sacrifices 'tragic'[23] Mitsui in the last chapter; he is a martyr to the reassertion of the absolute binary opposition between invading and invaded agencies.

Overcoming the adversity of their situation at the onset of the narrative, the Americans under Ardmore are able to triumph, defeating the invasion to regain control of their country. The plan that achieves this is the creation of a religion deifying atomic power – the god is called 'Mota': 'atom' in reverse – that provides a cover for the insurgency. Central to this religion are the atomic transmutation achievements of the compensatory fantasy super-weapon the Ledbetter Effect, a scientific breakthrough made by a scientist compared to Einstein that enables the Americans perform miracles: carve temples from mountains in minutes, turn base metals into gold, create a giant imitation of Mota to help them in battle and kill PanAsians but not Americans by targeting lethal radiation at particular racial

'wavelengths',[24] giving the Americans potential to commit genocide. Having developed the effect for practical use, the team of scientists are able to produce portable staffs that the 'priests of Mota' use to proliferate their religious mystique and protect themselves from harm without arousing suspicion of any scientific breakthrough. The religion is also a cultural initiative as it is a military one; Ardmore's religion, predating Leo Strauss's neo-conservatism, is a myth used to unite the American people against the PanAsian enemy. Culture and language provide common ground for the Americans yet exclude the invaders; hymns of Mota are American patriotic songs that have had their words altered to suit the 'religion', whilst Ardmore uses a code of English idioms to talk discreetly to Thomas whilst imprisoned in the Prince Royal's palace, a ploy used also in C. M. Kornbluth's *Not This August*. These racial and cultural discrepancies are drawn as a fundamental rift between PanAsian and American; culture is a key strategy for repelling the invaders, a means of defining a uniquely American identity.

Ardmore's pragmatism results in a utilitarian military absolutism that is seen as necessary to defeat the PanAsians and, after the war, the 'provisional interim period, military government of sorts'[25] that Ardmore sees as prerequisite for re-establishing democracy. *The Day After Tomorrow* ends with the Prince Royal's suicide and hence the defeat of the invasion, with Ardmore still in control of America under martial law. The reader is left unclear as to how much longer Ardmore would remain in control, whether the war situation is a permanent one because the enemy could never be defeated 'once and for always'[26] in view of the failures of political acts and treaties in preventing future conflict. Though Ardmore tells Calhoun that 'It is not the business of military men to monkey with politics',[27] the only governments in the text are

military led and it is an elite military cabal that survives the invasion and saves America from total conquest. Militarism is the triumphant force in *The Day After Tomorrow*, surviving after the fall of democratic government. Any developments in science that the remaining team make are judged on their usefulness in the military situation that Ardmore proclaims the Americans find themselves in. Through Ardmore, Heinlein is able to present a value system covertly, wary of 'all the long-haired men and short-haired women'[28] whose appearances fail to match an unspoken gender template concomitant with conservative ideas of masculinity and femininity. Ostensibly championing democracy, the text indicts it by omission, proposing martial law – a totalitarian form of government – as the only effective way of defending national and individual freedom.

### ***Point Ultimate***

Anxiety over the fate of the world after the end of the Second World War and the escalation of the Cold War encouraged fantasies of how America would suffer under a Soviet regime. Jerry Sohl's *Point Ultimate* (1955) is one such, portraying life after a Soviet victory in World War Three. Where the Allies' development of the nuclear bomb ended the Second World War, Sohl's Third was determined by the invention of an anti-nuclear and aircraft defensive shield, making the U. S. S. R. invulnerable to American attack. As a result, all countries fighting against the Soviets surrender, leaving Communism as the prevailing world ideology. In order to secure their position – and prove their insidiousness to the American reader – Sohl's triumphant

Soviets release a virus into the world that only they can immunise, forcing the formerly free people of democratic capitalist states into total dependence on authority for booster injections once every month. Corrupting all exposed to it and persisting by deception, the virus is a clear metaphor for the regime; by the 1950s use of the viral metaphor for Communism had become widespread, used regularly by public figures like Senators Pat McCarran and Joseph McCarthy and also the head of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover.

The virus allows Sohl to explain America's supine response to the occupation and the speed of the conversion from autonomy to dependence while retaining the sanctity of America as a nation worth preserving. America is only weak and servile because it has been tricked into servility by the deceit of the Communists, who promise health and security but bring ruin. It is only through malevolence that America is held back, suppressed rather than defeated as a testimony to the endurance of the nation's ideals. *Point Ultimate*'s central figure is Emmett Keyes, a young man in his mid-twenties who is dissatisfied with his life under the Communists in Spring Creek. Keyes's uniqueness is his immunity to the virus. He has no need to depend on a booster injection and therefore the authorities for his health; the symbolism of the virus as an extension of the regime casts his immunity to Communism as innate. In Keyes, America produces its own solution to the virus organically, born naturally immune to the virus and be therefore biologically able to epitomise the greatness of the nation. He is young, naïve, unsophisticated, idealistic and enthusiastic, an embodiment of America that contrasts with the manipulative, corrupt Communists. His name, Keyes, is an implicit metaphor aligning the Communists with shackles that America is, through Keyes, able to unlock and discard. Born immune, Keyes is an organic

solution for America to the manufactured problem of the virus, blooming in defiance of the unfavourable conditions of total invasion and suggesting that ultimate American defeat to invasion is impossible.

Even his father doesn't believe that Keyes is a worthy revolutionary, 'This was a free country then. It's worth fighting for, Em, but you won't get a chance to fight… Better men than you have tried'.[29] Ivy, the novel's love-interest for Keyes, remarks to him sympathetically, 'What a pity it is that men like you can't rise up and set things straight'.[30] He believes naïvely that most people in the society were people like his mother and father, 'good, loyal, hard-working people who prayed for the day when they'd once again be free'.[31] This naïvety is exposed when he is hassled by a gang of youths uninterested by his struggle, declaring, 'We ain't on anybody's side… We're on our own side'.[32] As directionless as he is at the beginning of the text, Keyes is deemed too unworldly to be allowed in when he stumbles across Ivy and is subdued by her friends. Excited by the prospect of actually finding what he was seeking, Keyes is despondent when he is turned away by the shadowy leader Johansson – later revealed to be leader of Manumit, the main resistance group – leaving him wallowing:

> Would he ever find what he was looking for? Would he ever come upon a group that would welcome him, teach him what could be done about the occupation? Or was the spirit of freedom so dead that nowhere was there a fight to restore it?[33]

Manumit suggests manumission, the act of freeing a slave done at the will of the owner. Eventually, he succeeds in his quest, but first he has to be imprisoned by the

Communist District Director of Occupation Forces Gneissen, escape after Gneissen's death and be recaptured before he is suitably hardened to the task and the members of Manumit are persuaded of his value to their cause.

Written in the third person but from Keyes's perspective and focusing as much on his personal development and his seeking true love as on the societal differences, *Point Ultimate* reads primarily as a coming-of-age or rite-of-passage story with the anti-Communist and invasion themes only a secondary consideration. The credibility of both the occupation forces as a threat and the importance of overthrowing them is diminished by the narrative indulging Keyes's personal confusion. When he decides to leave Spring Creek, his ineptitude for his chosen task of restoring American freedom manifests, as he is unable to harness his conception of an alternative into something less vague than an inherited discontent. He determines that his destination is 'Away. Anywhere. Just away. Away from Spring Creek and everyone he knew and the dull life of working for the commies and trying to meet quotas'.[34] That his life is unexciting seems to be the main rational motivation for his desire for adventure, yet the desire to escape from an insular small-town environment to the outside world is common also amongst young people in Western democracies; the 'American Dream' is partly about achieving personal fulfilment or 'making it' despite a disadvantageous upbringing. Although 'working for the commies and trying to meet quotas' contributes to his unhappiness, it is superseded by the wish to leave, relegating the importance of the invaders further. Regardless of his protestations against his circumstances Keyes continues to represent the values of his birthplace – or, at least, his family – with his ignorance acting as a defence against Gneissen's efforts to corrupt him. Angered by Gneissen's hypocrisy in living in luxury but promoting the

Communist doctrine, Keyes ponders sanctimoniously that if people knew of Gneissen's excesses then they'd 'no longer try to convince others of the magnificence of the commie program'.[35] He does this having already met someone who dispels this idea, Bradshaw, who tells him, 'we proved that we couldn't handle or own business and now they're handling it for us'.[36] Extolling the virtues of Tri-D, a device akin to television, Gneissen dismisses the need for literature like Shakespeare and the Bible, claiming quite reasonably that, 'even if these books were in the public libraries, I think people would rather watch their Tri-D'.[37] Finally, he is shocked by what occurs at Gneissen's debauched parties, where attractive young women are invited to attend to provide sexual favours for Gneissen and those he surrounds himself with, whilst the men that bring the women to the parties – further examples of people accepting Gneissen's abundance – seek social advancement by attending. Leaving the party in disgust, Keyes is similarly dismissive of the Tri-Ds having not seen one in Spring Creek, but Gneissen assures him that there are plenty in the cities, 'and, despite what you're thinking, the people who have the sets can really afford them'.[38] That Sohl's Communist society permits discrepancies between the salaries of rural and urban people suggests either that it is a Communist society in name only or that some of the anti-Communist sentiment of the novel is misdirected, rooted in dissatisfaction with elements of American society such as social and financial inequality and the cultural implications of domestic technology such as television.

The Communist invaders are portrayed without exception as repulsive, evil figures whose redemptive features – such as Gneissen's intelligence – are sullied by their enslavement of the Americans and the rest of the world. Their regime is characterised by deceit, hypocrisy and corruption, epitomised by the revelation at the end of the

novel that rather than providing immunisation against the virus, the booster jab sustains it; the Communists – or 'The Enemy' – control births strictly in order to inject the bacteria into the newborn, in turn forcing the newborn into a lifetime of dependency. With the relationship of benefactor and dependent determined, the Communist authority implement bureaucratic necessities to restrict the freedoms of the American citizens such as street patrols, travel and birth permits and production quotas. Contrasted to Keyes's modest life in Spring Creek, Gneissen's abundance shows the hypocrisy and injustice of life under the regime, in practice more feudalist than communist. His character and Germanic name vaguely suggestive of the decadent leading Nazis, Gneissen lives illegally even under the occupants' laws, using Dr. Smelzer's drugs to enable him to pass the physical examination required to maintain his position as District Director. Corruption is rife, with informants such as Mr. Tisdail given advantages over everyone else for collaborating, whilst Gneissen's parties are 'a mad scramble for authority. Sometimes new positions are created here on Saturday nights, and old ones eliminated. And often the men along with them'.[39] Special scorn is reserved for Bradshaw, Gneissen's cook who thrives under the regime. To Keyes, Bradshaw becomes 'a symbol of all he had come to hate: the fickleness and inconsistency of people, their abandonment of ideals for an illusory society, justifying their cowardice and weakness by saying their overlords could manage their affairs better than they themselves could'.[40] Evidently the greatest narrative contention with the regime in *Point Ultimate* is not Communism itself but the Communists that are administering it; it is practical, not ideological. Keyes's frustration is directed at the failure of Communism in authority to be consistent with itself, the injustices of a day-to-day existence under the regime. Notably, Bradshaw, Mr. Tisdail, the partygoers and the youths that Keyes resents are all Americans

thriving under the corrupt Gneissen, shifting the focus of the narrative's attack away from Communism to the self-serving of Americans under occupation.

There are two resistance groups depicted in the novel. The first encountered by Keyes, later revealed to be one of many subsidiaries to Manumit, comprises gypsies. Their members are secretive, suspicious and dark in appearance, a plot device that links their activities with racial characteristics. Possibly alluding to the film *Man On A Tightrope* (1953), they perform as part of a travelling circus, permitted the freedom not enjoyed by other elements of American society because it is deemed easier to tolerate than to restrict them; gypsies that remember the days before the occupation even 'claim that life is better'[41] under the Communists because of this tolerance. Despite their freedom, the gypsies have very little power, relying entirely on Johannes. Pressed by Keyes into justifying the Point Ultimate operation – moving Americans to a safe haven away from the Communists – she reveals that she knows little of Johannes's motivations, 'you have to take a thing like that on faith. You have to trust the others or the whole thing's no good'.[42] Ultimately, the gypsies are subordinates to Manumit, entitled to little information or extended security. Race is used again as a marker as members have noticeably Aryan names such as Johannes and Gillis. Telling Keyes, 'we aren't the resistance group you think we are',[43] Ivy hints at the lesser importance of the group, namely to target possible recruits for Manumit. Keyes's importance to them lies in his immunity to the virus. Concealing this from them initially, Keyes is turned away by Johannes, much to his frustration; 'What was wrong with this man? Couldn't he see how useful Emmett could be? What kind of a movement was this that refused to take a good man?'.[44] This narrative speculation encourages the reader to consider the scale of the movement beyond

Keyes's then limited comprehension. Manumit are well resourced, headed by a group of self-exiling scientists who were the world's leading specialists in their fields. Hi-tech in comparison to the 'decadent'[45] Communists, they are able to launch a strike operation on New York, the centre of Communist power in America, in order to free Keyes from captivity without reprisal. Manumit are portrayed as long-term strategists as opposed to the Communists, who think only of meeting quotas and maintaining control. Significantly for the reader of science fiction, the sense of Manumit as liberators is tied into scientific and technological progression. Having achieved total power, the Communists 'had retrogressed',[46] having no reason to renew any financial or intellectual expenditure on science given the absence of opposition. The implication here is that the Soviet interest and expertise in science and technology that led to the arms race in the Cold War is due only to America's own capabilities and, with those capabilities ended by America's defeat, the Soviet interest passes and opportunities for it to flourish are withdrawn.

### *Not This August*

Entitled *Christmas Eve* in the United Kingdom, Cyril M. Kornbluth's *Not This August* (1955)[47] depicts a post-war Communist occupation of an America halved by China and the Soviet Union. It begins by detailing 'the blackest day in the history of the United States'[48], placing the reader in the middle of a war between America and a Chinese-Soviet Alliance. Radio broadcasts reporting good news for the American side are quickly and finally dismissed by a Presidential address announcing the U. S. defeat, the military General surrendering in the face of 'annihilation of his troops to

the last man by overwhelmingly superior forces'.[49] Kornbluth's America is split in half by the Russians and Chinese, with the Russians taking the industrial East and the Chinese the spacious West. Occupying the country is only a part of the overall plan as conjectured by the narrative voice's determining the secret Soviet goal: the extermination of Americans. This is due to occur over a protracted period, achieved by increasing poverty to target the aging population left behind in the war, presumably killing the younger, vanquished soldiers stranded abroad. Procedurally, the invasion itself is a formality as the scale of the military defeat forces the President to tell the American citizens to allow the invaders into the country without resistance. Set in Norton, a small rural town close to New York but with no value as a military target, reception of the invasion comes mainly through radio, distancing the narrative from the forefront of events.

The central figure of the novel is Billy Justin, a 37 year-old farmer who does not have to serve in the military having received honourable discharge after the Korean War. He is presented as 'a well-read average man',[50] honest and hard-working. Whereas some farmers manage to meet their quotas by manipulation of resources and allowing the authorities to underestimate them, Justin 'didn't know the thousand dodges farmers everywhere always used, almost instinctively, to cheat the tax man of his due for the tsar, the commissar, the emperor, the sheraf, the zamindar, La Republique, the American Way of Life. Billy Justin, like a fool, kept books'.[51] His honesty is coupled with a reluctance to act against the new authority though suspicious of it shown in his becoming angry with Betsy Cardew, a young delivery girl he is attracted to. She arranges for him to take in Gribble, a psychiatric patient later revealed to have been working on a top-secret military project, without his knowledge, leading him to rage

at her and comment sarcastically, 'Billy's a patriot, you can always count on him'.[52] Told by Gribble of the secret plan to finish a radar satellite that would guarantee the Americans victory and asked to become involved, Justin replies, 'those cows are bellowing to be milked. Somebody might notice'.[53] This reluctance is rooted mainly in war-weariness, resenting his being 'entangled despite his fatigue, his hundred-times-earned honourable discharge'.[54] It is also due to, despite all he believes and has been told, a grudging respect for the first wave of occupants. Though feeling an 'impulse to back away'[55] when the Bradens reveal that they are Communists, upon hearing the review about his farming methods, he acknowledges that he 'hated to admit it, but the red star boys were being more than fair about it. He had drifted into sloppy farming'.[56] His unwillingness to join in with his own side and increasing acceptance of the Soviets corresponds to an empathy with humanity and a distrust of imposed systems and organisations:

> And there was still a nagging doubt that these Red G. I.s were just human, and that their bosses were just human and that things seemed to be easing into a friendlier pattern of live and let live.
>
> And beneath that one there was the darker thought that it was too good to last, that somehow the giant self-regulating system would respond to the fact that Red G. I.s were treating the conquered population like friends and that Colonel Platov had a girl.[57]

The Soviet soldiers are admired in the narrative for their relaxing of their principles and the way in which they tolerate the occasional indulgence. Here, there is a

disparity between the text and other textual imaginings of Soviet invasions such as Jerry Sohl's *Point Ultimate*, critical of the Soviets primarily because they allow their principles to lapse. Strict procedural adherence is equally condemned when imposed by the Americans. Eventually resolving to finish the satellite because the second wave of occupants lead him to conclude that his choice is, 'he could be a debased animal or he could die',[58] he stumbles across the resistance and is immediately placed on trial 'for treason'.[59] Informing them of what he knows about the satellite, he is told 'we'll quarantine you and pass the matter up higher for a decision as soon as possible'.[60] Incredulous at his own side, Justin despairs, 'God help the human race if you thugs are its fighters for liberty'.[61] The text inclines towards humanism rather than nationalism or even patriotism because of the difficulties that Justin has with the 'them or us' mantra of the American side. Tolerating the resistance until the Soviets are defeated, Justin rejects his co-conspirators in victory, choosing to follow English yoga devotee Sparhawk on a spiritual quest, opting out of the Communist/Capitalist dichotomy he has grown tired of.

Although the invasion occurs over all America, the location of the novel is mainly small, rural Norton. Situating the text in this way shows how the occupation affects American 'heartland' and also affiliates the text with other narratives that feature surprise attacks, keeping it in vein with the U. S. invasion tradition. The importance of the setting of the novel extends beyond the sentimentality attached to the heartland; the community is not prepared for the conditions the Soviet authorities force on it. Not being a financially vibrant area before the war, Norton is especially vulnerable to effects of poverty. Largely comprising farmland, Norton is open to the cold, devastating for the population when the area is poor. To make matters worse, the

community itself is made up of people who are particularly susceptible to adverse conditions. Very few young people are present because they are detained abroad as prisoners of war; Justin, at 37, is considered the most able-bodied member of the community. The community is also preyed upon by some of its own people. A particularly repellent figure is Floyd Croley, the local shopkeeper who capitalises on the needs of the community by overcharging for services. Justin decides that Croley's declaration of 'I'll go along with anybody. Doesn't matter who'[62] degrades him 'below the level of mankind'.[63] Ironically, his brand of rapacious capitalism is rewarded by the Soviets and by Hollerith, the leader of the insurgency, who both grant him with authority because he is 'a steady man'[64] and his shop is in a useful strategic position. In juxtaposing Norton and its community with the partisan rhetoric of the Cold War, Kornbluth exposes the inadequacies of U. S. and Soviet ideology in accommodating survivalists like Croley, without loyalty but able to thrive under either regime.

*Not This August* challenges the perceptions of both America and the Soviet Union by presenting figures on either side that are susceptible to human failings. Whereas the Americans are not all heroic – or indelibly treacherous if dissenting from nationalism – the Soviet invaders are not all hostile or repugnant. The first to arrive are members of the 449th Soviet Military Government Unit (SMGU). Justin is shocked by how reasonable the regime seems, asking 'was *this* the Red barbarian they had all been dreading?'.[65] These invaders are recognisibly human, at odds with the othering strategies pursued by propagandists and used throughout the invasion narrative tradition. The brigade don't demand too much of the American citizens and punish soldiers who commit crimes against the natives, executing a corporal for a near-rape.

They even have a sense of humour; 'Zolaty had for a moment grinned wryly – and there had been a sardonic inflection on "Military Intelligence". Hell, no doubt about it – all armies were pretty much alike'.[66] Justin observes the 449th settle into an American way of life, living in rather than converting the large estates and marrying American girls. Tellingly, they do not follow Stalinism. Its principles are continually compromised by expediency, notably in the assassination of American Communists. Justin commends the strategy despite it being his friends the Bradens that were killed:

> They knew from experience, that you didn't want a few trained revolutionaries kicking around in a country you've just whipped, revolutionaries who knew how to hide and subvert and betray, because all of a sudden *you* are stability and order, and trained revolutionaries are a menace.[67]

Justin, the narrative voice, prefers that the Soviets decide not to 'live like Spartans in their barracks, officers not faring much better than the troops'.[68] He admits that he 'had liked what he had seen'[69] of the new regime. However, this reaction is proven premature since the purpose of the 449th is only to implement the changes to the country, preparing the nation for the *Meeneestyerstvoh Vnootrenikh Dyehl* (MVD). Used to fight guerrilla elements in the Baltic states after the Second World War, the MVD represents the sum of all libertarian anti-Communist fears: the Gestapo. Its members are much more aggressive in enforcing the Stalinist doctrine on the Americans, executing their own compatriots in the 449th SMGU that succumbed to the temptations offered by American capitalism, including the head of the unit, Colonel Platov. It is the coming of the MVD and their violent repression – diverting

all fossil fuels to Russia and China and shooting children for failing to report sabotage – that instigates Justin's revolutionary action; he is shown to react against the authorities not because of a received hatred of Communism but a resentment stirred by the MVD's 'attrition of the U. S. population'.[70]

Although Kornbluth humanises the Soviet forces by having the 449th SMGU exceed Justin's expectations to the point where he actually quite likes the regime, much of the subtext confirms the fears of those Othering supporters of Communism. *Not This August* vindicates the anti-Communist propaganda of the Eisenhower era by introducing the MVD and its extinction agenda. The Soviets are proven to be as hostile as the propaganda would have it, implementing a multi-phased plan to exterminate all Americans. 'Soft-spoken, reasonable, mannerly'[71] people like the Bradens that promote the principles of Communism without aggression are judged to be naïve as the Soviets execute their American sympathisers first for expedience, proving those that support American democracy possess ultimate wisdom for doing so. This idea of the ultimate wisdom of America is furthered in the plan to restart work on 'the *real*'[72] weapons satellite after fooling the Soviets with an imitation that is destroyed. Justin may reject the American side, but only after victory is achieved; the victory reinforces the nationalist idea that America is the smartest nation of all with the best scientists and war-planners and will overcome any adversity, no matter how desperate. Like Heinlein in *The Day After Tomorrow*, Kornbluth extrapolates that despite ideological differences, Russia and China will eventually team up to rid the world of America. The Chinese feature only fleetingly despite controlling half of the country, whilst no Chinese figure is encountered throughout the text. Therefore where some of the Soviets are humanised, the Chinese remain Othered and feared;

one American defends the new Soviet authority by commenting, 'how'd you like to have a bunch of Chinks swaggering around?'.[73]

***The Conquered Place***

Robert Shafer's debut novel *The Conquered Place* (1955) is written according to the established aim of jeremiad narratives, to alert readers to the danger of American defeat to a totalitarian enemy. The biographical sleeve-notes for the 1955 Putnam edition state that he was motivated to write the novel because 'too many people are ignorant of the consequences of a military defeat and an enemy occupation'.[74] Unexceptional as this may be, the narrative is notable for the extremes that Shafer's American military are prepared to go to in order to achieve victory. Having being exiled from the North, East and most of the heartland of the United States by a Soviet occupation and forced to conduct operations from Mexico and South America, the military authority representing America sanctions what is essentially an invasion on itself six years after Soviet occupation has taken hold: an operation to smuggle a self-interested genius scientist out of the occupied territory in Columbus, Ohio using a double-agent before attacking the territory with nuclear weapons. To spell this out, the inevitable consequence of military defeat and occupation to Soviet forces is for America to destroy large parts of itself, a national self-mutilation that goes beyond the policies of Mutually Assured Destruction adopted during the Cold War. Unremittingly bleak, the novel thwarts any elements of romanticism found in other post-invasion narratives; the military plots to sacrifice the people it represents, the ineffectual resistance squabbles amongst itself and the likeable soldiers of *Not This*

*August* are replaced with sex-obsessed misogynists, forcing the women to dress unflatteringly as not to invite the attention of potential rapists.

This bad medicine of nuclear self-harm is insisted upon by the narrative's contrasting of the military and civilian resistance. Members of the civilian resistance's Central Committee argue with each other and are obstructively sceptical of 'blind two hundred percent Americanism'.[75] Divisive yet democratic, the need of the members of the Central Committee merely to survive under oppressive totalitarian rule is set against the objective Allied military command who have deemed them 'useless to the war effort'[76] and has determined that they will be sacrificed for the greater good of the salvation of the American idea from Soviet attempts to destroy it. Given the name Hal Lorch for the purpose of his mission, the Allied soldier-agent is sent into Columbus to betray the Central Committee by using them to retrieve Carroway, the scientist, and then leaving them to die in nuclear holocaust. Yet this is presented not as treasonous but heroic, with civilian Jankowicz telling him, fawningly, 'I wish I'd been in the army rather than the sewer'.[77] Though it is the Soviets that are the imperial invaders, it is Hal that most closely resembles the unemotional, duplicitous aliens from Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters* and Finney's *The Body Snatchers*. Met with disapproval after his intentions are revealed, Hal thinks 'this is what they expected of me from the beginning. An evil alien come to destroy them all. What can I say to them?',[78] suggesting he understands their anger but dismisses it, completely abdicating his individual will to the necessity of the mission. Narrative admiration of this military necessity becomes fetishisation through the figure of Hal's mission-cover wife Bonnie, who has sex and falls in love with him despite his lack of reciprocation.

Despite the strict authoritarian necessity of the Allied military, *The Conquered Place* becomes libertarian when considering the school system. Education is the means by which the invasion perpetuates beyond physical occupation, advancing into the cultural landscape of the nation. By redefining what America is through schooling, the invaders – occupiers – quell any future resistance by suffocating it in infancy and creating a fundament aligned with their ideology. The teaching methodology used by occupying forces is characterised by indoctrination, the tone of the chapter written to emphasise the sinister implications and disadvantage of the way the school is run after the occupation as opposed to before it. It begins with the school's appearance:

> It was like all the schools Hal remembered, but dirtier. The same bare floors in the hall, but in need of sweeping. The same painted plaster of the walls, but smudged and cracked.[79]

The picture created is one of neglect, of dilapidation. This sensibility is repeated in the impression of the 'shabbily dressed'[80] children. They look poor and unkempt, which is below then implied standard of a developed nation, suggesting that Communism engenders a lack of cleanliness, a decline from a prior peak. The narrative voice sneers at the history lesson, interpreting the events of the war within a rigidly Communist bias, 'It seemed that the war had been started by greedy, money-grubbing, priest-ridden, Negro-hating, labour-baiting enemies of the people'.[81] The affront in the narrative is not just to the reductivism of the stereotypes attributed to American ideology but to the supplanting of the incumbent ideology and the mirroring foreign stereotypes it uses to help define itself; becoming Other and using the power to Other opponents, the authority to deride challengers to its dominant position.

Disregarding the subject matter of what is being taught, many of the criticisms of the totalitarian schooling could be made of any type of institutional, standardised teaching. What is truly invasive about the regime is the way lessons taught in school are enforced:

> 'I'll bet their fathers tell them different at home', Hal said.
>
> 'They have to be careful', Bonnie said, 'or the inspectors will notice'.[82]

Here there is a hint of menace in the suggestion of consequences for anyone demonstrating the ability to think independently. Inspectors visit the school to ensure that the mantras dictated by the state are imposed on the children, with those resisting in any way facing removal from the system. Thought the tone of the narrative and Hal's interjections colour the system as deplorable, under further analysis there is little difference between a Communist classroom and a democratic one; scruffy inattentive children and weary teachers are a feature of any American school. Through bratty pupil Eddie Evans, 'a bright-eyed, well rehearsed, solemn-faced, flat-voiced and disrespectful boy',[83] the narrative proposes smart-alecking as a distinctly American response to Communism, yet this could be equally appropriate as a general critique on authority rather than a specific response to an authoritarian regime. The novel is more successful in demonstrating the failures of Communist principles when put into practice in the 'emotionalism'[84] of Captain Wrobel, the overweight, slow-witted second-in-command of the occupation. Wrobel has Hal tortured during an interview because he is being undermined by an ambitious subordinate, reacting, 'with rage and bluster, to express his frustration and humiliation at being a figure of

fun and his fury at the cause of his embarrassment'.[85] The tyranny of the invaders' rule is haphazard, subject to the mood swings of an insecure and emotionally unbalanced authority.

## After Vietnam

After the struggles of the American military in Korea and Vietnam, notions of the capability of American ingenuity and weapons technology to transform any disadvantageous situation into one of decisive victory had become unfashionable. There is also a sense of a loss of faith in the ability of the United States to overcome its adversaries, reflected in New Wave science fiction of the 1960s in the works of writers like Thomas Disch, Robert Silverberg and Ursula K. Le Guin, a rejection of the 'live free or die' ethos championed by Heinlein and his contemporaries of the Golden Age science fiction of the 1950s. Later post-invasion narratives address the national fatigue with the persistence of the Cold War, with enemies appearing and assuming control of the United States without meeting any significant resistance. Three later examples, *Vandenberg* (1971), *The First Team* (1971) and *Arslan* (1976) were first published after the rise to prominence of the pacifist movements of the 1960s, each featuring a paralytic governmental and passive civilian response to invasion that has happened without the outbreak of war. The fatigue in the surrender to the new military regime reflects the problem for writers in maintaining the horror of the totalitarian threat after decades of its presence. With developments in invasion fiction traditionally arising from the re-imagining of enemies, speculations on the

nature of the Soviet enemy were exhausted after more than twenty years of political stalemate.

***Vandenberg***

Beginning in a similar vein to other Jeremiads, *Vandenberg* (1971) by a writer using the pseudonym Oliver Lange is another narrative envisaging a Soviet takeover. America is again decadent, weakened by its excesses:

> In terms of image, the world was presented with the Statue of Liberty, not as an inviolate emblem but as a vacuously grinning old whore, who after a token assault was debauched and then rolled docilely in the hay.[86]

As the narrative unfolds, however, it reveals itself to be more considered than the traditional attack on liberalism. Published later than most post-invasion narratives, there are suggestions of a critical slant to the text in its identification of the pitfalls of anti-Soviet propaganda, arms-race militarism, the lack of patriotism exhibited by the central protagonist and the futility of the resistance mounted by such a small group against a world superpower.

Expectations of a nationalistic narrative created by the sharing of its title with the name of the famous Californian air force base or frustrated by the protagonist. An irascible, drunk, self-centred loner, Eugene Vandenberg is the fairly unsympathetic figure central to the narrative. He delights in being anti-social and discordant, 'I was

out to make trouble... real trouble. And I had no affiliations whatever';[87] he is an anti-hero, a rebel, an iconoclast. He is also a fairly distinguished painter, aligning ideas of creative expression and distance with political freedom given that he is portrayed antithetically to the Soviet Military Government's (SMG) controlling authority. His artistic sensibilities and his capability in the outdoors as a fugitive lend the novel a Hemingway-like male survivalism; autonomy in the natural world that the narrative suggests has been lost in wider American society, observing in the journals that, 'the average American male was scared to be alone'[88] and, 'the outdoors was lovely, but it had become alien'.[89] In this, *Vandenberg* shares a displaced unease with urban and suburban lifestyles common in narratives set in the American heartland but rather than the familiarity and safety of the small town it romanticises the wilderness. Cultured but practical, Vandenberg thrives in this environment, finding purpose in resisting the Communist authority: a constructive use for his destructive tendencies. His hardiness is appropriate for his – and America's – circumstances, persevering through the adversity of the erosion of liberties taken for granted under democratic governance. Casting him as a man of the outdoors connects him to the natural environment, rooting him more deeply in the country than the SMG or the other American citizens that accepted it without protest. A contrast is drawn between 'the real, as opposed to the fancied, state of mind',[90] where social constructions and organisations such as government are ephemeral unless their link to 'reality' is constantly reinforced. Thus, Vandenberg is drawn as the distillation of the necessary attributes for the America of its written constitution to survive the Communist conquest.

*Vandenberg* projects this sense that American society has become remote from its natural environment into a vulnerability identified by the Soviets that results in

America's conquest. Being remote from nature due to affluence and technological advancement has led to a softness permeating through society and a detachment from the reality of the outdoors:

> Americans, as it turned out, were not tough. For us to leave comfortable homes and camp outside for longer than a week was a major adventure planned far in advance, and then the idea was to make a wilderness camp as much like home as possible – tents, portable generators, folding chairs, tables, collapsible crappers, radio, television, the works. Ché would have flipped.[91]

An absence of toughness increases the likelihood of surrender, engendering a willingness to accept whatever is presented characterised by the absence of resistance to the SMG. Walters, who defected from America to the Soviets concludes that 'Americans were after all, emotionally speaking, children',[92] a contention given 'indisputable proof'[93] by the protracted national mourning and sentimentalism over the Kennedy assassination. The introduction of television and radio into the cultural environment increases the potential to create and distort reality that is utilised by the Soviets through their organisation FORSTAT to abet the takeover. The Soviets create a calamity on the scale of 'the three great disasters'[94] to hit America in the Twentieth Century, namely the Wall Street Crash, Pearl Harbor and The Kennedy Assassination: an attack on Washington that causes the death of the President, Congress and millions of citizens. The true scale of the attack is not clear from the text, though Walters says in an aside to Vandenberg that the President and 'four million other Washington area residents achieved the same heights of martyrdom as Kennedy'.[95] Having infiltrated the media, FORSTAT feed stories to the American public to exaggerate the severity

of the incident, reporting falsely of the devastation of major cities and the signing of an armistice alongside the instruction Walters calls 'the magical placebo, repeated over and over: keep calm – watch for further reports'.[96] Paralysed into inaction by this process, America is passive and perhaps complicit in its reception of the Soviet invasion, consuming its own conquest through the media.

Having delivered a substantial psychological shock to the collective American psyche, the Soviets take control with clear principles and a strong sense of authority; Walters cites the example of Lyndon Johnson after Kennedy's assassination, praising him for the way he 'stepped in' despite his 'lack-lustre personality' (p. 160). What keeps the Soviets in power after their conquest is their superior understanding of the American society resulting from FORSTAT's careful studying, identifying the vulnerability of the *laissez-faire* society to forceful, cogent argument. The Communist message in *Vandenberg* overwhelms pluralistic liberalism partly through its rationality and articulation, proving that the Soviets are not the monsters of American Cold War propaganda and undermining the trust and confidence in the democratic authorities that claimed this to be true. Propaganda used against the Soviets is proven in the narrative to be self-defeating, ultimately weakening the resistance to Communism by casting doubt upon the validity of the pretext and those who set it, as Vandenberg tells Walters, 'How can you be objective when you know your country's been fed as much pap as another?'.[97] Exposing the propaganda for what it is harms the American self-image already suffering as a consequence of invasion and allows the new Soviet rulers to justify themselves more easily by avoiding the stereotypes and permitting the continuation of national holidays and religious worship. Furthermore, the Soviets are able to list the failings of the American regime: the orienting of

national defence 'towards aggressive-weapons stockpiling rather than actual defence';[98] the democratic method's reliance on 'huckstering and sham to achieve its ends';[99] the culture of national insularity in that 'most Americans cannot accept the fact that the rest of the world regarded the US as an essentially warlike nation'.[100] No figure or agency mounts a rigorous defence of democracy while Vandenberg's pronouncement, 'I know of nothing more deleterious to my liver than being the useful, contributing member of society the Occupation seems bent on making us all'[101] is less a defence of freedom than of selfishness.

In contrast to the humanised, rational, peaceful Soviets, Vandenberg is a difficult and dissident individual. He only becomes concerned with the absence of democratic liberties when his personal irresponsibility is no longer tolerated and isn't seeking to reach out to other, more principled opponents of the regime but reacting against his incarceration at the place of its occurrence:

> Personally, I couldn't have cared less about becoming a world citizen. The fact that I am an American citizen has never exactly held me spellbound with delight.[102]

Though the anti-hero is a common protagonist in American fiction, Vandenberg is atypical in that his status as an outsider is not vindicated by a greater patriotic imperative misunderstood by others. His objection to the Soviet occupation is not ideological but practical. He observes that under American democratic rule, his disagreeable behaviour 'probably alienated some people, but not to the point where they felt they had to do something about me'[103] whereas the Soviet Military

Government's (SMG) Communism resulted in his confinement. For the duration of 'In The Compound', Vandenberg is held at Cowles, 'a detention centre for political radicals and non-conformists'.[104] Inmates are persuaded of their lack conduciveness to society by a combination of in-depth psychological interviews and surreptitiously delivered lobotomy drugs that quell the idiosyncratic disposition in each subject. Cowles is compared to the German concentration camps rather than Stalin's *Gulag* camps, the full extent of which was unknown to the West at the time of the publication of the novel.[105] Cowles is the most invasive strategy employed by the Soviet Occupation to American individualism, treating of mavericks and lateral thinkers as criminals. It is because he is an unpatriotic, apathetic loner that Vandenberg becomes emblematic of American ideals of freedom; his persecution despite his reluctance to fight for democratic values demonstrates the invasiveness of the SMG's authority to American individualism and individuals.

*Vandenberg* is more successful than other post-invasion narratives at demonstrating the paradox of individualism as a national template, the difficulty of mounting a unified defence of pluralism against external authoritarianism without reverting to internal authoritarianism. It is done by presenting the reader with by the dissident strands of American identity, be it the capable, Spartan 'man-of-the-outdoors' like Vandenberg and but also 'big business American-style, with endless promotion on all the junk'[106] via consumer capitalism. Vandenberg is drawn as an antagonist to the latter but comes to appreciate the freedom to granted to exist as he does just as he is forced to accept that he and his band of followers that conduct the assault on Cowles are 'obsolete classes of citizens',[107] who would have arguably fell victim to progress were it not for the Soviet invasion. To progress in this way, however, is to become

increasingly detached from a reality represented by a connection to the outdoors in the form of figures like Vandenberg, where existence becomes 'peripheral involvement, wherein the real interest or activity is shunted in favour of an image'.[108] Lange's narrative does not condemn this given that the Soviet success is based on the exaggeration of the attack on Washington that leads to their conquest of America and ability to distort reality through news reporting prevents the reporting of Vandenberg's fairly successful assault on Cowles. It instead advises that America is too lacking in sophistication in the use of deception to abandon its Vandenbergs. As we will see in the next chapter, this idea of the exaltation of image as equal or superior to reality is one of the key contentions in the work of William Burroughs.

***The First Team***

Set in a near-future United States that has been under totalitarian occupation for a few weeks, *The First Team* (1971) by John Ball is an exercise in reinvigoration for American values and faith in the American political stance during the Cold War after the failure and disillusionment of Vietnam. The First Team of the novel's title is a group of highly skilled, well-resourced and super-secret organisation of 'invisible men'[109] activated only in case of American defeat and government surrender. Though the nationality of the enemy is unnamed, numerous signifiers of those representing the occupiers make it evidently the Soviet Union: the dull, ill-fitting uniforms, suits that were 'indifferently cut of very ordinary material',[110] Eastern European accents, the Slavic features and names such as Feodor Zalinsky and Gregor Rostovitch. The novel hinges on the effort of the First Team to recapture an American fleet ballistic missile

submarine (FBM) from the San Francisco Bay. The submarine is named the U.S.S. *Ramon Magsaysay* after the vocally anti-Communist Nacionalista President of the Philippines famous for his campaigning against the islands' Communist guerrillas. Since 'one modern FBM like this one packs more firepower inside her hull than has been released in all of the wars in the world's history',[111] freeing the submarine from occupation control would force the enemy to retreat from the United States. More famous for his series of novels featuring the African-American detective Virgil Tibbs that included *In the Heat of the Night* (1968), Ball again here employs black figures such as Davy Jones and Frank 'Asher' Jordan to thwart the institutionally racist regime, Frank ultimately killing Rostovitch, the figurehead for the regime's systemised tyranny. The novel is also critical of American hypocrisy over institutional racism, comparing General DeWitt's registration of Japanese-American citizens during World War Two to the regime's anti-Semitic policies and also the historical rewriting that characterises the conflict as an ideological war against racism.

America's occupation in the novel is constructed as the result of a series of coincidences that have, collectively, contributed to a failure of the nation to disengage from internal disputes; a failure to recognise and resist the real threat that is posed by an external enemy. The readiness of the enemy to invade is underestimated by the population and members of Congress, who have turned on the 'military establishment'[112] in America after the Vietnam war. The omniscient narrative sporadically follows a trio of self-aggrandising individuals separately courting popular opposition to the military activities of the government, jeopardising national security in pursuit of personal celebrity. Disguising cowardice as principle, popular singer Marc Orberg – who constantly refers to himself in the third person – and

violent black power militant Erskine Wattles campaign against the draft and help bring about the end to conscription so they can avoid military service. Probing into secret activities of the American military, ambitious Senator Soloman Fitzhugh helps expose weakened state of American national security to enemy that encourages them to invade. Others in Congress fail to grasp the ruthlessness of the enemy, 'because many of them were reasonable men they could not conceive that others could or would be any different',[113] that deceit during international negotiations was 'part of the system'.[114] The nation mutilates itself, undermining the institutions put in place to protect it from unscrupulous invaders, who are imagined by the narrative as being poised to take advantage of America's internal dissidence. Other factors cited for America's capitulation include a misdirection of American resources in the employment of talent in the commercial rather than national field – 'Your slogans sold more cigarettes, our slogans conquered your country'[115] – and the 'pitiful'[116] propaganda that failed to communicate that the military establishment was acting in the best interests of the nation.

Discussions regarding the relative morals of the American and enemy regimes take place in the White House as an 'invisible battle',[117] between the novel's chief protagonist, interpreter Raleigh Hewlitt, and his boss, Zalinsky, the head of the enemy government in the United States. The episode of Zalinsky's accusing Hewlitt of double standards over Japanese internment is a rare example of the enemy succeeding over America when the Americans are without handicap. Having explained how the United States succumbed to invasion, Ball uses the narrative to demonstrate the superiority of the American system over that of the enemy in terms of culture, humanity, technology and ingenuity. Both Hewlitt and Zalinsky are inappropriately

placed in the enemy regime. Derided as a former factory manager, Zalinsky was 'an absurdly out-of place figure in the White House',[118] unfit to run the United States but 'probably a good manager and administrator'[119] whereas Hewlitt is underused, deemed 'useful as an errand boy'[120] but possessing the special talent of a 'mnemonically trained mind'[121] that gives him an exceptional memory. Acquired by the First Team, Hewlitt is more suitably deployed obtaining information for the resistance from the enemy's base of operations in the White House. His skill in this is commendable, operating under 'the X-ray eye treatment'[122] of Zalinsky's scrutiny and an enemy 'almost fanatic in their suspicion'.[123] Unable to outmanoeuvre the First Team, the enemy can neither match the United States for weapons, having no equivalent to the U.S.S. *Ramon Magsaysay*; Rostovitch's claim that the enemy has sunk it with 'devices of which you do not dream'[124] is proven to be false. America's moral superiority to the enemy is reflected by its possession of a weapon as powerful as the *Magsaysay* but having 'no desire to use it', seeking to restore sovereignty 'without bloodshed'.[125] The enemy inspector discovering the crew requests and receives political asylum, a mercy that would not have been offered to an American counterpart by the enemy.

Clemency in American conduct is set against the 'inflexible posture'[126] of the enemy, particularly brutal in the execution of Landers for sedition and the torture and massacre of drama students staging a play about the occupation. The students are 'totally unprepared'[127] for the 'anything but secret'[128] secret police, who beat them, burn them with a cigarette lighter and shoot them. The regime's prohibition of Jews from public office and professional positions breaks the 'national illusion of being and having the best of everything'.[129] Normal functions of government continue 'in a

shadow world where the will of the enemy was in absolute control and tightening its grip with each passing day'.[130] The constriction of the invasion is implemented through numerous announcements that are arbitrarily enforced but designed to reduce the quality of life in the nation and dispel any notion that the conquest will bring any improvement: the cancellation of the primarily Jewish New York Philharmonic Orchestra's season; the abrupt ending of government farm programmes and agricultural aid; the appropriation by the State of Hawaiian private lands; the shipping of production and manufacture of household appliances overseas; and the phasing out of the English language within five years. The architect of this constriction is Rostovitch, a 'ruthless murderer' that uses his position of power to 'increase it still more',[131] he is motivated by 'blinding ambition... and his intense hatred of the Jews'.[132] After capture of the submarine he determines to 'set up a system of terror that would destroy the underground and force the total, absolute and final surrender of the United States, not so much to his country as to himself',[133] becoming emblematic of the secondary drive of invasion to obliterate the very idea of the occupied nation.

Characterising all attacks on American values from within and without as by-products of the personal ambition of objectionable individuals such as Rostovitch, Orberg and Wattles, the narrative enacts retribution on each for the damage their vanity has caused the nation. The occupation begins to crumble once their monopoly over news management and ability to obtain accurate information is broken by the First Team. Attempting to interrogate Frank, Rostovitch is goaded into relieving his armed guard of their duty believing, 'if I chose to kill you with my bare hands, you might last as long as thirty seconds',[134] yet is himself killed by Frank's superior martial ability.

Poetic justice is meted out to similarly vain Americans who achieved personal celebrity or notoriety in pre-occupation United States by denouncing it, expecting to be rewarded by the new regime yet being blithely unaware of how its rigid conformism will affect their individualism. Wattles' anticipation of release from prison when the enemy takes over are dashed and Orberg's expectation of being an active partner in the government and receiving the Nobel Peace Prize after greeting the enemy arrival at Maryland shore are frustrated when he is ignored by the commander. Persisting to seek the commander's attention, he is shot before he realises his unimportance to the regime and the reality of the invasion, 'He did not even know his own name anymore – only the all consuming fire of incarnate hell that was raging in his body'.[135]

Success in the novel is achieved by figures able to restrain and channel their personal inclinations, to operate in secret. Submitting himself to a violating search 'that even felt up into the crotch of his trousers', Hewlitt maintains a placid countenance even though 'his insides were knotted and his spirit cried for action',[136] delaying action until the proper time. The invasion in *The First Team* necessitates duality and deceptive appearances, with the operation to reclaim the United States occurring under strict enemy surveillance. America is represented by a retracted resistance, disguised by cover identities. Hewlitt is the 'visible boyfriend'[137] of agent Barbara Stoneham, who later acts as a high-class prostitute after the resistance establishes a brothel as its base of operations in Washington. Ex-marine Frank is a taxi driver who moves unsuspected because of his 'protective coloration',[138] while the leader of the First Team, Admiral Haymarket, is officially dead, killed in a car crash in Colorado. Conspirators are recruited from various American organisations, all having in

common 'a proven ability to keep his or her mouth shut',[139] disguising America from its oppressors: the armed forces, law-enforcement, Masonic lodge, Mensa, the Knights of Columbus, the Teamsters Union and even Ham radio operators. Having stolen the *Magsaysay* from the enemy by staging a fake reactor emergency, the passage of the submarine to Canadian water is helped by a series of apparent coincidences – in reality, discreetly conducted sabotage – that prevent any planes from taking off and hitting it with an air strike. Americans use their knowledge of the country and culture of the nation to conspire undetected, supplying the reclaimed submarine in Alaska because its 'vastness' and 'remoteness'[140] was a refuge from the enemy's surveillance. Like 'Christmas Eve' in *Not This August*, American citizens have an idiomatic 'password' between themselves, the lesson derived from the invasion and the moral of the narrative: 'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'.[141]

Where discrete operation helps the Americans undermine the occupation, the enemy, by contrast, are 'betrayed' by their appearance, one 'surrounded by an almost visible cloud of hostility… a machine that had somehow mistakenly been born as a human being and was determined to correct that error'.[142] The incongruity of the enemy to their new surroundings compared to the American comfort in their homeland, the inappropriateness of the system when applied to America, is proffered by Hewlitt to Zalinsky as the reason that the occupation will fail:

> This is a very big and complicated country, very different from your own and run under a different system. Our people are different, our ways of doing things, even our recreations. You and your people would take years to learn

the mechanism. It is like a vast machine that you have not built and have not been taught to operate.[143]

After Rostovitch's death the desire of the enemy to consolidate of the invasion expires, with Zalinsky admitting to Hewlitt that occupation 'simply wasn't practical. We cannot occupy your country indefinitely, and you could not occupy us, for many of the same reasons'.[144] Withdrawing expediently, the enemy premier is permitted by the Americans to save face by claiming 'the occupation has achieved its purpose'.[145] Concluding with a resumption of the Cold War stalemate, with peace maintained only because America has a nuclear submarine aimed at the enemy country, the purpose for the narrative is a reappraisal of the American position in the Cold War, to rejuvenate patriotic enthusiasm by defining it as being opposed to an external enemy rather than an internal one.

***Arslan***

Both Robert Silverberg's *Invaders from Earth* (1958) and Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Word for World is Forest* (1972) are science fiction narratives describing events much like the European discovery of America, where an expansionist, commercially driven Western government attempts to colonise a newly discovered world at the expense of the natives. In both narratives, sympathy is reserved for the colonial Other rather than the imperial familiar; introducing her novel, LeGuin calls her military officer Captain Davidson 'purely evil'.[146] Author of *Arslan* (1976) M. J. Engh describes her novel as mostly 'about people and their interrelationships. Power politics, ecology, good and

evil – all that stuff is just side effects'. [147] Engh has been compelled to defend it from criticism, 'considering that science fiction readers habitually take the slaughter of a few billion humans or other sentient beings without batting an eyelash'.[148] Arslan is a ruthless but charismatic dictator leading an invasion of America; the alternate title for the novel, *The Wind from Bhukhara*, is his nickname, making him metaphorically a natural, destructive phenomenon. Suitably, Engh's dictator employs the 'judo technique'[149] of using the opponent's weight and force against him, interrogating the nation's inherent hypocrisies as a figure that 'lied, but he did not pretend'.[150] Like Silverberg and LeGuin's narratives, *Arslan* challenges the Western perspective, addressing the mollification of America's founding by Europe, 'Social Studies books confessed that westward expansion had been a little hard on the Indians; but what citizen of Kraftsville could have questioned that Kraftsville citizens were nice people, and that nice people were good?'[151]

The novel is presented as the collated journal accounts of two witnesses to the successful invasion and occupation of America by a military dictatorship from an invented third world Eastern European buffer state, Turkistan, a vicarious agent of the Soviet Union. Having perfected a laser defence shield that enforces American surrender, the Soviets allow Arslan to impose himself on the country. Events begin at and are centred around the small Illinois town, Kraftsville, which becomes significant through its representing the frontier at which the invasion of America is wholly realised. As a post-invasion narrative, the novel is atypical because of the attention paid to the invasion itself. Arslan's conquest of America is sealed symbolically and controversially by his staged and broadcast rape of two teenaged children – one male, Hunt Morgan and one female, Paula Sears – in the local school's gym. The rape is

both an announcement of his arrival in the United States and animalistic exhibition of his intent to dominate the country. The innocence of the town is stolen with that of the children; the scene is a trauma from which the nation is unable to recover and begins to define itself around rather than against; the residences are billeted and a programme sterilisation is enforced as Arslan seeks to cut all communication and make all communities self-sufficient, destroying any affluence and comfort. Strategically useless, Kraftsville is the victim of misfortune in being the first American town that Arslan comes across and decides to experiment with, 'it was a challenge, a risk, an exploration; he did not yet know what he had done, nor what he would find'.[152] As the scene of invasion, it sets the sheer ferocity of the will of the dictator against the insulated comforts of the American middle class, marking the physical and psychological penetration of the dictator's authority into the American territory and imagination.

The unreadiness of America for the coming of Arslan are personified in the narration of Franklin L. Bond, the principal of the school Arslan uses to announce himself to the country. Provided by the text as a foil to Arslan, Bond emblematises the middle class American moral values that Arslan assaults, which demonstrates how ill-equipped the comfortable townsfolk are to cope with their merciless occupants. When the invaders arrive, his reactions to them strike as ineffectual and completely inappropriate, whether being 'grated'[153] by their singing or finding Arslan's manner with dogs 'beautiful'.[154] Styling himself as the town's pragmatic steward, Bond's inaction and his agreement with Arslan that he will 'spread the word that you're worse dead that alive'[155] reinforces Arslan's mythic, unconquerable status by

appeasement. Each time he is given an opportunity to resist the invaders, he fails, a paralysed, incredulous observer:

> I stared at him, amazed as much disgusted. It was incredible that a two-bit warlord from nowhere, infected with some outmoded Middle Eastern strain of agrarian socialism could be kinging it over my town – let alone my whole country.[156]

He begins by dismissing the invasion, seeing 'no reason to declare a holiday'[157] even though he knew the army was heading directly for the town. Yet presented with the chance to do something about it by Arslan, who gives him his pistol and baits the principal to shoot him with the caveat that Arslan's death could have severe consequences for the town, Bond resents being given the responsibility of making a choice, 'I didn't want it. I wasn't God. The most I could do is choose for myself, for Luella and the children'.[158]

The father of one of the children, Arnold Morgan, chastises Bond for sabotaging any hope of resisting Arslan before his hold on the town tightened, being 'so damn quick to inform on anybody who had a gun'.[159] His son, Hunt, is the author of the other journal account making up the text and is the embodiment of the physical territory invaded by Arslan. Hunt witheringly criticises Bond's 'authentic voice',[160] its delusion proving too much for the traumatised boy when Bond pontificates on Arslan's relative youth arriving in Kraftsville:

> Very young? I closed my eyes against it. Very young, when he had crushed me beneath him on the green couch in the school gymnasium, and I heard him laugh in my ear, and smelled the ugly smell of him, and blazed and but burst and splintered with hate? No, Arslan had never been very young. But I, I had been very young.[161]

However inadequate his temperance with regards to the severity of the circumstances, Bond does provide Hunt with a home unconditionally where his father would not and later prevents him, the most prominent victim of Arslan, from being lynched by townspeople. Shunned by Kraftsville and having only the vacillating Bond to support him, Hunt turns to Arslan and, like Winston Smith in *1984*, he is so thoroughly violated by his oppressor that he grows to love him. Arslan is his only constant, the stolen intimacy developing into a horrible familiarity. Converting the school into a brothel, Arslan comes to represent sex for all the teens of Kraftsville but particularly for Hunt, who is possessed by Arslan even when sleeping with Leila, another of the dictator's child slaves, 'and 'Arslan,' I sang silently into her hair, 'Arslan, Arslan,' against her smooth brown body'.[162] Arslan co-opts the extremity of Hunt's emotions, driving him to fetishise and obsessively define himself by and against the dictator. His being and independence subjugated to the point where his actions revolve around trying to impress upon Arslan's emotions, be it reading to him to 'produce, by my own action, an actual result in Arslan'[163] or, more drastically, killing Arslan's wife, 'my rival, my replacement'.[164]

An unusual and uncomfortable narrative, *Arslan* is presented largely as an exercise in exploring the effects of a traumatic experience given the implausible premise of

American defeat to a third world invasion. It is an example of the increasing sophistication and self-reflection of the invasion narrative, the adaptation of a more critical approach parallel to the critical utopias identified by Tom Moylan in *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination* (1986). Through Arslan, Engh reminds the reader of the foundation upon which the comfortable American middle class lifestyle is built and how insulated the modern nation has been from war in comparison with other nations:

> You have *made* war, you have not suffered it! Your nation, sir, has been perhaps the happiest to exist in the world. And yet consider its history. The natives despoiled, displaced, cheated, brutalized, slaughtered. The most massive and the most cynical system of slavery since the fall of Rome. A civil war spectacular in dimensions. A century of labor troubles, of capitalist exploitation and union exploitation. And in the very ascendancy of your power, disintegration! The upheaval, the upswelling of savagery, of violence.[165]

Arslan imposes a new trauma on to America that refers to the European invasion of the continent, recalling the violence involved in the creation of the United States of America that is glossed over by the European narrative of discovery. This returns us to the thematic territory covered by Chapter V of Washington Irving's *A History of New York*, and leads us into the final chapter, which concerns the new satiric invasion narrative.

[1] *Culture and Imperialism*, p. 12

[2] Tom Shippey, 'The Fall of America in Science Fiction' in Tom Shippey, ed. *Fictional Space: Essays on Contemporary Science Fiction* (Atlantic Highlands: Oxford Humanities Press, 1991), pp. 104-32, p. 109

[3] Robert Heinlein, *The Day After Tomorrow* (London: New English Library, 1972), p. 36

[4] In a speech to the Senate in 1837, Calhoun proposed slavery as a 'positive good' in upholding white supremacy and paternalism rather than a 'necessary evil'.

[5] *ibid*, p. 26

[6] *ibid*, p. 133

[7] *ibid*, p. 125

[8] *ibid*, p. 14

[9] *ibid*, p. 14

[10] *ibid*, p. 128

[11] *ibid*, p. 14

[12] *ibid*, p. 97

[13] *ibid*, p. 41

[14] *ibid*, p. 23

[15] *ibid*, p. 23

[16] *ibid*, p. 23

[17] *ibid*, p. 46

[18] *ibid*, p. 122

[19] *ibid*, p. 27

[20] *ibid*, p. 27

[21] *ibid*, p. 28

[22] *ibid*, p. 28

[23] *ibid*, p. 135

[24] *ibid*, p. 34

[25] *ibid*, p. 127

[26] *ibid*, p. 133

[27] *ibid*, p. 128

[28] *ibid*, p. 120

[29] Jerry Sohl, *Point Ultimate* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Company, 1955), p. 3-4

[30] *ibid*, p. 42

[31] *ibid*, p. 27

[32] *ibid*, p. 27

[33] *ibid*, p. 47

[34] *ibid*, p. 6

[35] *ibid*, p. 78

[36] *ibid*, p. 65

[37] *ibid*, p. 80

[38] *ibid*, p. 80

[39] *ibid*, p. 98

[40] *ibid*, p. 66

[41] *ibid*, p. 152

[42] *ibid*, p. 158

[43] *ibid*, p. 43

[44] *ibid*, p. 43

[45] *ibid*, p. 172

[46] *ibid*, p. 179

[47] The American title comes from Ernest Hemingway's 'Notes on the Next War', whereas the UK title refers to the rhyming slang for disbelief.

[48] Cyril M. Kornbluth, *Not This August* (New York: Tor, 1981), p. 15

[49] *ibid*, p. 27

[50] *ibid*, p. 112

[51] *ibid*, p. 60

[52] *ibid*, p. 79

[53] *ibid*, p. 122

[54] *ibid*, p. 131

[55] *ibid*, p. 41

[56] *ibid*, p. 63

[57] *ibid*, p. 136

[58] *ibid*, p. 159

[59] *ibid*, p. 195

[60] *ibid*, p. 196

[61] *ibid*, p. 198

[62] *ibid*, p. 233

[63] *ibid*, p. 233

[64] *ibid*, p. 224

[65] *ibid*, p. 51

[66] *ibid*, p. 65

[67] *ibid*, p. 56

[68] *ibid*, p. 138

[69] *ibid*, p. 137

[70] *ibid*, p. 163

[71] *ibid*, p. 41

[72] *ibid*, p. 114

[73] *ibid*, p. 150

[74] Robert Shafer, *The Conquered Place* (London: Putnam, 1955), p.323

[75] *ibid*, p. 54

[76] *ibid*, p. 37

[77] *ibid*, p. 138

[78] *ibid*, p. 267

[79] *ibid*, p. 218

[80] *ibid*, p. 219

[81] *ibid*, p. 219

[82] *ibid*, p. 220

[83] *ibid*, p. 222

[84] *ibid*, p. 252

[85] *ibid*, p. 252

[86] Oliver Lange, *Vandenberg* (London: Pan, 1971), p. 8

[87] *ibid*, p. 62

[88] *ibid*, p. 49

[89] *ibid*, p. 49

[90] *ibid*, p. 48

[91] *ibid*, p. 49

[92] *ibid*, p. 158

[93] *ibid*, p. 158

[94] *ibid*, p. 158

[95] *ibid*, p. 160

[96] *ibid*, p. 161

[97] *ibid*, p. 124

[98] *ibid*, p. 94

[99] *ibid*, p. 94

[100] *ibid*, p. 124

[101] *ibid*, p. 50

[102] *ibid*, p. 50

[103] *ibid*, p. 129

[104] *ibid*, p. 82

[105] The term *Gulag* became familiar in the West as a result of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's 1973 text *The Gulag Archipelago*, published after *Vandenberg*.

[106] *ibid*, p. 47

[107] *ibid*, p. 283

[108] *ibid*, p. 52

[109] John Ball, *The First Team* (Boston: Bantam, 1971), p. 91

[110] *ibid*, p. 6

[111] *ibid*, p. 279

[112] *ibid*, p. 14

[113] *ibid*, p. 42

[114] *ibid*, p. 117

[115] *ibid*, p. 62

[116] *ibid*, p. 62

[117] *ibid*, p. 75

[118] *ibid*, p. 9

[119] *ibid*, p. 334

[120] *ibid*, p. 24

[121] *ibid*, p. 32

[122] *ibid*, p. 178

[123] *ibid*, p. 236

[124] *ibid*, p. 345

[125] *ibid*, p. 382

[126] *ibid*, p. 42

[127] *ibid*, p. 185

[128] *ibid*, p. 85

[129] *ibid*, p. 67

[130] *ibid*, p. 189

[131] *ibid*, p. 295

[132] *ibid*, p. 171

[133] *ibid*, p. 290

[134] *ibid*, p. 401

[135] *ibid*, p. 209

[136] *ibid*, p. 29

[137] *ibid*, p. 59

[138] *ibid*, p. 101

[139] *ibid*, p. 266

[140] *ibid*, p. 330

[141] *ibid*, p. 192

[142] *ibid*, p. 27

[143] *ibid*, p. 144

[144] *ibid*, p. 427

[145] *ibid*, p. 423

[146] Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Word for World is Forest* (London: Gollancz, 1977), p. 8

[147] http://www.mjengh.com/arslan_7473.htm [accessed 15th September 2010]

[148] http://www.mjengh.com/arslan_7473.htm [accessed 15th September 2010]

[149] M. J. Engh, *Arslan* (London: Gollancz, 2010), p. 109

[150] *ibid*, p. 180

[151] *ibid*, p. 179

[152] *ibid*, p. 194

[153] *ibid*, p. 15

[154] *ibid*, p. 57

[155] *ibid*, p. 26

[156] *ibid*, p. 27

[157] *ibid*, p. 5

[158] *ibid*, p. 29

[159] *ibid*, p. 74

[160] *ibid*, p. 302

[161] *ibid*, p. 160

[162] *ibid*, p. 156

[163] *ibid*, p. 161-2

[164] *ibid*, p. 154

[165] *ibid*, p. 81

## Chapter Six: Self-Conscious Invasion Narratives

More commonly used as extrapolative warnings to frighten readers out of complacency or into altering a particular pattern of behaviour, American invasion narratives can also be funny. Though the tradition draws upon the puritan jeremiads that, as Sacvan Bercovitch sets out in *The American Jeremiad*, arrive in America with the missionary settlers of the seventeenth century, satirical fiction plays a prominent role in establishing the invasion narrative in American culture. Washington Irving's *History of New York* derides the righteousness of the European colonisation of America by imagining the nation invaded by beings from the Moon whilst Charles Heber Clark's essay 'An American Battle of Dorking' helped to appropriate the European invasion narrative for American culture. The pattern of early future war fiction had become so familiar that it was cliché, P. G. Wodehouse subverts it in *The Military Invasion of America.* The story comments on the disconnection between the ruling classes and the wider population through the farcical attempts of the German and Japanese conquerors to capture national attention by performing in Broadway musicals. Dismissing the concern over invasion as juvenile, the organisation most concerned with and successful in ridding the nation of the invaders is the Boy Scouts of America, led by the boy patriot, Clarence Chugwater. To varying degrees, much of the literature in this section ridicules or parodies the invasion narrative, or treats the invasion narrative itself as part of the subject.

Included with 'Zero Hour' as part of the American edition of *The Illustrated Man* (1951), Ray Bradbury's 'The Concrete Mixer' pokes fun at invasion clichés and the vacuous, hedonistic lifestyle of affluent Californians. Unusually, the narrative is

written from the perspective of the invader. Protagonist Ettil is a Martian intimately familiar with American pulp science fiction where 'nine out of ten stories in the years 1929, '30 to '50, Earth calendar, have every Martian invasion successfully invading Earth'.[1] Consequently he is reluctant to join in with a planned invasion of Earth because the conclusion is foregone, 'the Earthmen know they cannot fail'.[2]
Ettil's refusal to participate makes him an outcast:

> 'Who ever heard of a Martian not invading? Who!'
>
> 'Nobody. It is, I admit, quite incredible.'[3]

Eventually convinced to enlist, he arrives on Earth as part of the invasion force to find that they are welcomed and welcome to anything the planet can offer them. The hospitality the Martians receive unnerves Ettil, who insists that 'something's going to happen to us. They have some plan. Something subtle and horrible. They're going to do something to us – I know'.[4] Yet the worst harm the hosts do to their invaders is overindulging them with popcorn, hotdogs, ice cream and pastrami. Meeting hostility with hospitality, America kills the invasion threat with kindness, disregarding the Martian danger by not taking it seriously; film director Rick even wishes Ettil a 'happy invasion'.[5]

Matching the stereotype of an avid reader of pulp science fiction, Ettil is particularly awkward around girls, 'blond robots with pink rubber bodies, real, but somehow unreal, alive but somehow automatic in all responses, living in caves all their lives. Their *derrières* are incredible in girth.'[6] Invasion narratives before the late 1980s had

rarely involved female characters in prominent roles other than as a sexual interest for the lead male figures. One major exception to this is Richard Wilson's *The Girls From Planet 5* (1955), an anti-feminist novel in the vein of Sam Merwin Jr.'s *The Sex War* (1953), which uses the invasion as a device to set up the novel's polemic. A former member of the Futurians, a group of influential science fiction fans that included Sam Moskovitz, Frederick Pohl and James Blish, Wilson reverses the traditional gender binary association of masculine with invader and feminine with invaded, using a race of stunningly beautiful Amazonian-like warrior women called the Lyru as the invaders. 'Lyru' is a corruption of 'le roux', meaning red-haired, and both the 1955 and 1967 editions of the novel feature a scantily-clad girl with red hair on the cover. Set in a feminist-governed America in 1998 after women had controlled power for nearly twenty years, Texas, the setting for the majority of the novel, remains as a haven for disenchanted patriarchs. The Lyru arrive six miles south of Washington in the city of Alexandria, Virginia, destroying the city and much of Maryland with anti-gravity. Explained as a miscalculation rather than a statement of malevolence, the intention or not of the catastrophe caused by the arrival of the Lyru is an uncertainty lasting almost until the end of the novel, when the narrative reveals itself as an invasion within an invasion. It transpires that the Lyru are an invaded race themselves, controlled by haggard old women named the Crones who, it is eventually revealed, have come to Earth to take the men to maintain their slave race, something suspected by the Texans and particularly protagonist Dave Hull from the beginning. A comparison between the way matriarchal society of Earth and that of the Crone controlled Lyru is insinuated by the way Washington accommodates the invaders.

The apparatus of opposition in this narrative is so insistent that traditional masculinity is incapable of co-existing with a female identity that is not submissive. The relation between the sexes is drawn as that of competition, epitomised when Hull moves to Texas after his girlfriend beats him to a promotion and becomes his boss. Referring to the rest of the United States as 'Biddyland', Texas has virtually seceded from the rest of the country as a preserve of male-domination, personified by the hero-figure of Sam Buckskin, whose name evokes Americana and sheriffs of the Wild West. He is contrasted with the 'weak and despised' men of the Lyru home-world, who are retained only 'for their skills and procreation value'[7]. This conservative idea of an inferior masculinity that accommodates feminism is implied by their occupation of cultural professions rather than in manual labour or agriculture:

> Some of the men were artisans, some poets and storytellers. A prevalent theme in the tales they told was of a day when the males would find their lost strength and free the Lyru women from the subjection in which they were held by the Crones.[8]

The self-loathing longing revealed by these tales also betrays the imperialist inclination of Wilson's narrative, since it is America, distilled into Texas, that liberates the Lyru and their men from the oppression by the Crones. The reward for masculinity as the Crones are deposed is the Lyru's relinquishing of their Amazonian redoubt, 'now that we've got our men back we'll have to be more feminine',[9] returning to submission. Wilson's novel is a perfect metaphor for the American invasion paradigm, a feminised America invaded by an enemy that is less than masculine and that can be repelled and even dominated once America reaffirms its

repressed masculinity. Though its fears of feminist rule proved unfounded, the novel was remarkably prescient in envisaging a successful Presidential run for a conservative Texan candidate in 2000, with the election of George W. Bush.

Where Wilson's novel uses invasion in a comic way to express fears of feminism, whilst Frederic Brown's *Martians Go Home* (1955) humorously unpicks the conventions of the fiction, making reference to prior fictional Martian invasions. The prologue begins with a distinctly Wellsian warning, 'If the peoples of Earth were not prepared for the coming of the Martians, it was their own fault. Events of the preceding century in general and of the preceding few decades in particular should have prepared them'.[10] The invaders appear on Earth after a science fiction writer in the pulp tradition, Luke Devereaux, has driven out into the California desert to work on a new story. Responding to popular dismissals of science fiction, Brown's invaders revisit the genre stereotype, 'science fiction had carefully avoided the cliché, and the cliché turned out to be the truth. They really *were* little green men'.[11] Their appearance is explained by their use of a mental projection technique known as 'kwimming', parodying science fiction neology, allowing them to appear anywhere in the world at will. Unfortunately for humanity, they are:

> abusive, aggravating, annoying, brash, brutal, cantankerous, caustic, churlish, detestable, discourteous, execrable, fiendish, flippant, fresh, galling, hateful, hostile, ill-tempered, insolent, impudent, jabbering, jeering, knavish killjoys. They were leering, loathsome, malevolent, malignant, nasty, nauseating, objectionable, peevish, perverse, quarrelsome, rude, sarcastic, splenetic, treacherous, truculent, uncivil, ungracious, waspish, xenophobic, yapping and

> zealous in making themselves obnoxious to and in making trouble for everyone with who they came into contact.[12]

Brown's Martians harass and disrupt activity in America and the rest of Earth by verbal and visual harassment. They delight in bringing misery to the humans, going as far as distracting people in order to kill them, for example, by blocking the vision of car drivers. Unable to touch or be touched by humans, the Martians cause people to harm themselves by psychological bullying. Radio announcements, like in Orson Welles broadcast, implore people not to panic, 'Don't be afraid, but don't try to attack them. It doesn't do you any good anyway. Besides, they are harmless. They can't hurt you for the same reason that you can't hurt them'.[13]

However, their ability to appear anywhere on Earth means that they cannot be ignored and their possession of X-ray and night vision enables them to see in the dark and through opaque objects. Intimacy is destroyed by their interest in people's 'disgusting mating habits',[14] providing sarcastic commentary as they watch. Yet the 'greatest mental torture'[15] is suffered by members of secret military organisations, whose confidential projects are compromised to serve the Martian amusement, creating world peace since governments are unable to prevent intelligence from falling into the hands of enemy states. Where the Martians drive most people to the brink of insanity, Devereaux actually goes beneficially insane by developing an inability to see the Martians when diagnosed by a psychiatrist as 'specialized hysterical blindness',[16] an ironic reversal of the hallucination as a symptom of mental disorder. *Martians, Go Home* is resolved by the disappearance of the aliens, as sudden as their appearance, when Devereaux realises he can make them disappear by willing it. This explanation

is set alongside two other simultaneous attempts to dispel the Martians from Earth: the 'juju' of an African witch doctor and the invention of a super-weapon by a Germanic sounding American amateur scientist, Hiram Pedro Oberdorffer, a name evoking famous weapons inventor Hiram Maxim and also Dr Oppenheimer, who developed the atomic bomb. Oberdorffer is a caricature of inventor-hero, the traditional saviour of the world in American invasion fiction, whose self-importance is belied by his self-image; 'in his own words (and who are we to gainsay them), he knew more science than most of them laboratory guys'.[17]

Where Devereaux conjures an invasion by imagining it, the scientist Dr Simmons in Theodore Sturgeon's short story 'Unite and Conquer' (1948) resolves to invent one, successfully displacing imminent international conflict into 'a Buck Rogers war'[18] by hoaxing an alien invasion. The alien, dubbed 'The Outsider', confounds the military department set up to prepare for nuclear attack by an international adversary:

> Well, it's just that I've been expecting the well-known atomic doom for so *very* long, that I've covered every emotion but one over it. I've been afraid, even terrified. I've been angry. I've been disgusted. And now – it's funny. It's funny because of what you're going through. Of all the things you've guessed at, trained for, planned for – it has to come like this. Sitting ducks. An enemy you can't outthink, outweigh, outsmart, or terrorize. It was always inevitable.[19]

Instead of fighting amongst each other, the nations of the world pool their resources in co-operation. An attempted invasion hoax fails in 'The Architects of Fear' (1963), an episode of the television series *The Outer Limits* directed by the Byron Haskin, the

director of the 1953 film of *The War of the Worlds*. The concluding voice-over narration warns against the seeking of short-cuts in trying to resolve the Cold War stalemate, 'Scarecrows and magic and other fatal fears do not bring people closer together. There is no magic substitute for soft caring and hard work, for self-respect and mutual love'.[20]

### *The Genocides*

The parodying of invasion conventions supports the view of David G. Hartwell, arguing that, by the end of the 1950s, the insistence on human victory through scientific development in American science fiction had become tantamount to 'intellectual masturbation'.[21] The 1960s saw the birth of the New Wave, a group of writers that believed science fiction's literary potential extended far beyond the pulps and into canonical status. Their interest focused more on 'inner space', social and political issues, than outer. Although the New Wave was a mainly British phenomenon, the one major American writer who engaged with the invasion theme was Thomas M. Disch. Aggressive pro-humanism, characteristic of traditional invasion, is attacked brutally by *The Genocides* (1965), most significantly subverting the invasion theme through the victory of the alien invaders over the human inhabitants. This significance is not simply that the invaders win; J. W. Campbell's 'The Invaders' (1935) depicts this eventuality; it comes with the unequivocal scale of the aliens' victory.

Events in *The Genocides* centre around the struggle of a small group from a small village by – ironically – Lake Superior in Minnesota. Their survival is somewhat miraculous, due to the knowledge of a local farmer, Anderson, rather than military or scientific initiative, triggering expectations created by the genre of the ability of the human race to endure such crises. Yet, the hard-line Christian patriarchy set up in the failure of all other structures of order breaks down gradually too until there are but six survivors. Minnesota is part of the so-called 'Bible belt' of the mid-west, much derided for being full of ignorant and unintelligent people, and setting the novel there suggests that the hopes of the species lie with the people least capable of realising them. Skilled people that survived the incineration but were attacked in their sleep by Anderson's farmers, lest they threatened Anderson's rule or food supply. Buddy and Greta agree that, by and large, the 'best' people have died.[22] This ridicules the idea that the survival of the species will always be in the hands of those able to give it a fighting chance, as in *The Puppet Masters*, or that those left would be people exemplifying the reasons why the human race is worth preserving.

One of the reasons for the inability of the humans in the novel to defend themselves is the lack of reason or discrimination on behalf of the invaders; they are giant plants. All the plants do is grow. When inhibited in this growth, they adapt and grow around or through whatever inhibits them. That the invaders are plant-based gives the text a significant precursor in the spores of *The Body Snatchers*. Having no discernible intelligence, the plants are humanised if it is argued that the invasion is malign. This is something done by Anderson, who hates the plants as if they'd grown deliberately to spite him. Neither Anderson nor anyone else in the novel knows that the plants have been sent by an alien race intent on wiping them from the planet in order to

protect their 'chief artefacts',[23] the plants. These aliens do not appear to be aware of any morality to what they are doing, and describe the human inhabitants as 'indigenous mammals'[24] that apparently exist only to disrupt their gardening. This responds to the human colonisation Sanctuary, the planet of barely evolved plant life in Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* (1959), where plants thoughtlessly introduced from Earth eliminated all naturally occurring life because of their evolutionary advantages.

Disch reverses the standard Othering in parasitic invasion fiction by comparing the inhabitants and not the invaders to pests. Where *The Puppet Masters* describes the aliens as slugs, *The Genocides* compares its five remaining figures to worms. The size of the plants perpetuates the idea of humans being pests as it gives the inhabitants the stature proportionately equivocal to that of pests, undermining their superiority. It is also the redundant strategy of the Artilleryman in *The War of the Worlds*, one that can be applied metatextually to Disch's novel. Humanity might have survived if it was willing to accept the new role of pest dealt to it, but the drive to escape from the plants and reach the surface, noble as the narrative conveys it, leaves the survivors subject to the methods of extermination concocted by the aliens. In contrast to *The War of the Worlds*, the plant invaders have no obvious intelligence, meaning that any human analogy with them must be reductive. It is also an invader that invites comparisons with Vietnam, noted for its battles amongst jungle undergrowth and the use of napalm bombs, which bears resemblance to the second phase of the extermination, the incinerators; the estimations of extermination completion by the aliens, echoing the predictions of Defense Secretary General Robert McNamara of when the US military role in Vietnam was due to end, suggesting the novel can be read in part as a satire on the conflict.

Religion is notorious as a rationale used to assert superiority and systematic intolerance. Christianity is central to the novel, as events transpire in Minnesota, and it uses biblical language throughout, some prime examples being the description of Buddy as a 'prodigal' and Anderson being compared to Noah. It is Anderson that has taken control of the town as a result of the crisis, as it was he who developed the strategy that preserved the race to this extent. His mayoral rule is an authoritarian patriarchy, something typically set up in crises, be it emergency decree or military takeover. He is the father figure of the patriarchy, wielding a Colt Python .357 Magnum as a phallic totem of power, the symbolism underlined later in a dispute between Neil and Greta where he takes Neil's side, 'Anderson was a firm believer in male supremacy'.[25] He represents the all-American farmer: close to nature, good with his hands, intuitive and decisive and is driven by 'an animal strength… the only strength strong enough to prevail against the Plants'.[26] Dealing in the familiar, he is suspicious of technology and outsiders such as Orville, more so if they possess knowledge beyond his understanding. Like Sam in *The Puppet Masters*, his perspective is one that identifies instinct and intellect as opposites, the former positive and the latter negative. His rule is grounded on strict Christian principles, a 'homemade and apocalyptic brand of Congregationalism'.[27] Although he flourishes due to the invasion of the plants, his hold over the community is loosened considerably by the incinerators and his inflexible authority begins to unravel. His confidence fails due to Orville's superior knowledge; his strength fails as he weakens through old age and ill health; his authority fails because the Bible upon which the rule is based was left behind in the blaze. Greta's defiance causes him to collapse and a rat bite soon after weakens him considerably further; he is left broken to the extent

where even Neil, his idiot son, disobeys and then kills him by refusing to accept Orville as the successor.

The survival of nobody suggests that *The Genocides* judges humanity on the basis of its worst representatives, giving no leeway to even those that have some attribute worth preserving. Yet of the main protagonists, there is no one figure for the reader to readily identify with. Even the more benign members of the group are difficult; Orville, for example, is shown to be selfish, 'The world might die around him. No matter: *he* was alive again',[28] but his growing love for Blossom and his dwindling hatred of Anderson redeems him. Contrastingly, Neil is used by Disch to epitomise how hereditary patriarchy restrains the human race. Epitomising stupidity, his incompetence and closed-mindedness hamper the progress of the community consistently. After insanely lusting after Blossom, his sister, his fate is ridicule by the copulation with a putrefying skull. Escape from the plant is a vindication of the conduct of those who make it. They are, however, unable to escape their fate as Disch goes further than Wells and eradicates the human race from the universe. Humanity is dismissed nonchalantly at the novel's end:

> Nature is prodigal. Of a hundred seedlings only one or two would survive; of a hundred species, only one or two.
>
> Not, however, man.[29]

*The Genocides* takes the ideology of adopting the Darwinian ruthlessness of the uncaring universe that is dealt out to the plant species in *Starship Troopers* and throws

it back at the human race. It judges the species by the ethical standards it has set for itself in other works of science fiction and exacts that judgement in uncompromising fashion: extermination, offering no last minute release and no future for the human race.

**The *Nova* Trilogy**

William Burroughs's *Nova* trilogy, comprising *The Soft Machine* (1961), *The Ticket That Exploded* (1962) and *Nova Express* (1964) is not a set of conventional invasion narratives. Burroughs identifies the virus with words – his very medium – and portrays invasion as a permanent, continuous process.

Throughout, Burroughs uses experimental writing techniques such as the 'cut-up' and 'fold-in' methods and a non-linear, episodic style to disrupt logocentric expectations of sequencing and plot, with events occurring and reoccurring without consequence to future episodes. Diverging from invasion paradigms, there is no clearly defined invader, incumbent subject to invasion or territory. Episodes take place in various locations, some more distinct than others, and can move through dimension and time, for example, from futuristic America to the Mayan dynasty. Figures change shape and appearance without warning; people transform into crabs; gender becomes a disguise rather than a fixed state. The cut-up and fold-in methods make the text difficult to follow at times, which contrasts with the simplistic dualism of the paradigmatic invasion narrative. Despite these radical differences, the *Nova* trilogy shares major thematic commonalities with the other narratives considered here that justify its

inclusion as part of the invasion tradition, if not strictly as an invasion narrative in the traditional sense. A jeremiad, it warns of humanity's path of self-destruction having been corrupted by a parasitic virus deeply entrenched in civilisation: the word. The word itself carries the invading virus that pervades and expands, corrupting from birth by constructing a noxious cultural environment, denying people born into it any innocence or autonomy. Burroughs' approach in the *Nova* trilogy to word and narrative exacerbates the difference between his works and that of other writers of invasion fiction. Of particular importance here is his use of imagery. Invasion narratives that have been considered for the purposes of this study tend to use invasion as a device to illustrate how society is endangering itself through, as examples, complacency, depersonalisation, immigration or lack of military preparedness. Though the *Nova* trilogy continues this trend of identifying practices that prove self-destructive, it deviates from other narratives by maintaining the theme as a *permanent context*, on ongoing condition of the text, with multiple invasions occurring on innumerate occasions in the past, present and future. Rather than insisting on one cataclysmic event or purposeful process, invasion in Burroughs is constant, shifting and on multiple levels for multiple agendas.

Unconventional as invasion narratives, the *Nova* trilogy is also unconventional as narrative, ignoring – even hostile to – the basic Aristotelian requirements of beginning, middle and end. Events have no discernable sequence and occur without lasting consequence. The episodes are as phantasmagoric, replayed throughout the text in varying contexts and with shifting significance. Texts are divided not into chapters but routines, a term borrowed from theatre or stand-up comedy, implying repetition, performance and stage; a self-consciousness that defies perceptions of

reality, resisting the traditional author/reader contract of suspension of disbelief. Burroughs hinders comprehension further by undermining trust in the narrative authority, including explanatory notes from invented scientific research and experts alongside real ones. Then there is the writing itself. Throughout the trilogy, Burroughs uses a technique he calls the 'cut-up method', taking excerpts from his own fiction, his non-fiction and that of other writers as varied as Shakespeare, Rimbaud, Eliot, Conrad, Kafka, Chandler and James M. Cain, rearranging them to procure new meanings and associations. A particularly noteworthy example is Henry Kuttner, a member of 'The Lovecraft Circle' of writers corresponding with H. P. Lovecraft and writing in an indebted style. The body focus and amorphous, squirming horrors that permeate the *Nova* trilogy evoke Lovecraft but this is perhaps by way of Kuttner given the science fictional elements in Burroughs' work; in *The Ticket That Exploded*, Burroughs redraws 'the Happy Cloak' from Kuttner's *Fury* (1947), including the citation in the text.

Burroughs describes consciousness as a cut-up; reading on a train for example is an amalgamation of the word or sentence the reader is focused on, mixed with text before and after, the surrounding area, sounds from passenger conversations and the noise of the train itself. The cut-up method is an attempt to put this on the page, like a montage painting. As such, the writing is often a collection of loosely related images, densely packed and more closely resembling poetry than prose. Like other practitioners of the stream of consciousness style such as Joyce, punctuation and sequential clarity is dispensed with in an attempt to redefine the manner by which cognition is articulated. Time and space bend in the *Nova* trilogy, which ranges from an apparent dystopian future to the era of the Mayan empire to Venus and Uranus

without ever being in any of these places. Most importantly, the primary virus in the trilogy is the medium through which it exists: the word. That the medium is infected means there is no innocent perception; the reality of the narrative is subjective and permeable, where the only constants are instability and corruption.

Considering the *Nova* 'trilogy' as an invasion narrative raises certain problems because of the text's lack of clarity and linearity. One of these problems is the absence of a definitive invaded territory, hitherto a central premise for invasion narratives. Trends in post-war invasion fiction were towards mind control, with invaders gradually reducing in size from massed armies to tiny alien parasites. Rather than a land mass, it is the 'soft machine' of the human body and the 'mind body' of humanity that is the subject of invasion, under constant siege from a series of viruses. Burroughs insists on the materiality of the viruses and of culture as represented by the 'Reality Film' or 'flesh scripts', but proffers that people were scared 'into body'[30] by the word, implying that the physical is akin to a prison. Controllers in the *Nova* trilogy are physical viral entities with a material value, not merely ghosts that descend from another realm and possess. Word, the key virus in the *Nova* trilogy, is similarly corporeal; Robyn Lydenberg observes of Burroughs' work that 'the absence or emptiness that is language is made literal and concrete'[31]. Literalness is allied by Lydenberg to Burroughs' 'commitment to scientific speculation and naked fact'.[32] Although the actions within the trilogy apparently defy logic and reason, Burroughs offers explanations of his approach in footnotes and appendages throughout the text, giving the trilogy a scientific – or pseudo-scientific – foundation. The science he cites tends to be the work of experimental or maverick figures, such as Wilhelm Reich and John Yerbury Dent,[33] or occasionally invented academics like Dr Kurt Unruh von

Steinplatz, plugging evidentiary gaps in his theories by citing speculation as proven fact. Logical paradoxes, constant mutation and shifting of events, people and places make the text resistant to interpretation and the paranoia echoed throughout the text could be seen as a symptom of the corruption of the medium as readily as a response to it. Many of the difficulties in reading the text as an invasion narrative are less to do with the theme of 'invasion' and more with the format of the narrative. Events occur in temporary performances, compared frequently to vaudeville, which have no effect on subsequent or prior sequences in the text. There is no sense of progression, instead events run as an extended present; invasion is maintained as a permanent context, neither thwarted nor repelled by those defending against it nor successful in totally consuming humanity.

Much of the confusion in Burroughs results from his persistent ambivalence. Though hostile to logocentrism and binary opposition his use of the theme of invasion is perverse given that the key relationship in invasion, that of invader to the entity it invades, is a binary one. The introduction of the Nova Police and Nova Mob into the latter two novels of the trilogy only restates – is reliant on – the importance of the binary principle. However, the division between Burroughs' mob and police is not without caveat. Though the mob is cast as a group of viral parasites intent on destroying the human organism, Burroughs creates an ambiguity around them that defies his mythology. The Subliminal Kid, the technician who creates the suggestive messages that facilitate the control by word, is a figure not unlike Burroughs himself in experimenting with tape recorders; the apparatus promoted as the tool of repression is never totally dismantled, but reconfigured, cut-up finds new meanings but uses the same words. The doctor figure in Burroughs is usually Benway, the arrogant,

incompetent medical professional that represents abusive authority, but in *The Soft Machine* he helps bring down the forces of control by assisting with the Mayan Caper. He also resembles Burroughs by fading 'into the shadows furtive and seedy as an old junky',[34] the 'el hombre invisible' identity Burroughs assumed when in Mexico. Even Mr Bradly Mr Martin, the leader of the Nova Mob, is shown as a victim of parasitic invasion himself, split and penetrated by 'Long tendril hands'[35] in the routine 'The Black Fruit'.

### The *Nova* Trilogy as an Invasion Narrative

Though very different from the other narratives discussed, the *Nova* trilogy shares similarities with all types of invasion narrative and can be read perhaps as an interrogation of the invasion model. Invasion narratives set up the invader and the invaded in opposition to each other. The two agencies are different in ways that are irresolvable by means other than the elimination of one of them; they cannot co-exist peacefully. This is due to the nature of the relationship of the invader to the invaded; either the invaded inhabits the space that the invader wishes to occupy or, as a parasitic entity, the invader wishes to occupy the invaded entity itself. Prior to invasion, the incumbent was able to exist in a state of relative health; the presence of the invader is hostile, unwelcome and absolutely detrimental to the well-being of the incumbent. Stealth invasion by parasites differs in that the invading agency attempts to disguise the malign ends it strives for, hiding its presence or projecting it as beneficial to the incumbent. Indeed, the maintenance of the incumbent as food supply is not a requirement of invasion. Though parasites require a source of subsistence,

they are able to search for alternative sources once the incumbent has expired; the spores in *The Body Snatchers* travel across galaxies in search of food, as do the slugs in *The Puppet Masters*. Invaders in the *Nova* trilogy come from a less determinate location and invade at a less determinate point. In the routine 'Cross the Wounded Galaxies' from *The Soft Machine* the invader is intrinsic in the evolutionary development of the human being, yet this reads as a type of fable rather than a definitive origin, maintaining a vagueness around the point of invasion contrasting with the certainty in the narrative that it has occurred. More traditional invasion narratives imply a primordial nature of the opposition, stressing the connection between incumbent and the occupied territory, using the invaders alien disposition to heighten their lack of belonging and hence the wrongness of the displacement that would occur should invasion be successful. This is not the case in the *Nova* trilogy where the very environment is invasive and people are born into it. Here it is more like a post-invasion narrative, for example, Jerry Sohl's *Point Ultimate* where the ruling Communists infect healthy American infants with a virus to maintain native subordination.

Like the early narratives that beseeched Americans to prepare for invasion by bolstering border defences and building a larger navy, the *Nova* trilogy alerts its readers to the elements in society that inhibit the liberties of people who do no harm to others, that prey on behaviours in order to subsist and fuel their own perversions. Part of the preparation was the awareness of danger; the texts are jeremiads, warnings not only to be ready for an attack but also to beware of the dangers already in the midst, whether a sixth column facilitating a future attack or weaknesses in the incumbent society that make the task of an invader easier. Suggesting corruption at a

very early stage of evolution, the *Nova* trilogy casts humanity as vulnerable to invasion on a fundamental, biological level. Viruses infect the human so absolutely that the majority have not realised they are subject to parasitic occupation. Word, the key virus identified in the trilogy, is unchecked and even feted in society with technological advancements that enable communication where previously impossible; silence, Burroughs' antidote to word, is scarce in a society where word spreads and is not an option or a writer. The purpose of the *Nova* trilogy is both diagnostic and prognostic, to identify the source of the ailment of the human condition and prescribe treatment for it. This is the primary thematic similarity that the trilogy has with other invasion narratives. Burroughs' episodic 'routine' style ensures that the trilogy is closer in terms of relaying its message to earlier, future-war invasion narratives that repeat their contention didactically throughout the text, as opposed to the progressive estrangement style of the mid-twentieth century parasitic fiction where the conclusion is drawn only after investigation.

Sharing this necessity to diagnose and suggest treatment for society, there is a futility throughout the *Nova* trilogy in regards to the scale of the corruption. The permeation of invasion into humanity reaches the human body and its thought processes, whilst the prognosis – the silence of the word – is completely and deliberately impractical. Those governing or most prominent in society will not act to prevent the imminent disaster; they are symptomatic of the malignant infrastructure, subsisting from it but ultimately victims of it, too, not immune to corruption or invasion. In the *Nova* trilogy, the human body and, by extension, humanity is invaded on multiple levels by multiple parasites that will ultimately cause the species' destruction. The invasion occurs at an early evolutionary stage and is located in the brain. The significance of

this is that unlike traditional narratives, the key parasite in the *Nova* trilogy – word – forms a core part of the personality and corrupts all thought processes. Constructed in the trilogy as a virus, word is also the medium – the novel – through which this message is conveyed, putting the message of the text at odds with its constitution.

That this warning of fundamental corruption comes via a corrupt medium draws attention to the text itself, underlining how invasion narratives are constructed as imaginative spaces to violently renegotiate the terms of the implied subject's identity. Ever self-conscious of the process of writing, Burroughs does this literally, writing the 'flesh' of characters who exist only on the page, in word and image. Traditional invasion narratives use the invaders in the text to highlight the deficiencies in what is represented by the targeted territory. Though cast as the ultimate danger or the embodiment of evil in the narratives, the invaders themselves are not the central source of dissatisfaction. Invaders can be seen as a reflection of the incumbent and possessing the opposite characteristics, some of which may be desirable to the incumbent and which need to be adopted in order to address the said deficiencies. In the *Nova* trilogy the commodity most desired in the invaders is their ability to control, their mastery of the controlling media and apparatus. Though the first impulse is destructive, to 'cut word lines', the next is to institute a replacement for what has been removed, the writing of the new 'flesh scripts', the reconfiguring of the Mayan Calendar. Burroughs' cut-up technique, the means by which controllers are thwarted, is an exercise in asserting control, not a means of relinquishing it; Burroughs pieced together notes and excerpts of text from himself and other writers, only releasing works for publication after extensive editing. Abolishing control, the collapse of word and image, means the end of proceedings for both sides, not just the invaders.

Though the *Nova* trilogy concerns itself with fundamental relationships such as that of language to culture and routines traverse through time to avoid linear sequencing, aspects of the text tie it inexorably to its contemporary context of 1960s America. A general weakness of invasion fiction is the failure of the threats warned against, physical or metaphorical, to materialise, dating the narratives and making the effects of the contemporary context on the narrative seem that much more pronounced. Dramatic tension is heightened and imminent danger created in the form of the Nova conspiracy, aiming to 'Always create as many insoluble conflicts as possible and always aggravate existing conflicts'.[36] The term 'nova' refers to the conspiracy's ultimate goal, aggravating the conflicts enough to 'lead to the explosion of the planet'.[37] One route to Nova mentioned explicitly here is nuclear war, which places the trilogy firmly in Cold War context from which it was written. Though not specifically referred to in the trilogy, the arms race and political posturing by both the Americans and the Soviets at the time of Burroughs' writing – and the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction – is an example of conflict that could have resulted in 'nova'. 1960s America is evident also in the tone of the narrative, its revolutionary zeal and use of subversion as a key strategy in overcoming the invaders. By rewriting, splicing tape recordings, rearranging the calendar, Burroughs' agents thwart the control mechanisms of the invaders. Also, the Nova Police of *The Ticket That Exploded* and *Nova Express* comprise many people who are usually considered criminals and illegal designer drugs provide the means of immunisation against hazardous environmental conditions. The presentation of designer drugs as beneficial and progressive evokes psychedelia and experiments with consciousness-alteration. A common strategy of the protester – the sit-in – is recalled in the rally to occupy the

reality studio, appropriating the territory of the oppressors. These oppressors are presented negatively by means of their association with some of the American government's controversial practices, such as the control and surveillance measures implied by the permanent invasive presence and also germ warfare in that the majority of invaders in the trilogy are viruses. Burroughs' interest in experimental science and technology dates the text significantly; it incorporates the work of figures such as Wilhelm Reich and groups like Scientology who were concerned with different kinds of social conditioning and that, due to subsequent breakthroughs or understandings lose relevance or credibility to readers disconnected from the – unexamined – 1960s context.

**Trilogy?**

Although generally regarded as comprising *The Soft Machine*, *The Ticket That Exploded* and *Nova Express*, some seeking to catalogue the texts have included *Naked Lunch* (1959), Burroughs' first cut-up narrative, as part of the trilogy at the expense of either *The Ticket* or *Nova Express*, whilst others dispute the order of the trilogy, interchanging the latter two texts. Though serving to illustrate the confusion created by the lack of elements such as plot, sequence and coherence, it is perhaps not significant in itself; readers that have struggled to the end of *Naked Lunch* are informed in the last routine that 'You can cut into *The Naked Lunch* at any intersection point'.[38] The routine is subtitled 'the atrophied preface', ironically positioned at the end of the text when such information may have perhaps been helpful in explaining the cut-up nearer the start of the novel.

The first novel of the trilogy, *The Soft Machine*, is the diagnosis of the human condition. 'Cross the Wounded Galaxies', the final routine in *The Soft Machine*, reads as an alternative interpretation of the evolution of the human and also the fall of man, humanity rising not because of advancement but disease after 'muttering sickness leaped into our throats'.[39] Further evolution is another disease, the 'white worm-thing inside'[40] that compels the humans to eat flesh, initially to survive the cold. This divides the species as 'the others did not want to touch me'[41] because of the parasite, leaving those who refused to act on the compulsion to die from the cold or because the parasite consumes them, 'because they could not live with the thing inside'.[42] Disease and the compulsions it creates are rationalised – by juxtaposition rather than explanation – as the medium by which control operates. Burroughs' narrator in 'Cross the Wounded Galaxies' is sick but powerful; though the others 'did not want to touch me... no one could refuse if I wanted and ate the fear-softness in other men'.[43] Though the parasites remain in the body, the humans escape the nematodes they excrete, white worms twisted up feeling for us and the white-worm sickness in all of our bodies',[44] demonstrating an awareness that the sickness is destructive even though they are possessed and controlled by it. A further evolutionary change is achieved by again acquiescing to control rather than resisting it, 'Those lived who learned to let the softness in, eat animal excrement in the brown bones';[45] accepting the basest, most repulsive compulsions and acting upon them enables endurance, whilst refusal ensures death. Burroughs' most straightforward explanation of what he means by 'the soft machine' is given not in the main body of the text but in an appendix to the later editions:

> The soft machine is the human body under constant siege from a vast hungry host of parasites with many names but one nature being hungry and one intention to eat.[46]

Burroughs' hybrid phrase anticipates cyborgs and implies humanity's mixed nature; the soft machine refers to both the human body and humanity, the latter being what Wells in *War of the Worlds* calls the 'empire over matter'[47] that includes ideas of nation, society and culture. 'Machine' suggests an entity subject to external control, created for repetitive tasks, 'the machine can only repeat your instructions since it cannot create anything'.[48] Softness here is pliability; the body is controlled by the mind, subject to controlling parasites. The body is the invaded terrain, a host entity set upon, manipulated and consumed by the parasites.

With the terrain outlined in *The Soft Machine*, the latter two texts emphasise the agencies involved in the invasion. In a speech at the Edinburgh Conference in 1962 entitled 'The Future of the Novel', Burroughs concluded:

> I am primarily concerned with the question of survival – with Nova conspiracies, Nova criminals and Nova police – A new mythology is possible in the Space Age, where we'll again have heroes and villains with respect to intentions toward this planet – the future of the novel is not in Time, but in Space.[49]

*The Ticket That Exploded* elaborates on these comments by developing the *Nova* mythology hinted at by *The Soft Machine*, introducing the Nova criminals and Nova

police and having some routines move in an intergalactic environment. Though introduced in *The Ticket That Exploded*, the Nova Police, Nova Criminals and Nova Conspiracy is most prominent in *Nova Express*, the final novel in the *Nova* trilogy. It begins with its first two routines effectively summarising the message of the first two novels. The first, 'Last Words', reminds the reader of the chief parasite:

> What scared you into time? Into body? Into shit? I will tell you: '*the word*'. Alien word '*the*'. *The word* of Alien enemy imprisons '*thee*' in Time. In Body. In Shit.[50]

It also reminds the reader of his power over the virus, 'Prisoner, come out. The great skies are open. I Hassan i Sabbah[51] *rub out the word forever*',[52] suggesting that the potential for a new beginning without the parasite is achievable. The second routine, 'Prisoners, Come Out', comprises mainly a letter from Inspector J. Lee of the Nova Police, a Burroughs proxy, outlining his purpose:

> The purpose of my writing is to expose and arrest Nova Criminals. In *Naked Lunch*, *Soft Machine* and *Nova Express* I show who they are and what they are doing and what they will do if not arrested... With your help we can occupy The Reality Studio and retake their universe of Fear Death and Monopoly.[53]

References to political acts of resistance are a common theme in Burroughs' literature, whilst the police/criminal motif highlights the underlying dualism of invasion metaphor: traditionally the invaded are good and innocent opposed to the bad, corrupt invaders. There is greater clarity and urgency here than at the beginning

of the trilogy's prior texts, which force the reader to struggle through estrangement and dislocation before divining any meaning from it. Lydenberg suggests that readers of the *Nova* trilogy are 'revolutionary cadets in training'[54] for the Nova Police, casting the first two novels as a 'training program in new ways of thinking and perceiving, of reading and writing. *Nova Express* is an advanced seminar review of what the reader *should* have learned from these earlier fractured texts'.[55] The messages in *Nova Express* are not new, but a restatement of what was outlined before, perhaps more frenetically given that the message still requires communicating despite the earlier novels.

**Word Virus**

In the essay 'Ten Years and a Billion Dollars', Burroughs sets forth his belief that 'the word is literally a virus... an organism that has no internal function other than to replicate itself'[56]. With the phrase 'in the beginning there was the word and the word was bullshit',[57] Burroughs identifies the word virus with the Judeo-Christian traditions that influence, if not underpin, all Western thought and culture. Humanity, particularly the West and specifically America is invaded so fundamentally by word that it is essentially rotten and that societal advancements only confound the problem by facilitating the spread of the word infection. Yet however sincerely the argument is presented, casting the word as the principal virus the *Nova* trilogy is provocative and highly ironic given that the medium Burroughs uses to decry the word is the novel. As a novelist, Burroughs has a professional interest in word associations, the use of word to control and direct thought processes, to create and unmake reality. The frequent

references to film studios and spliced tape recording impress upon the reader the importance of editing as a control mechanism, while the cut-up and fold-in methods promote the creative importance of editing above that of writing.

Discussion of word as a virus uses elliptic semantic associations of 'virus' to recall the Christian mantra, 'spread the word', meaning the word of God, or logos, from which the principles of logic and logocentrism are derived. Christian values – expressed as repressive moralising – are implicit targets in Burroughs' fiction as agencies of control along with government, law enforcement and medical authorities; any agencies seen as repressing or criminalising conditions and dispositions rather than actions, the addict rather than the drug use. Word spreads because it is a parasitic part of the human being, 'the Other Half': 'a separate organism attached to your nervous system on an air line of words'.[58] 'Word *is* flesh'.[59] Word is the 'noxious human inter-language',[60] 'a parasitic organism that invades and damages the central nervous system',[61] the voice in the head that resists and breaks silence, occupies space; it is subliminal suggestion. It is the medium from which control spreads; morality cannot exist without it, dwelling as it does in the metaphysical realm, wedded to humanity rather than the human organism. As a tool of control – or the control itself – the word subjugates the human organism by demonising people and by creating anxiety for feelings or behaviour that causes no harm to others, also hindering the development of knowledge by restricting research on consciousness and sexuality. The word is compared to junk, in both the narcotic or waste senses, and is white: colourless, sanctimonious, intolerant, racist, homophobic, dominant and always right, with everyone and everything else being wrong. The word creates a repressive, restrictive reality – a flesh – that is dependent on its human resource, a reality studio

that requires people to run it and actors to convey its message. The word is a film that is 'the dreariest entertainment ever presented to a captive audience'.[62] History is the history of the word, a reality given credence only by people's complicity, that can be made, unmade and remade through the employment of writers and artists, the provision of skilled exponents of word and image. Burroughs' most overt example of this is the Mayan calendar in *The Soft Machine*, where priests use symbols to dictate to their subjects what they should be thinking, feeling and doing. This system is plunged into chaos by the rearranging – or cutting-up – of the sequence in which they are displayed. The priests, guardians of the system, are puppets of it, unable to repair it when it is damaged. When it is broken, they disintegrate, their flesh unmade by the erasing of the word that bestows on them their power.

This unmaking and remaking reflects the text's interpretation of evolution, both physical and conceptual, as a process of expansion and experimentation and not distillation. The cut-up and fold-in methods used in the *Nova* trilogy are an attempt to create new ways of thinking by subverting logocentrism; introducing a random element that thwarts what Burroughs calls 'word-locks', clichés and dead metaphors that have become so ingrained and meaningless in themselves that the thought process underpinning them is imperceptible and unchallenged, regardless of how stultifying it is for human development. Burroughs' very fiction in the *Nova* trilogy is an affront to this; word associations and meanings are created by chance rather than corrupt thought processes whilst binary opposition is reduced to a character in a book – the dually titled Mr Bradly Mr Martin – and not an unassailable, invisible hand directing affairs and drawing neat conclusions. A danger in confronting binary opposition in this way is that it is reinforced, that Burroughs discovers an alternative to the thought

system that establishes it as a binary by providing it with an Other. Lydenberg points out that Burroughs is resistant to this, suggesting the possibility of a third, unassimilable element that transcends the oppositional agencies. This is evident in Burroughs' work with Brion Gysin, *The Third Mind* (1978), the repeated warnings over 'keeping this tired show on the road' and the recording experiments involving arguments interspersed with random noises. Evolution or truth is derived from conflict, albeit with the addition of a random element to prevent stagnation. However, this isn't consistent with the other strategies suggested in the *Nova* trilogy of shutting the machine off and not responding to the voices of control attempting to engage. Burroughs' mythology presents the human being as a cross-species but insists that one half of this – the word – is a parasitic organism, an obstacle to evolution that persists under the pretence that it is symbiotically bonded to the human and is an intrinsic part of human development, 'the old symbiosis con'.[63] The 'third' in Burroughs is a strategy of subversion that disrupts control as in 'The Mayan Caper' where the symbols of the calendar are not destroyed but revised, undermining the controllers but maintaining the apparatus of control.

Though satisfied to describe himself as a Gnostic, Burroughs insists on providing evidence for his mythology, filling the scientific and epistemological gaps with speculation and fabrication. In 'The Job' Burroughs invents Dr Kurt von Unruh von Steinplatz, whose theories postulate the origins of speech as the result of alterations in the inner throat structure that were occasioned by a viral illness. 'Operation Rewrite' from *The Ticket That Exploded* presents this didactically as 'the beginning of *that* history' – that history being what we call history, which the narrative argues is merely 'the history of the word'.[64] 'Operation Rewrite sets out defining 'The Other Half', the

word, an organism separate from 'you' that is 'attached to your central nervous system on an air line of words'.[65] Having described the word as an organism, Burroughs then outlines the adverse effects of its presence, for it is a virus, speculating on human evolutionary development:

> The flu virus may once have once have been a healthy lung cell. It is now a parasitic organism that invades and damages the lungs. The word may once have been a healthy neural cell. It is now a parasitic organism that invades and damages the central nervous system.[66]

The word is 'the Mark inside', the means through which external control is exercised and compulsions are manipulated. The 'Mark' is a slang term for target, chiefly for assassination or conning, so here the implication is that the word symbiote is the intersection point through which the controlling viruses operate. To emphasise the point, the reader is invited to partake in an experiment:

> try halting your sub-vocal speech. Try to achieve even ten seconds of inner silence. You will encounter a resisting organism that *forces you to talk*. That organism is the word.[67]

So, Burroughs identifies the source of interruption preventing the existence of free will and describes how this prevention works. 'Operation Rewrite then proceeds to explain how autonomy can be regained, how control can be wrested away from the 'alien and hostile'[68] by separating oneself from the 'Other Half':

> The word is spliced in with the sound of your intestines and breathing with the beating of your heart. The first step is to record the sounds of your body and then start splicing them in yourself. Splice in your body sounds with the body sounds of your best friend and see how familiar he gets. Splice your body sounds in with air hammers. Blast jolt vibrate the 'Other Half' right out into the street.[69]

This is the manner by which the parasite is revealed, operating below a conscious level yet impacting on actions and consciousness. The necessity of this process is emphasised by italics, '*Communication must become total and conscious before we can stop it*'.[70] The strategies to disrupt the effects of the word are a form of self-mastery[71]: being aware of the internal chattering of the 'sub-vocal speech' and body noises, disrupting them by confusing the default rhythms.

Burroughs uses *The Ticket That Exploded* to expand his ideas about the invading parasite cohabiting with the human organism. The opening routine, 'See the Action, B.J.?' starts ostensibly as a road trip between two ill-suited yet intimate people:

> It is a long trip. We are the only riders So that is how we have come to know each other so well that the sound of his voice and his image flickering over the tape recorder are as familiar to me as the movement of my intestines the sound of my breathing the beating of my heart. Not that we love or even like each other. In fact murder is never out of my eyes when I look at him. And murder is never out of his eyes when he looks at me.[72]

Moving forward to 'Operation Rewrite', we see a familiar line that reveals more about the nature of the relationship between the two companions:

> Remember that you can separate yourself from the 'Other Half' from the word. The word is spliced in with *the sound of your intestines and breathing with the beating of your heart.*[73]

The hated, familiar companion in the opening routine is the word organism; the mutual murderous intent is the relationship between the parasite that will inevitably destroy that from which it feeds and the host seeking to kill that parasite that hinders it. The organism is not essential and not a mutually dependent partner. This is understood despite the intimacy, yet the narrator remarks, 'my body is convinced that my breathing and heart will stop if his voice stops'.[74] The narrator is physically dependent on the other despite knowing the truth about it. 'Operation Rewrite' suggests that, sometime in the past, the word organism may have been 'a healthy neural cell'[75] but has mutated into something more harmful. 'Substitute Flesh' explains the inevitability of this process but colours it with malevolent intent on behalf of the parasite, 'First it's symbiosis, then parasitism – The old symbiosis con'.[76] Further examples of the negativity of the parasite in comparison to the host are the smile which, 'split his face right open and something quite alien like a predatory mollusk looked out different',[77] recalling the metamorphing priests in *The Soft Machine* and anticipating the insect controllers of *Nova Express*. The passage is laden with humanising metaphors for the viral Other, introducing by this association intent on behalf of the viruses to malignancy so that the harm to the human host caused by invasion is a deliberate strategy, not merely an accidental consequence.

**'Soft' Territory**

Unpicking Burroughs hybrid phrase, the machine is functional, repetitive and subject to control by an external force, whereas softness implies victimhood and susceptibility, also malleability. This association is visited explicitly in *The Soft Machine* by the use of ' Undifferentiated Tissue' or 'U. T.'.[78] Drawn from pulp science fiction and vaguely suggestive of *The Blob* (1958), it is a substance that enables a person to assume the form of another, to change appearance and gender. The substance itself is gelatinous, oozy and coloured phosphorescent green, implying disease or toxicity, connoting loosely with mucoid waste produced by the body. As a constituent of the human body, undifferentiated tissue suggests sickness and artifice is endemic in human physicality. Unlike *The Body Snatchers*, another text involving the artificial replication of the human body, there is no way of detecting an intruder by instinct. Here, the artificial and the real are interchangeable, so the real has no advantage over the artificial. With transmutable physicality and ability to adopt the mannerisms and personalities of others, regardless of age or gender, the concept of the self in *The Soft Machine* becomes difficult to sustain. Burroughs explains the extent of the invasion of the human being by speculating on neurology, believing 'what Freud calls the id' to be a 'parasitic invasion of the hypothalamus' that interferes with the metabolism and 'what Freud calls the superego' to be a 'parasitic occupation of the mid-brain' that inhabits 'the rightness centres',[79] acting as a controlling influence on the mind.

Being parasites, the invaders of human beings serve no beneficent purpose for humanity; they are a destructive influence and an unnecessary one, a burden that can be disposed of without consequence given the correct method. Throughout the text and also Burroughs' other writings there is a reluctance to impose definition, creating a tension between whether the beleaguered beings subject to control are hosting a parasitic entity that prevents autonomy or are prisoners inside the machine; an inadequate physical construct that undermines the higher being at every stage. That is to say, the tension in Burroughs' fiction stems from a refusal to spell out what constitutes a human being, whether the body – the machine – is truly part of the conscious being or if it is a transitional containment unit, a caterpillar stage for a butterfly that is able to use the human organism 'like a plane or a space capsule'.[80] However, Burroughs' emphasis on different aspects of the body and use of drugs as physical manipulators of consciousness suggest the opposite, that he is projecting a material sense of humanity. The text shifts back and forth between the alternatives; looking at the text in relation to invasion fiction, the territory of the invasion keeps changing. The machine's susceptibility to such influences, its collapse into 'laughing till we pissed and shit and came'[81] when free of external control, suggests the body itself to be complicit in the invasion. Bodily emissions – rectal mucous, vomit – bear close resemblance to the sickness and disease in how they are perceived and described, that they are poisonous are to the body. It is possible to be free from control in *The Soft Machine*, which suggests that there is some part of consciousness, of being, that remains impervious to the influence of control mechanisms; the chemicals, viruses. Such a reading of the text validates the religious belief in the soul, casting the invaders as those two groups in society competing for transcendental attention, forced into competition by co-existence in the physical, material realm of

the soft machine. Further complication results from Burroughs' multivalent use of the metaphor; the soft machine refers to both the human body and humanity, the latter being what Wells calls the 'empire over matter'[82] that includes ideas of nation, society and culture. Here, the 'drearily predictable quarters' are cast as the parasites, belligerent 'shits' that require the attention and subjugation of the live-and-let-live 'Johnsons' in order to maintain their status and existence.[83] However, the invasion of the metaphysical in Burroughs is as unclear as the physical. Describing the parasites as 'the drearily predictable quarters *of* the soft machine' (italics added), Burroughs shows that the 'shits' are as much a part of the soft machine – of humanity – as the 'Johnsons'. Humanity is self-destructive, even cannibalistic. Paradoxical dualities form an important feature in Burroughs' fiction; freedom from external control results in loss of personal control such as the excessive release of bodily emissions, whilst deviating from traditional standards of behaviour into drug taking or sexual promiscuity leads to addiction and dependence. Although gaining release from the 'drearily predictable' control groups, those seeking freedom are diverted into different patterns of repetition, subject to control by alternative agencies. The machine's softness invites dependence, as it is not hard or sturdy enough to be autonomous, intrinsically incapable of achieving freedom.

**Control**

Despite the phantasmagoric sequences of ejaculation, excretion, rabid consumption and drug use, the *Nova* trilogy preaches control and self-mastery by identifying the parasites that exploit states where self-awareness is usually absent, such as orgasm,

addiction, heated conflict or even – as speculated in 'Cross the Wounded Galaxies' – during evolution. It is the ability to maintain self-control and resist invasive influences in vulnerable states that eventually becomes the didactic purpose of the trilogy, preparing readers for the next evolutionary leap by minimising the parasitic influence over it. Here the text connects with the Calvinistic influences underscoring the invasion tradition, the demonic invaders taking advantage of the distractions caused by the physical cravings of their hosts to possess and consume them absolutely.

The Nova Mob comprises anthropomorphised viruses variously named from Western and gangster narratives such as Sammy the Butcher, Green Tony, Izzy the Push, Hamburger Mary, Johnny Yen, The Subliminal Kid and Mr Bradly Mr Martin or Mr & Mrs D, pursuing control over humanity to the point of nova – total destruction. Also known as criminal controllers, they are 'very definite organisms indeed',[84] operating 'in very much the same manner as a virus'.[85] Izzy the Push, for example, is the voice that encourages weak investment bankers that have incurred significant losses to defenestrate. A controller acts, according to Lee, through weakness and vice, so the controller who acts through addiction to opiates uses the drug itself as the point of entrance. This point of entrance is called a 'coordinate point',[86] the means by which the virus 'invades, damages and occupies'.[87] Controllers are able to operate 'through thousands of human agents'[88] as long as these points are aligned, so 'Some move on junk lines through addicts of the earth, others move on lines of certain sexual practices and so forth'.[89] An example of this shifting is the interrogation of Winkhorst by the Nova Police in *Nova Express*. Coerced into revealing his 'scorpion controller' – insects and crabs are common forms for the parasites to take – through a combination of drugs and 'Gnaova drum music', he apparently metamorphoses into a

'death dwarf', a ventriloquist's dummy operated by the remote control of Mr & Mrs D. When arrested, controllers are placed in 'antibiotic handcuffs'[90], suggesting the organic, parasitic nature of the controllers.

A key parasite working in tandem with the cerebral parasite invading the central nervous system is the sexual parasite. In 'Call the Old Doctor Twice?' the narrator contends that, 'the cerebral parasite kept you from wising up to the sexual parasite',[91] the latter being a compulsive urge that results in ultimate destruction, since, 'Death *is* orgasm *is* rebirth *is* death in orgasm *is* their unsanitary Venusian gimmick *is* the whole birth death cycle of action'.[92] Throughout the *Nova* trilogy Burroughs intersperses passages of debauched sexual practices undertaken by controllers in the cause of ceremonial religion, tying religious worship to abusive sexuality and undermining ideas of religious purity with an undercurrent of perversion. In 'Pretend an Interest' from *The Soft Machine* the reader is enlightened about Puerta Joselita, a town 'deep in the vilest superstition and practices',[93] where the Purified Ones maintain immortality by receiving 'monthly injections of youth substance'.[94] From being the lifeblood of the religious elders in *The Soft Machine*, orgasm becomes the communication intersection for the viral controllers in *The Ticket That Exploded*, the point where invasion recurs. It is a key tool in the propagation and maintenance of control and the perpetuation of the invasion process in that it is the point where the body loses control and self-awareness, antithetical to what the narrative champions as being resistant to invasion and invaders. The idea of unfulfilling, coerced sexual impulses is deified in the figure of Johnny Yen, the 'Boy-Girl Other Half strip tease God of sexual frustration – Errand boy from the death trauma – His immortality depends on the mortality of others'.[95] It is through sex, therefore, that the parasites

subsist; the cerebral parasite is used to distract attention away from the sexual parasite, which compels the body to present for consumption. Orgasm is for Burroughs what writers of vampire fiction represent in blood: the life force of the human being that is targeted for subsistence by invaders.

Word and image are used destructively by the invading, controlling power, creating 'reality' through selective editing. This 'reality' is 'simply a more or less constant scanning pattern… imposed by the controlling power on this planet'.[96] The apex production of the reality studio is the Garden of Delights, the idea presented, Siren-like, to people under parasitic control as a means of appeasement or even fulfilment, given that the initials of Garden of Delights spells GOD. The garden is an inverted Eden, a 'terminal sewer'.[97] The price paid for entering the Garden of Delights is loss of control to addiction, a vicious cycle of repetitive behaviour in pursuit of a particular 'delight' that results in a disgusting death, for example the 'Paralysed Orgasm Addicts eaten alive by crab men with white hot eyes or languidly tortured in charades by the Green Boys of young crystal cruelty'.[98] *The Ticket That Exploded* offers rewriting as the strategy by which 'reality' can be dismantled. Revealed as the Reality Studio, being aware of 'reality' as a contrived performance is the first step towards undoing its adverse influence. After revealing the identity of Johnny Yen as the deity of sexual frustration, the narrative demonstrates its power over him, 'Alternatively Johnny Yen can be written back to a green fish boy – There are always alternative solutions – Nothing is true – Everything is permitted'.[99] Mr Bradly Mr Martin is rewritten in the routine 'Last Round Over'. He is instructed to unsew the planet he has sewn up, reverse all his gimmicks, reverse and dismantle his machine, unravelling the processes of construction by deconstruction, undoing all that has been

done. What Mr Bradly Mr Martin has constructed, what he has used to demand the attention of the world, is compared to theatrical productions, 'an old vaudeville act', 'an old Western flop',[100] 'the dreariest entertainment ever presented to a captive audience'.[101] Burroughs reintroduces the reality studio in 'Call the Old Doctor Twice?', writing the narrative from the perspective of a desperate agent working on behalf of the studio:

> The film bank is empty. To conceal the bankruptcy of the reality studio it is essential that no one should be in position to set up another reality set. The reality film has become an instrument and weapon of monopoly. The full weight of the film is directed against anyone who calls the film in question with particular attention to writers and artists.[102] Work for the reality studio or else. Or else you will find out how it feels to be *outside the film*'.[103]

The threat made at the end of the cited passage recalls the opening routine, where the narrator's body 'is convinced that my breathing and heart will stop if his voice stops'.[104]

### Subversion

Human subjection to and complicity in invasion is so prevalent in *The Soft Machine* through evolution and speech that the text does not offer a means of salvation, of ultimate escape from the invading agencies. In the routines 'Who Am I to be Critical?' and 'The Mayan Caper' however, Burroughs describes the method to

destroy the control systems of demagogues, invaders that metamorphose into giant bugs during religious and sexual rituals and comprise 'nothing but word and image'.[105] The control method is explained by Technical Tilly, another Burroughs proxy:

> It's like with the festivals and the fucking corn they know what everybody will see and hear and smell and taste and that's what thought is and these thought units are represented by symbols in their books and they rotate the symbols around and around on the calender.[106]

This explanation leads to a release from control, 'As I looked at his formulaes something began to crack up in my brain and I was free of the control beam'.[107] Enlightenment, knowing the technical details of the control method, is the means by which control is broken. To be free from subjugation one must realise they are being controlled, desire to be free from this control and learn how the control systems work, a pattern matching that of a typical protagonist in an invasion narrative, such as Sam in *The Puppet Masters* or Miles in *The Body Snatchers*. In 'Who Am I to be Critical?', the narrator sends the priests into tumult by turning on:

> something I inherit from Uranus where my grandfather invented the adding machine – I just lay there without any thought in tons focus of heavy blue silence and a slow wave went through me and spread out of me.[108]

This wave is powerful enough to cause tremors that bring down the temple but it is not clear what exactly the wave is; perhaps it is the concentrated desire or willpower

to be free of control, a self-mastery achieved in another existence. 'The Mayan Caper' provides a more coherent explanation of the process that ends the Mayan Control system. Infiltrating the priesthood by possessing a young epileptic boy and using various drugs to proceed, the narrator possesses a priest using a controlling drug and subverts the control machine by rearranging the 'image track', producing a set of instructions that makes the machine give 'the order to dismantle itself and kill the priests'.[109] The simplicity of the control mechanism in acting as a reductive influence on those it subjugates proves its undoing; the agent's task in reordering the images is straightforward, whilst the priests 'were in the position of someone who knows what buttons to push in order to set a machine in motion, but would have no idea how to fix that machine if it broke down'.[110] The priests destroy themselves, persistent in pressing the buttons but getting 'unexpected results'[111] because of their ignorance in the technical processes of control.

The role of the Nova Police in exposing Nova Criminals is set out in 'Coordinate Points', an extension of the routine 'The Nova Police' from *The Ticket That Exploded.* The narrative makes absolutely clear that the Nova police are unlike any other police force:

> I am quite well aware that no one on any planet likes to see a police officer so let me emphasise in passing that the nova police have no intention of remaining after their work is done.[112]

There is a contrast drawn between the Nova Police and 'the parasitic excrescence that often travels under the name 'Police' ',[113] who by use of the term 'parasitic' are cast

as part of the problem to be solved by the Nova Police. The subversive aspect of Burroughs' police force is evident in that 'Paradoxically some of our best agents were recruited from the ranks of those who are called criminals on this planet',[114] an indictment of how criminals are conventionally defined. Burroughs compares his Nova Police to other police forces metaphorically: the Nova Police are apomorphine and the other police morphine. Apomorphine is 'a regulating instance that need not continue and has no intention of continuing after its work is done',[115] serving a particular purpose and not requiring retention once that purpose is served. This is the direct opposite to how Burroughs characterises other 'parasitic' police forces:

> First they create a narcotic problem then they say that a permanent narcotics police is now necessary to deal with the problem of addiction. Addiction can be cured by apomorphine and reduced to a minor health problem. The narcotics police know this and that is why they do not want to see apomorphine used in the treatment of drug addicts.[116]

The morphine police – a term that includes regulating authorities – are corrupt and parasitic, using their position to safeguard themselves at the expense of the job they are supposed to be doing, preserving the system at the expense of the addicts.

## Inoculation

Where the Nova mob can be said to represent the virus afflicting the human organism, the Nova Police are not cast as the cure or anti-virus, but are a part of the system that

administers it. Criminals are sent to the Biologic Court for trial, then to biologic processing for cellular alteration. Burroughs posits that the flu virus is a mutation of a healthy lung cell, so presumably this processing would involve the reversion of the diseased cell to its original state. A similar idea to this takes another metaphorical form in 'Operation Rewrite', where biologic code is rewritten on 'the soft typewriter',[117] helping liberate people who have succumbed to parasitic control. Again, 'The Mayan Caper' provides evidence of the result of this, as people are freed from the control of word by the configuration of the system. Burroughs' cut-up technique becomes the means of liberation, the anti-biotic handcuffs that allow the parasites – the Nova Mob – to be exposed and put on trial if not convicted or eliminated. Humanity is 'the soft typewriter' that has at least the potential to be rewritten, although it is not necessarily inevitable that this will happen. Inspector Lee's suggested method of inoculating oneself against the parasitic elements poisoning every human being is as follows:

> Convert all available stocks of morphine to apomorphine. Chemists, work round the clock on variation and synthesis of the apomorphine formulae. Apomorphine is the only agent that can disintoxicate you and cut the enemy beam off your line. Apomorphine and silence.[118]

Burroughs took the apomorphine treatment devised by Dr John Yerbury Dent to cure himself of a heroin addiction and advocated its wider use as an anti-anxiety drug, incorporating it into the *Nova* trilogy as a key weapon against the parasitic forces of control plaguing the human race.[119]

In 'Clom Friday', the last routine of *Nova Express*, the reader is instructed 'Don't answer the machine – Shut it off'.[120] Silence is recommended because, 'To speak is to lie – To live is to collaborate'.[121] By this, Burroughs is suggesting that humanity refuse the scripts the controllers present, to end participation in the Reality Studio, to cease engaging the parasitic forces on their terms. In *The Ticket That Exploded* the narrative suggests exercises that maintain 'a state of total alertness during sexual excitement'[122] as a means of defence against parasitic opportunism:

> Try simple exercises first like jacking-off while balancing a chair – Driving full speed on a dangerous road – Flying plane – Performing precision operations at the same time like target shooting – So you can maintain alertness in the sex act and not be taken in by the sex agents of the enemy who move to soften you up with sentimentality and sexual frustration to buy ersatz goo from their copy planet'.[123]

Such experiments anticipate the symphorophilia in J. G. Ballard's *Crash* (1973) and the singularly focused opposite approach, 'Never Whistle While You're Pissing', the manifesto of anarcho-capitalist submarine captain Hagbard Celine from Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson's *Illuminatus!* trilogy.[124] Burroughs' techniques are all forms of self-mastery, maintaining order in a state of chaos. Burroughs controlled his own addiction through apomorphine whilst his cut-up and fold-in techniques provide a mastery over his impulse to write, being totally removed from the idea of the descending Muse. Progress made as a result of following the resistance techniques is demonstrated in 'From a Land of Grass Without Mirrors', where Inspector Lee is able to 'move on his projected image from point to point – he was already accustomed to

life without a body'.[125] Through his narrative proxy, Burroughs demonstrates to the reader his own self-mastery, achieved as a result of his techniques. It is an ability to assume various guises whilst retaining a distinct consciousness, outlining the limits of the Western – particularly American – idea of the Self, to achieve a heightened awareness during automatic processes: states where the Self is absent. The goal of the techniques is to reach a state of consciousness that enables the eternal vigilance against invasive forces demanded by the jeremiad tradition.

Burroughs' non-linear approach to invasion and the narrative form, his treatment of the nation and individual as a body subject to constant invasion and, specifically, the contention that the medium of the word is incurably corrupt make the *Nova* trilogy radically different to preceding narratives. Along with Disch, whose ironic misanthropy in *The Genocides* results in the extinction of the human race, Burroughs provides a new form of the satiric invasion narrative that returns us to Irving, thus being the appropriate, substantive endpoint for the current study.

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[1] Ray Bradbury, 'The Concrete Mixer', in *The Illustrated Man* (New York: Bantam, 1967), pp. 139-56, p. 141

[2] *ibid*, p. 141

[3] *ibid*, p. 140

[4] *ibid*, p. 145

[5] *ibid*, p. 154

[6] *ibid*, p. 150

[7] Richard Wilson, *The Girls From Planet 5* (New York: Lancer 1967), p. 72

[8] *ibid*, p. 72

[9] *ibid*, p. 218

[10] Frederic Brown, *Martians, Go Home* (London: Grafton, 1987), p. 7

[11] *ibid*, p. 10

[12] *ibid*, p. 60

[13] *ibid*, p. 40

[14] *ibid*, p. 42

[15] *ibid*, p. 52

[16] *ibid*, p. 126

[17] *ibid*, p. 179

[18] Theodore Sturgeon, 'Unite and Conquer', in *The Perfect Host: Volume V: The Complete Stories of Theodore Sturgeon* (Berkeley: North Atlantic, 1998) pp. 20-62, p. 34

[19] *ibid*, p. 36

[20] 'The Architects of Fear', dir. Byron Haskin, *The Outer Limits* (Season 1, Episode 3, September 1963), http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dctvOGI5nz4 [accessed 4th September 2010]

[21] Thomas M. Disch, *The Genocides* (Boston: Gregg, 1978), p. vii

[22] *ibid*, p. 26

[23] *ibid*, p. 6

[24] *ibid*, p. 40

[25] *ibid*, p. 65

[26] *ibid*, p. 17

[27] *ibid*, p. 31

[28] *ibid*, p. 46

[29] Thomas M. Disch, *The Genocides* (London: Panther, 1968), p. 188

[30] William Burroughs, *Nova Express* (London, Panther, 1968), p.10

[31] Robyn Lydenberg, *Word Cultures* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987) p. 17

[32] *ibid*, p. 10

[33] Reich conducted research into sexual practices and believed the Earth is surrounded by a field of 'orgones', electrical charges Reich conjectured were linked to orgasm. Dent is the English doctor who treated Burroughs's heroin addiction with apomorphine, a treatment not licensed in America.

[34] William Burroughs, *The Soft Machine* (London: Corgi, 1968), p. 72

[35] William Burroughs, *The Ticket That Exploded* (Flamingo: London, 2001) p. 69

[36] *NE*, p. 51

[37] *ibid*, p. 51

[38] William Burroughs, *The Naked Lunch* (London: Corgi, 1969), p. 250

[39] *TSM*, p. 168

[40] *ibid*, p. 169

[41] *ibid*, p. 168

[42] *ibid*, p. 169

[43] *ibid*, p. 168

[44] *ibid*, p. 169

[45] *ibid*, p. 169

[46] *ibid*, p. 172

[47] *War of the Worlds*, p. 51

[48] *NE*, p. 76

[49] *Word Virus: The William Burroughs Reader*, ed. James Grauerholz and Ira Silverberg (London: Flamingo, 1999) p. 181

[50] *NE*, p. 10

[51] Hassan-i Sabbāh was a late Eleventh Century Persian Nizārī Ismā'īlī missionary who founded a group called the Hashashin, or 'hashish-users'.

[52] *ibid*, p.10

[53] *ibid*, p. 12

[54] *Word Cultures*, p. 96

[55] *ibid*, p. 96

[56] William S. Burroughs, *The Adding Machine* (New York: Arcade, 1993) p. 47

[57] *TTE*, p. 154

[58] *ibid*, p. 38

[59] *NE*, p. 69

[60] *ibid*, p. 81

[61] *TTE*, p. 39

[62] *ibid*, p. 116

[63] *ibid*, p. 66

[64] *ibid*, p. 39

[65] *ibid*, p. 39

[66] *ibid*, p. 39

[67] *ibid*, p. 39

[68] *ibid*, p. 39

[69] *ibid*, p. 39-40

[70] *ibid*, p. 40

[71] Controlled breathing is a technique used in meditation, yoga and martial arts.

[72] *ibid*, p. 1

[73] *ibid*, p. 39, italics added

[74] *ibid*, p.2

[75] *ibid*, p. 39

[76] *ibid*, p. 66

[77] *ibid*, p. 1

[78] *TSM*, p. 54

[79] *ibid*, p. 172

[80] *The Adding Machine*, p. 135

[81] *TSM*, p. 18

[82] *War of the Worlds*, p. 51

[83] A Manichean *weltanschauung* Burroughs borrows from Jack Black's autobiographical novel *You Can't Win* (1926) for his essay 'The Johnson Family'.

[84] *TTE*, p. 45

[85] *ibid*, p. 45

[86] *ibid*, p. 45

[87] *ibid*, p. 46

[88] *NE*, p. 53

[89] *ibid*, p. 53

[90] Strictly speaking the Nova Police should use anti-viral rather than anti-bacterial restraints.

[91] *TTE*, p. 112

[92] *ibid*, p. 42

[93] *TSM*, p. 83

[94] *TSM*, p. 84

[95] *TTE*, p. 42

[96] *NE*, p. 50

[97] *ibid*, p. 11

[98] *ibid*, p. 133

[99] *TTE*, p. 42. This bears a striking similarity to the mantra of Aleister Crowley, 'Do what thou wilt be the whole of the law.'

[100] *ibid*, p. 107

[101] *ibid*, p. 116

[102] Burroughs wrote parts of the *Nova* trilogy while *Naked Lunch* was on trial for obscenity in Boston in 1965.

[103] *ibid*, p. 117

[104] *ibid*, p. 2

[105] *TSM*, p. 77

[106] *ibid*, p. 17

[107] *ibid*, p. 17

[108] *ibid*, p. 18

[109] *ibid*, p. 76

[110] *ibid*, p. 75

[111] *ibid*, p. 75

[112] *NE*, p. 48

[113] *ibid*, p. 48

[114] *ibid*, p. 52

[115] *ibid*, p. 49

[116] *ibid*, p. 49

[117] *ibid*, p. 61

[118] *ibid*, p. 12

[119] The main side-effect of apomorphine is nausea, which led to the drug's stringent regulation. Today it is most commonly prescribed with an anti-nauseant to sufferers of Parkinson's Disease and, ironically given the copious levels of sexual content in the *Nova* trilogy, for erectile dysfunction.

[120] *ibid*, p. 155

[121] *ibid*, p. 12

[122] *TTE*, p. 59

[123] *ibid*, p. 59

[124] Both Burroughs and Wilson have described themselves in interviews as Non-Euclidean.

[125] *NE*, p. 85

## Conclusion: The Return of the Invasion Narrative

Novelists following Burroughs explore some of his thematic interests regarding the permutations of invasion through more conventional narrative approaches. Also recalling Lovecraft's 'The Color Out of Space' through its use of a non-anthropomorphic alien, techno-thriller *The Andromeda Strain* (1969) by Michael Crichton shares many of the aspects of a stealth invasion novel by literalising the metaphor of plague used to describe the slugs in *The Puppet Masters*. Military scientists returning from a space exploration project inadvertently introduce a micro-organism that causes rapid and fatal coagulation or insanity in humans and animals into the Earth's atmosphere. Crash-landing in the ghost town of Piedmont, Arizona, the novel traces the micro-organism's mutation and the inadequate efforts of Wildfire, a top-secret extraterrestrial bio-hazard response team, to stop it. Wildfire's ultimate emergency protocol is a nuclear device in a laboratory located remotely in Nevada, the state that hosted much of America's nuclear testing. Ironically, the weapon is discovered to be ineffective as the resultant environmental changes would strengthen the micro-organism, which only leaves Earth's atmosphere after mutating itself into a harmless strain. At variance with the jeremiad invasion that rails against a lack of preparedness, the narrative portrays the failure of expensive and elaborate organisational safeguards, a plot device repeated in *Jurassic Park* (1990) and *Airframe* (1996). *The Andromeda Strain* is instead a biblical parallel warning against humanity's pursuit of the forbidden fruit of knowledge.

Where Crichton's novel constructs its invaders as a microorganism, Stephen King's *The Tommyknockers* (1987) uses it as a metaphor for cocaine addiction; King, like

Burroughs, suffered recurrent drug problems. Western fiction writer Bobbi Anderson discovers an alien spacecraft buried deep in the woods on the outskirts of the small town of Haven, Maine and finds herself transformed by an odourless, invisible gas; the process, called 'becoming', mirrors the symptoms of cocaine use. The spread of the invasion is resisted by Jim 'Gard' Gardener, whose name acknowledges the debt of King to 'The Color of Outer Space'. Gard is immune to the becoming because of a steel plate in his head from a skiing accident, recalling Curt Temple's immunity to the Crimson Plague in *The Gods Hate Kansas*. King returns to plague-like alien invasion in *Dreamcatcher* (2001); here, the side-effects of alien possession vary depending on the way in which the mould-like alien enters the body; if contact is through by skin then it causes telepathic ability in humans but when ingested it is disgusting and fatal, causing extreme flatulence and dyspepsia before death. King's consciousness of the tradition of the invasion narrative is again reflected by references, to *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) with an infected character called McCarthy and *Alien* (1979) in its nicknaming of the virus 'The Ripley'. Burroughs' attempts to cure his drug addiction led to an interest in a wide variety of treatments, one of which was Dianetics, the mental health programme designed by the science fiction writer and founder of the Church of Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard. Written in the space of twelve months, Hubbard's enormous *Mission Earth* (1985-6) spans ten volumes and is in excess of one million words.[1] Sharing a superficial narrative similarity to Burroughs, Hubbard uses invasion to attack his recurring bugbears, 'earth-raping multinationals, death-dealing bureaucracies, conniving media, casual murder and rampant immorality'.[2] Abundant with thinly veiled puns, the novel is written as the confessions of the nefarious agent Soltan Gris of the Coordinated Information Apparatus, the CIA. Based on the planet Voltar, the agency is working in conjunction

with the New York based Rockecenter Corporation on Earth to smuggle drugs into Voltar and keep the people of Earth under control by techniques of 'Mental Stealth': psychology, psychiatry, rock music and sexual deviancy.

**The End of the Cold War**

Speculation on futuristic weapons and advanced technology in future war and science fiction had encouraged the inventiveness of military scientists to replicate or better in real life what they had read in novels and pulp magazines, which helped contribute to the enthusiasm for the super-weapons that had, in part, brought about the Cold War. Reflecting and perhaps helping cause international tension, the invasion narrative was eventually proposed as a means of ending it. Addressing the United Nations General Assembly on the 21st September 1987 in an attempt to engender support for the 'Star Wars' Strategic Defense Initiative anti-missile satellite system, President Ronald Reagan said 'I occasionally think how quickly our differences worldwide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world.'[3] Reagan's speculations at the General Assembly are given form in the in the denouement to Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' serialised graphic novel *Watchmen* (1987). Like Simmons, retired superhero turned megalomaniacal venture-capitalist Adrian Veidt hoaxes an alien invasion by hiring a team of artists and scientists to design and create an alien. Resembling Wells's Martian, the giant alien is squid-like, comprising and is largely a gigantic genetically engineered brain cloned from a human psychic. Unlike Sturgeon's 'Unite and Conquer' where the alien presence is implied and the coup is bloodless, Veidt's alien is teleported into Manhattan – ironically, on top of the

Institute for Spatial Studies – where it explodes and kills three-million New Yorkers with psychic resonance. This prompts the cessation of hostilities with the United States from the Kremlin, signified by the immediate withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan.

Political and fictional themes coalesce again in the hard science fiction novel *Footfall* (1985) by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle, an attempt to revisit conventions of invasion fiction by using the narrative and science fictional metaphors to articulate a particular worldview. The ambition for the agenda underscoring the novel is expressed in its use of three science fiction writers acting as Presidential advisors. Perhaps tongue-in-cheek, but straying towards indulging a power fantasy, two of the writer-advisors are surrogates for the authors: Nat Reynolds for Niven and Wade Curtis for Pournelle. The third, Bob Anson, is a fictional representation of Robert Heinlein; the names chosen are all earlier literary pseudonyms for the three. Heinlein was a member of the Citizen's Advisory Council on National Space Policy, a lobbying organisation of which Pournelle was Chairman that advised the Reagan administration on the Strategic Defense Initiative; Pournelle had worked in the aerospace industry in the late 1950s for Boeing and so can be said to have been personally involved with and interested in the development of American military technology and space exploration. At times, the text reads as an elaborate advertisement for Pournelle's scientific projects, the imagining of an environment where they could be put into practice. Set in the near future of the mid 1990s with Earth attacked by race of elephantine aliens named the Fithp, events of the text imply that it is America's failure to maintain pace with the Soviet efforts in space that leave the planet open to attack. The Fithp breach the Soviet atmospheric defence frontier

and repel terrestrially launched nuclear missiles with a laser guided shield system much along the lines of the Strategic Defensive Initiative.

**A New Enemy**

The end of the Cold War in 1989 witnessed the end of the Soviet Union as America's longest standing invasion threat. Without a significant adversary to replace it, the invasion narrative became less pressing. Notable examples during the decade following the Cold War were mainly youth fiction such as Pamela F. Service's *Under Alien Stars* (1991), Scott Westerfield's *Fine Prey* (1998) and the television series *Invasion: America* (1998), or films that were knowing takes on the genre like *Independence Day* (1996) and *The Faculty* (1997) or the outright spoof of 1950s B-Movies, *Mars Attacks!* (1996). With the advent of the attack on the Twin Towers in September 2001, the new enemy for America identified by President George W. Bush was militant Islam, with subsequent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq conducted as part of a 'war on terror'. The vagueness of 'terror' as a conceptual enemy has resulted in a resurgent interest in the invasion narrative, with an abundance of original material produced since the attacks, in addition to expensive remakes of the staple narratives discussed earlier, *The War of the Worlds* in 2005 and *The Invasion* in 2007.

Parallels to the American occupation of Iraq can be seen in Harry Turtledove's short story 'Vilcabamba' (2010). Centring on America, aliens called the Krolp discover and occupy Earth, disregarding the human delegations joyous at finding existence of another species in the universe and effortlessly repelling the most powerful military

weapons at human disposal. Retaliation is futile, since the Krolp technology is beyond the theoretical and practical capability of human science; the most severe damage done to the Krolp vehicles is caused by stolen Krolp weapons and risks the wrath of a Krolp revenge attack. The title refers to the retreat of the Incas in Peru after the arrival Spanish colonists displaced them. Writing *Invasion America!* (2005), Alan Wing poses the following questions:

> How do you stop an invisible enemy when they have no organized structure which to stage an armed campaign against? When there is no government which can be forced to the negotiation table? What if they struck America in countless locales, then did not allow the US time to recover as they did after the events of Sept. 11th? What could we do as a nation? What might you do?[4]

Reflecting contemporary Islamophobia, America becomes a divided nation in Robert Ferrigno's *Assassin* trilogy: *Prayers for the Assassin* (2006), *Sins of the Assassin* (2008) and *Heart of the Assassin* (2009). The split is the result of an ostensibly Zionist nuclear onslaught on New York, Washington D. C. and Mecca. The Democratic (blue) states convert to Islam in sympathy, while the Republican (red) states secede to form a Christian republic in the South. The dominance of Islamic culture is represented farcically by midday prayers interrupting the Superbowl and LAX Airport being renamed Bin Laden International. In Tom Kratman's military science fiction *Desert Called Peace* series: *A Desert Called Peace* (2007), *Carniflex* (2008) and *The Lotus Eaters* (2010), Earth has become a Caliphate, leaving the ideological descendants of modern Americans exiled on an Earth-like planet named the Federal Republic of Columbia.

Fears of terrorism led to a surge in fiction portraying invasion by sleeper cells or the infiltration of the United States by militant groups. In Vince Flynn's *Transfer of Power* (2001), a group of Arab terrorists posing as wealthy campaign contributors stage a military coup of the White House. This plot is reprised in the seventh series of the television programme *24* (2009), on which Flynn has creative input as a story consultant. A paramilitary group from the fictional African state Sangala invade the White House by arriving from the Potomac river, their passage aided by conspirators in the secret service. In both *Transfer of Power* and *24* it is the efforts of a lone national security services agent – Mitch Rapp of the CIA and Jack Bauer of the Counter Terrorist Unit respectively – that foil the plot and preserves American democracy. *24* is parodied in an episode of the animated satirical comedy series, *South Park*, entitled 'The Snuke' (2007), describing the inadvertent discovery of an invasion plot by racist schoolboy Eric Cartman, whose suspicion concerning the arrival at school of a Muslim student coincides with an actual terrorist plot to explode a 'suitcase nuke' planted on an unsuspecting Hilary Clinton, then expected to be America's next President. Having discovered Russian neo-Soviets to be behind the plot, it transpires that the terrorist attack is merely a distraction for a naval invasion by Britain, returning to 'put an end to the American revolution'. The British navy is, preposterously, a fleet of eighteenth century wooden ships, and is annihilated by the firepower of the modern American navy on discovery.

Just over fifty years after the 1953 film adaptation of the novel and two years after the American led invasion of Iraq in 2003, Steven Spielberg's remake of *The War of the Worlds* (2005) ignores the conventions of other invasion narratives by avoiding

scenes of destroyed landmarks and generals around a map plotting a counter attack. Like the Welles broadcast, events take place in New Jersey, depicting the plight of Ray Ferrier (Tom Cruise) and his family during the alien invasion. Emphasising the working class perspective of the narrative, Ferrier is a divorced dock worker; a powerless witness unable to do anything in the face of the attacks except attempt to survive and steward his children to safety. Maintaining disorientation, there is no expert figure in the narrative to interpret events; the audience, like Ray, receive information about the invasion through news reports and speculation from other residents Ferrier encounters. The remake of a well-known narrative, the audience should be familiar with the plot to interpret the alien attack without needing to defer to expertise, to be in a critical position to notice changes to how this narrative treats the source material.

In this respect, it is significant that any reference to Mars as the origin of the invasion is omitted. Ferrier's daughter (Dakota Fanning) asks:

> 'Is it terrorists?'
>
> '... This came from some place else.'
>
> 'Like Europe!?'
>
> 'No Robbie, not like Europe...'

A modern update of Wells's novel, Spielberg's film accommodates a century's worth of science and science fiction by evading the source of the invasion. The aliens first appear to the audience from underground, causing an earthquake when they rise from beneath. Returning to Wells's text after the flying saucers of the 1953 film, their

vehicles are walking tripods with sudden, organic movements, here resembling a jellyfish rather than the manta rays of the earlier film and lacking the technological sheen that connoted an advanced scientific utopia. As before, the aliens are seen outside their vehicles by the narrative's protagonist. Ferrier's observation of the aliens departs from the horror of the preceding film or text, setting up a mutual curiosity between the two species as they watch he watches the aliens exploring a basement. Anxiety over global warming is alluded to by the notice of the coming of the invasion being given by the strange weather patterns and reports of severe lightning storms. These storms are located in the Ukraine, notably a former member state of the now collapsed Soviet Union, which perhaps incites in the audience a dormant Cold War anxiety.

Inspiring the Asylum Films' 'mockbusters' *H. G. Wells' The War of the Worlds* (2005) and *War of the Worlds 2: The Next Wave* (2008), the release Spielberg's *The War of the Worlds* in 2005 also encouraged television producers to commission two short-lived series. *Invasion* (2005) described the aftermath of a hurricane in which water-based creatures infiltrate a small Florida town, cloning the town's inhabitants by first merging with and then replacing them. Unfortunately, the series coincided with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, adversely affecting the promotion of the series. The premiere was also preceded with a warning that the show featured images of a fictional hurricane that viewers could be sensitive to. The second was *Threshold* (2005), focusing on a secret government project investigating the first contact with an extraterrestrial species, the government having learned that the aliens are attempting to rewrite the DNA of the human race. Agents if the project become infected by a fractal triskelion sent by alien electronic signals, nonetheless altering their brains and

causing them to have bizarre, linked dreams, and also receive alien messages. The series had a three-year arc that would have seen the series change its title each year, mirroring the stages of invasion, from *Threshold* to *Foothold*, dealing with a mass alien invasion and finally *Stranglehold*, the response to a well-established alien presence on earth.

## Cultural Angst

Much as the advancement of science and technology has raised awareness of certain ideas in science fiction by making them an everyday reality, cultural changes – particularly the continual development of computers and the internet – has engendered a need for a wider technological lexicon. Science fiction metaphors – particularly the virus – have become commonplace outside genre science fiction and perhaps as a result of this the invasion metaphor has expanded into mainstream fiction. Scott Nicholson's *The Harvest* (2003), revised as *Forever Never Ends* in 2010 for the electronic book reader, Kindle, is a techno-thriller set in the Appalachian mountains, the alien invader is a hungry parasite that devours all organic life it comes into contact with and is discovered by a clairvoyant female psychology professor whose special ability is unappreciated by her husband. The diminution of small town Americana is revisited in *Peculiar, MO.* (2007) by Robert Williams. A falling star hits the idyllic Midwestern town of the title and initiates the movement of a dormant alien life cycle and the response by the military to repress it. A gay, liberal writer, Williams claims his novel is a response to 'the most multicultural country in the world becoming increasingly afraid of "aliens" and outside forces', choosing the setting

because of the 'charming' name of the town and also that 'I wanted to portray life in a small Midwestern town, a culture which seems to be vanishing as suburbs spread out and engulf rural areas',[5] echoing Finney's *The Body Snatchers*. The author of *The Host* (2008), Stephanie Meyer, bridges between stealth and post invasion and provides an authorial intertextual link between alien parasites and vampires since she is the author of the *Twilight* saga. Meyer describes the novel as 'a science fiction story for people who don't like science fiction'.[6]

Though increasingly marketed towards a more mainstream fiction, the invasion narrative remains popular as genre science fiction. In *The Invasion* (2010), William Meikle, an Ebook which he describes as 'my homage to '50s SF… an old-school alien invasion story, complete with fleets of ships overhead, plucky survivors, and last-minute rescues.'[7] Canada, then the rest of North America, then the entire planet is subsumed by strange green rain, from which alien life forms quickly evolve and embark on a mission of conquest. Paying homage to Heinleinian science fiction, the first two novels of Robert Buettner's Jason Wander series, *Orphanage* (2004) and *Orphan's Destiny* (2005), depict an invasion by beings recalling *The Puppet Masters*. In the first novel, Earth is attacked by slug like aliens and retaliates by sending a force out to Ganymede. In the second, the heroes of the first return home to the slashing of the defence budget and the discovery of a second wave of attacks more terrifying than the first. The novels are as interested in the coming-of-age of the lead figure Jason Wander as the invasion; his motivation is rooted in revenge for his parents' death in the first invasion. Buettner's activities outside literature recall the backgrounds of many of the pulp science fiction writers of the mid twentieth century; he is a former Military Intelligence Officer, National Science Foundation Fellow in Paleontology

and has been published in the field of Natural Resources Law. The staunch pro-Americanism of his narratives have led publishers Orbit to produce separate editions for the United Kingdom. Another writer exploring invasion themes as genre science fiction is the prolific John Ringo in his *Looking Glass* series, co-written with Travis S. Taylor: *Into the Looking Glass* (2005), *Vorpal Blade* (2007), *Maxome Foe* (2008) and *Claws That Catch* (2010). Here, various alien invasions are enabled by the creation in an American University laboratory of mirror-like space portals.

Even the pre-*War of the Worlds* approach to invasion narratives is being revisited, by writers of alternate history such as Harry Turtledove and also Robert Conroy in *1901* (2003), where Germany invades the United States after the Kaiser's demand for America to relinquish control of its newly acquired territories is refused. Now that the crude stereotyping of the yellow peril has become unacceptable, concerns over immigration from over the Southern border are expressed more obliquely, particularly by survivalist novelist William W. Johnstone in *Invasion USA* (2006) and *Invasion USA: Border War* (2006), the latter written with his son, J. A. Johnstone. In the first novel, Vietnam veteran Tom Brennon forms a volunteer army to stop the activities of a notorious South American drug cartel. In the latter, Brennon comes up against a Mexican gang leader who has kidnapped a group of American schoolgirls. Early invasion texts, out of patent, are being put online for free consumption on websites such as Project Gutenberg and Google Books, with companies such as Simon Publications and Bibliolife issuing historical reprints of original publications. Continuing interest in other narratives has resulted in them being reissued in 2010 by the SF Masterworks series, with *The Body Snatchers* republished in October and *Arslan* December.

The invasion narrative has expanded into wider culture, its uses becoming more varied and numerous than is widely recognised. The term 'pod person' comes from *The Body Snatchers* and is used in a review of Martha Stout's popular psychology text *The Sociopath Next Door* (2006) quoted on the inside sleeve. Conflating Finney's novel with other narratives of parasitic invasion, Sky television in the United Kingdom is currently running a series about household pests, entitled *Invasion of the Body Scratchers*. Comedic writer Danny Wallace staged an invasion of Eel Pie Island near London, a former location for rock concerts in the 1960s, for his BBC television programme, *How to Start Your Own Country* (2004). Wallace arrived by boat with a cohort, declared his reign by megaphone and put up posters around the island to make people aware of it, only to flee in haste when armed police arrived to investigate. Displaced Islamophobia is evident in the more recent work of biologist Richard Dawkins, adopting the language of the invasion narrative for his documentary *Enemies of Reason* (2007) when describing how reason – characterised by Dawkins as Western empirical science – is 'under attack' by 'dangerous' irrational forces originating from other, foreign cultures such as religion and homeopathy. Concerns over global warming raised by the campaigning of former Vice President Al Gore, documented by Davis Guggenheim in his film *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), are characterised as an imminent threat, reflected in fiction by the film *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004), which shares its title with Heinlein's novel of post-invasion. The metaphor of parasitic invasion is most prevalent in computing, with the Internet plagued with viruses and malware capable of destabilising or adversely reconfiguring remote computer systems;[8] spam chain mail is produced by increasingly sophisticated

programmes that can automatically generate bodies of text, the extreme logical extension of Burroughs' cut-up method.

Coming nearly a century and a half after the introduction of the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, the election of Barack Obama as the first non-white President of the United States was symbolic in proving that ethnicity does not necessarily prohibit a candidate from power. Facing accusations that he was born abroad and was therefore ineligible as a candidate for President, Obama produced his Hawaiian birth certificate shortly after announcing the success of an American military operation in killing Osama Bin Laden, the man identified as being America's prime enemy by the FBI's Most Wanted List. Bin Laden is identified as the leader of al-Qaeda, a global terrorist organisation that is associated with the attack on the World Trade Centre in 2001. However, Jason Burke's *Al Qaeda: The True Story of Radical Islam* (2004) argues that 'al-Qaeda' is a collective term used to signify unassociated terrorist groups; though the threat is genuine, its construction as a cohesive organisation is a product of the American imagination that is made for American consumption. With Bin Laden dead and the threat he was chiefly associated with diminished in the American imagination due to the 'Arab Spring', America is once again without a substantial enemy.

**Resolution**

*The Evolution of the American Invasion Narrative* traces the development of the tradition of American invasion narratives from their explosion in popularity at the end

of the nineteenth century to the present day. Beginning as verisimilitudinous puritanical jeremiads, American invasion narratives evolve through time to reflect America's historical and cultural context, expanding into science fiction metaphors to represent ideas and anxieties as constantly re-imagined invaders from outside the nation. Inspired by fear of invasion rather than actual invasion, the United States provides the perfect setting for these narratives. Having discounted the origin of the modern nation by European colonists as 'civilisation' rather than invasion, the United States is presented as an imaginative space free from significant historical precedent, amenable to any invader or type of invasion that a writer could conceive. The growth of the nation into an imperial and military superpower coupling economic and technological progress with an increasingly expansionist political agenda moved the nation towards new frontiers. This in turn encourages writers to create newer, deadlier invaders to be outwitted and outfought by the genius of the American scientific imagination and the determination of the American spirit of republican liberty. Invasion narratives help America to semantically reinvent its imperialism, encouraging expansion as a way of fortifying itself against the attacks presented in the fiction and also as benevolent to the rest of the world, a peaceful assimilation compared to the violent alternatives of other ideologies.

This expansionism is an extension of the European idea of America as a 'new world' discovery, a progressive utopia free from the failings of the corrupt old world. Manifesting in accordance with a pattern of seeding and germination where dormant anxieties are triggered by points of historical national crisis, invasion narratives reveal the reverse of this idea – that the European landings and settlements represented an invasion of the territory – through metaphors that resemble the projections of the

original invasion transposed on to the modern United States, such as the invasion as a plague, the displacement of the people within their own country. It is unlikely that America could, or would, revisit its origin to resolve the trauma caused by the divergent interpretations of the nation – as the product of discovery or invasion – but perhaps the acceptance of the validity of both narratives as authentically American would help this process. Whilst this identity trauma remains unresolved, the invasion narrative will resurface as the narrative form that engages with it most forcibly, be it demanding fortification for any newly identified weakness as per the jeremiad, or ironising it through satire.

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[1] This is described on his dedicatory website as 'another of those legendary literary feats in line with the perfect dictated sentences of the later Henry James or the virtually flawless handwritten manuscripts of the later Charles Dickens.' http://writer.lronhubbard.org/page102.htm [accessed 4th September 2010]

[2] http://writer.lronhubbard.org/page103.htm [accessed 4th September 2010]

[3] UFO – Ronald Reagan's Alien Speech, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6Bz6Dkl84k&feature=related [accessed 4th September 2010]

[4] http://blurbal.com/wilbursmith/viewtopic.php?f=19&t=410&start=0&st=0&sk=t&sd=a&view=print [accessed 8th August 2010]

[5] http://www.sffworld.com/blog/1078p1.html [accessed 9th September 2010]

[6] http://www.amazon.com/Host-Novel-Stephenie-Meyer/dp/0316068047 [accessed 8th September 2010]

[7] http://www.williammeikle.com [accessed 9th September 2010]

[8] Encountering this problem in pursuit of this study, I was redirected to a 'spiked' site that thwarted my attempts to access the Amazon link for, ironically enough, Richard Hofstadter's *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1964).

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