



ARTEFACTS (ARTIFACTS): THE REPUTATION IN SCIENCE FICTION

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Abstract

As we know the importance of some kinds of gadgets or machines which are being played an effective role to evaluate the zenith points in fiction writings. The objects used in science fiction are deeply connected with the thoughts of readers and lead them into the different world which might not be existed till now as their knowledge. The reputation of artefacts in science fiction is good for research work and also being analysed in an innovative way at present times. The keen observation of some kinds of gadgets is something new to the historical objects which had been survived in the writings of our world well renowned historians from antiquity. This literary form is subject to consider as one of the literary aspects to understand in a different style in literature. The subject matter of artefacts interconnects the machines or gadgets of ancient days with the present days used or to be used in science fiction as a sub-genre of speculative fiction. This paper undertakes the growth of artefacts in speculative fiction with an extraordinary look on science fiction. This paper interweaves with a few sections: section-1: An entry path of artefacts in Science Fiction; section-2: Various models of artefacts in middle age; section-3: New trends in use of artefacts in science fiction; and section-4: Conclusion

Key words: artefacts, gadgets, historical objects, literary sub-genre, science fiction, speculative fiction and etc.,

Section-1: An entry path of artefacts in Science Fiction:

From the ancient Greece times, many authors or novelists consider the inclusion of a machine an easy way to move their story beyond the bounds of modern society and into the realms of Fantasy or Science Fiction. However, the utilization of this concept requires more than a good imagination. So that some rules have been formed to justify the use of artefacts or machines in all kinds of genres in speculative fiction writings which are usually considered as parameters. And any author or novelist who violates them can discover difficulties that no magical machine can rationally resolve.

Rule Number 1: Before the writing starts, decide the machine is a plot device or a character.

Rule number 2: Make the machine reasonable.

Rule number 3: Make the machine believable.

Rule number 4: There are bonus points for using real science.

Rule number 5: The writing is not about the machine.

It is not sure to say that when the science fiction has begun exactly but it is apparently easy to identify the moment when the artefacts or gadgets or machines have appeared. In late 19th century, the use of real life gadgets or machines has become more and more popular and



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writers began to earnestly explore what the machines of the future might be able to do. For illustration, H. G. Wells had defined time travel, and Jules Verne had begun the exploration of space. These two of sub-genres always require some sort of machines.

The spacecraft in *From the Earth to the Moon* is just another transportation device. Once the reader understands the function of a machine, it simply disappears into the background, and that's fine. The first significant machine has appeared in the novel *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865) by Jules Verne, which has been activated with some of his figures that are surprisingly close to reality. "*The travelers being desirous of examining the moon carefully during their voyage, in order to facilitate their studies, they took with them Boer and Moeller's excellent Mappa Selenographica, a masterpiece of patience and observation, which they hoped would enable them to identify those physical features in the moon, with which they were acquainted. This map reproduced with scrupulous fidelity the smallest details of the lunar surface which faces the earth; the mountains, valleys, craters, peaks, and ridges were all represented, with their exact dimensions, relative positions, and names; from the mountains Doerfel and Leibnitz on the eastern side of the disc, to the Mare frigoris of the North Pole*".¹ Jules Verne's novel is an eye viewed picture to the knowledge of his contemporary period with a good knowledge of the then technologies. It has several technical remarks, which look

unusual to the modern eyes, but reflect the knowledge of 1865-1870.

In the same way, the term "time machine" is first notified by H. G. Wells in his novel *The Time Machine* (1895). In which the machine is simply a plot device, allowing the Traveller to do something otherwise impossible. The machine does its job well, and the reader almost forgets it is around. In this novel, the narrator is the only person who believes the time traveller without any proof due to that the Time Traveller says he will be back with proof. Eventually, The Time Traveller goes into his lab and disappears but he never comes back. "*As the eastern sky grew brighter, and the light of the day came on and its vivid colouring returned upon the world once more, I scanned the view keenly. But I saw no vestige of my white figures. They were mere creatures of the half-light. "They must have been ghosts," I said; "I wonder whence they dated." For a queer notion of Grant Allen's came into my head, and amused me. If each generation die and leave ghosts, he argued, the world at last will get overcrowded with them. On that theory they would have grown innumerable some Eight Hundred Thousand Years hence, and it was no great wonder to see four at once. But the jest was unsatisfying, and I was thinking of these figures all the morning, until Weena's rescue drove them out of my head.*"² Both the concept and the notion of time travel by using a vehicle that allows an operator to travel purposefully and selectively is now universally used to refer to such a vehicle in later generations.



Section-2: Various models of artefacts in middle age:

Arrakis means in Arabic the dancer but is well known term for its meaning fictional desert planet and it is later called as Rakis. Frank Herbert has given importance to use as an object in his best featured novels *Dune* series of novels. *Dune* is the first novel in this series and was published in 1965. It is popularly considered one of the greatest science fiction novels of his contemporary period. In this novel *Dune*, the planet, Arrakis is the home of the Fremen and subsequently is the Imperial Capital of the Atrides Empire. As the third planet, Arrakis is being orbited the star Canopus and as the same way another two moons are orbited around it with different images. The first one is possessed the image of the desert kangaroo mouse, Muad'Dib and the other moon is shown as the image of a human hand.

This novel set in the distant future in the middle of a feudal interstellar society in which noble houses, in control of individual planets, ought to be owed faithfulness to the Padishah Emperor. *Dune* tells the story of young Paul Atrides, whose noble family accepts the stewardship of the desert planet Arrakis.

The ritualistic formality of it touched him with a feeling of loneliness.

Who was fooled by that fatuous legalism? Not the Fremen, certainly. Nor the

Houses Minor who controlled the interior trade of Arrakis . . . and were

Harkonnen creatures almost to a man.

They have tried to take the life of my son!

The rage was difficult to suppress.

He saw lights of a moving vehicle coming toward the landing field from

Arrakeen. He hoped it was the guard and troop carrier bringing Paul. The delay

was galling even though he knew it was prompted by caution on the part of

Hawat's lieutenant.³

According to common notion of Frank Herbert and his contemporary writers, the most important and valuable substance in the universe is Arrakis which is very dangerous but desired for doing of activities in space. The story explores the multi-layered interactions of politics, religion, ecology, technology, and human emotion, as the forces of the empire meet each other in a struggle for the control of Arrakis and its flavour. Since 2009, the names of planets from the *Dune* novels have been adopted for the real-world classification of plains.

Section-3: New trends in use of artefacts in science fiction:

As the genre development of science fiction, the civilisations of mechanisms within the genre seem to have become focused around two major notions such as futuristic weapons and discovered artefacts which are usually similar to something available in real life. The



artefacts are often something with truly advanced technology discovered amongst the fragments of a past earth-based civilization.

With the reference of the Greek Goddess of Wisdom, HAL 9000 is a computer device that has been named “Athena” with a feminine voice and persona in 2001: A Space *Odyssey* by Arthur C. Clarke. It is simply an advanced computer that talks and is just programmed citing its ability to monitor every function of the Discovery.

“Probably no one would ever know this; it did not matter. In the 1980s, Minsky and Good had shown

how neural networks could be generated automatically - self replicated - in accordance with any

arbitrary learning program. Artificial brains could be grown by a process strikingly analogous to

the development of a human brain. In any given case, the precise details would never be known, and

even if they were, they would be millions of times too complex for human understanding. Whatever

way it worked, the final result was a machine intelligence that could reproduce - some philosophers

still preferred to use the word "mimic" - most of the activities of the human brain - and with far

greater speed and reliability. It was extremely expensive, and only a few units of the HAL9000

series had yet been built; but the old jest that it would always be easier to make organic brains by

*unskilled labor was beginning to sound a little hollow”.*⁴

However, as the story moves forward, Hal becomes a character with some flaws and weaknesses usually reserved for human creatures. As the story has carried forward to 2010, it is discovered that Hal has some serious personality disorders by the humans who have misused it for their own purposes. Some other things have never changed. All together the transition from plot device to character is based upon the machine malfunctioning, thus other characters are be in danger. If it has been done well in good manner it can still be an effective.

In Galactic Pot-Healer by Phillip k. Dick, Joe Fernwright has a meaningless life as a ceramic pot-healer in a society that has no more use for his skills. Out of the blue he gets a call from the Glimmung, a god-like alien entity who wants him to relocate to Plowman's Planet to be part of a multi-species effort to raise Heldscalla, a submerged and ancient alien cathedral, but Fernwright soon finds he's caught up in a kind of Faustian quest that's destined to failure. *He heard Glimmung speak--heard not through his ears but in his brain. And, at the same time, heard the babble of the others, of the remainder of the group; their voices, the unceasing din, muttered beyond Glimmung's own voice, like crosstalk. "Help me? Where am I? Get me out of here!" They babbled against one another, like disturbed, frightened ants. And Glimmung's voice boomed, overpowering but not quenching them.*⁵ It is found that the first half of this novel is to be very



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tight and entertaining, but that sense of focus degenerated towards the end as the dramatic action takes over, which Dick was less able to describe nearly as proficiently as his mapping out of the novel's psychic territory.

The phrase “TRI-function recorder” in short "tricorder" refers to a multifunction hand-held device used for sensor scanning, data analysis, and recording data. The standard tricorder is a general-purpose device which is used primarily to scout unfamiliar areas and viewed detailed examination of living things, and record and review the technical data. For instance, the medical tricorder is used by doctors to help diagnose diseases and collect bodily information about a patient.

The three primary functions of the tricorder have appeared in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* which is an American science fiction television series created by Gene Roddenberry. It has been started from the week of September 28, 1987, with 178 episodes of 27 million viewers and ended with the week of May 23, 1994. This series is set in the nearby regions of the Milky Way galaxy; the first season takes place in the year 2364 (24th Century), 100 years after the start of the five-year mission of the Enterprise described in the original series, which began in 2264 (23rd Century). It features a new crew and a new starship *Enterprise*. Patrick Stewart's voice-over introduction during each episode's opening credits stated the starship's purpose, updated from the original to represent an open-ended "mission", and to be gender-neutral.

Conclusion:

Science Fiction writers are usually intelligent people who have concluded carefully and steadily from specific sections of the current reality even though their views are fictitious in worthy of artefacts' study. In science fiction writings, there are cherished and rare visionary objects which we found a handful of "powerful" artefacts that actually don't help anyone at all but we still have fond affections for all these artefacts that ultimately proved pointless. The contemporary science fiction writers haven't designed artefacts for long because recent trends are to be existed due to the generation changes like carriers of information such as radios, televisions, personal audio and video players and internet domains which are sometimes beautiful artefacts. Even though the original carriers of information can present the subject matters in a considerable way but do not guaranteed long times. If recent trends are continued there will be a change in modern technology which could be a threat not only to the value of the real artefact but to the future of skilled artisans.

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