

Cultural myth in Philip K. Dick's *The World Jones Made*

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Whenever a cultural myth is identified and discussed, the first question to ask is: which social order do its narratives and icons address, support or challenge? A frequent answer, particularly in a work of American studies, is the nation; and it is at this juncture that culture, society and the narratives that reinforce them are most integrally involved. In *National Identity*, Anthony D. Smith gives a prominent place to "common myths and historical memories" among his criteria for national identity; and they also figure prominently in the "main attributes of ethnic community."¹ National myths, such as myths of the American West, impose the image of a single people under the aegis of a unified state out of what may be several distinct groupings. Other myth clusters, however, may have a transnational nature; the cultural myths orbiting Adolf Hitler and the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust concern themselves with phenomena in Western Europe. Yet, since the victors write history, these myths can also be considered in part as American inventions.

The second question to ask is: where does the cultural myth come from? Western society relies on the truth-creating function of scholarly discourse, but when these truths are dispersed further from their discursively argued source, they are imposed and absorbed into a society's common sense as cultural myth. This paper will be dealing mainly with two "cultural myth" clusters, both based on Western scholarly discourse and both contributing to a notion of "identity" to nation, civilization, or

1. Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin 1991), pp. 14, 21.

species. History-based and science-based cultural myths perform much the same cohesive function in a society and they collaborate on the sub-textual level as meaning-giving narratives within a culture. According to Richard Slotkin, myths are born from a historical event; through repetitions and successively broader applications, the retelling of the original historical occurrence is transformed into mythic expression, "shared historical memories." Myths exemplify and illustrate, but they do not argue. By avoiding the transparency of discursive argument, myths are virtually immune to criticism and counter argumentation.² Science-based myths are much the same, except instead of a historical event at the root of the myth lies a scientific "fact." The facts of paradigmatic science are arrived at by different methods than those of history. Formally, each combines discursive argumentation and narrative, and both of the narrower discourses percolate to the culture at large in a similar fashion. With these similarities, mutual reinforcement, conflation, collusion and confusion may be expected, and cultural critics and historians should be aware of them.

Philosopher of science Bruno Latour's model for the spread of scientific ideas supplements the understanding of how the conclusion of discursive argumentation becomes myth. He points out that the density of paradigm-specific language and the absence of explanatory cues for non-specialists limit the discourse to "a small number of well-equipped contestants." The popularization of an idea for "large numbers of ill-equipped verbal contestants" requires a simplified presentation divorced from the terminology and rhetorical strategies necessary in the debates of research scientists. Ultimately, the dispersal of a scientific fact, "its way of passing from hand to hand, the effect it generates seems vastly different from the statement we call 'scientific'."³ The dissemination through retelling and adaptation to individual circumstances is, I believe, the principal re-negotiation in the transformation of discursive argument from both history and science into cultural myth.

My reading of *The World Jones Made* focusses on Philip Dick's delib-

2. Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Atheneum 1992), pp. 5-6.

3. Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP 1987), pp. 52-56, 208.

erate and uncritical use of cultural myths in this story of a truncated, provisional migration of the human species. While explanatory didactic passages and specific settings and plot tropes identify distinct myths, topography, migration dynamics, and development paradigms shared by many cultural myths indicate a plurality of myth that illuminates a common set of preoccupations from *several* discursive sources. The myths of human evolution here discussed are the migratory dynamic inherent in what I call "the Darwinian master narrative," and myths based upon eugenics and human genetics, including the attendant (and often confounding) repertoire of myths based on Hitler and Nazi Europe. The novel also reflects some elements from myths of the American West, leading to a discussion of notions of expansion and progress as a point of intersection for many Western cultural myths.

The original title for Philip K. Dick's second published novel, *The World Jones Made*, was "Womb for Another," and on one level, it narrates the birth of a new species body, another species of human. The novel opens in the artificial environs of the Refuge, a large-scale incubator where eight similarly afflicted mutants ponder their condition as biologically deviant beings and as virtual prisoners in the enclosure. While police agent Doug Cussick observes them for the first time, four of the mutants attempt to escape to the outside. This opening scene is crucial, for its twinned presentation – it returns half way through the novel – serves as an introduction to the mutants as well as a frame encasing the story of the political rise of Floyd Jones, Doug Cussick's marriage to Nina Longstren, the birth of their son, Nina's criminal involvement with Jones' movement, the Cussicks' divorce, and the imminent overthrow of the government for which agent Cussick works. Once the government is taken over by Floyd Jones and his Patriots United movement, the mutants are whisked out of harm's way and launched to Venus. The mutants, once planted in their "natural" environment, thrive and reproduce.

The World Jones Made presents an imaginative projection of the consequences of two closely related racialist discourses which flourished in the West until the Second World War: the scientific paradigm and social policies of eugenics, and the Nazi racialist political agenda as expressed in Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. The migration myth of the Darwinian master narrative stands as the naturalized foundation for the assumed "truths" of the development of species: ascendant species expand their

territory and migrate to new and better terrain in order to progress; and two species occupying the same terrain are potential rivals in the "struggle of life," or, as popularized by Herbert Spencer, the "struggle for survival." While this struggle is the key element of Darwin's explanation of the process of evolutionary selection, the migration myth is an *implicit* dynamic derived from his discussion of speciation. Robert Ardrey, who wrote several popular books on paleoanthropology, maintains that Darwin *denied* the importance of territorial infringement as a cause of war,⁴ but it has nevertheless intruded in society's common sense as a popularly perceived fact of evolution. This likely is a result of anecdotes from *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* read through popular racist assumptions and nineteenth century colonial activity.⁵ George Stocking points out that "evolutionary racialism was, from the European point of view, a grimly optimistic, but morally ambiguous doctrine, which could be used to justify the worst excesses of expropriation and colonial rule."⁶ The three species bodies in *The World Jones Made* – "regular" Homo sapiens, mutant humans deliberately bred for life on Venus, and large blobs of protoplasm called *drifters* – act, react and interact in accordance with eugenics and migration myths of human evolution. Homo sapiens shows a natural antagonism for the drifters and disgust for all mutants; the mutants feel a strong sense of Other-ness from Homo sapiens; the drifters treat mankind as a menacing annoyance.

Mutation, migration, and race war. The Darwinian master narrative supports the text in two ways. First, it provides common discursive ground for depicting the development of humankind after a nuclear con-

4. Robert Ardrey, *The Territorial Imperative: A Personal Inquiry into the Animal Origins of Property and Nations* (New York: Delta-Dell), p. 244.

5. "As species of the same genus usually have ... much similarity in habits and constitution, and always in structure, the struggle will generally be more severe between them, if they come into competition with each other ... The recent increase of the missel-thrush in parts of Scotland has caused the decrease of the song-thrush" (*Origin*). "Extinction [of a human group] follows chiefly from the competition of tribe with tribe, and race with race. Various checks are always in action, serving to keep down the numbers of each savage tribe ... If any ... of these checks increases in power ... the tribe thus affected tends to decrease; and when of two adjoining tribes one becomes less numerous and less powerful than the other, the contest is soon settled by war, slaughter, cannibalism, slavery, and absorption" (*Descent*). Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Survival*. 6th edition and *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*. (New York: Modern Library 1948), pp. 60-61, 542-43.

6. George Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press 1987), p. 237.

flagration. Dick's use of this myth cluster invokes an sf genre trope; much sf is concerned with the cultural and biological ramifications of nuclear war, and the significance of mutation in the *Homo sapiens* species body is conditioned by the Darwinian notions of the struggle for survival and survival of the fittest. Secondly, common-sense perceptions based upon the migration motif are defamiliarized and challenged by their being exposed as alibis for Nazi racism.

After the attempted escape of the mutants from their compound, Doug Cussick, reminisces about "life before Jones," a charismatic leader who has spurned the tolerant state-sanctioned ideology in favor of a xenophobic crusade to spur humankind's conquest of outer space. Cussick is a firm believer in "Hoff's Relativism," which legally prohibits the absolute truths claims of any belief system. This has left humanity without any anchoring belief, and for many, without hope for the future. This vacuum is filled by Floyd Jones. Jones is discovered by the young Secpol agent at a county fair. In spite of Relativism, xenophobia and hatred of the Other are not difficult to find. Away from the main course, the freak exhibits confront the carnival-goers with humanity's war-mutated progeny, "countless sports, oddities, freaks." Even though the mutants had been routinely exterminated right after the war, nowadays, "Under Relativism we have to let them live." Casual comment by a family father shows that this tolerant ideology is generally accepted, and mutants are left in peace. However, a passing "veteran," who had "burned a barnful of them" during the war, believes extending human rights to freaks is "contrary to common sense." When gently reminded of the law, he spits out "the hell with Relativism," and skulks away, mindful of the censure of the gathering crowd.⁷

The menagerie of sports and mutants invokes an assembly of mutant-myths associated with nuclear war superimposed over images from ancient mythology. But compared with the mutant sideshow freaks, Jones' Otherness is of a completely different order; he possesses precognitive power as a result of a mutation, but *not as a result of the nuclear war*. Jones is an unlikely, but nonetheless possible, candidate for the position of evolutionary *Übermenschen*, always an unpleasant thing to be

7. Philip K. Dick, *The World Jones Made* (New York: Vintage 1993), pp. 12-14.

in a Dick novel. His physiognomy subtly blends an awkward adolescent with the icon of human evolutionary development, the large brained future man.⁸ Jones is a mutant, but he is more than the iconic precognitive the sf genre was overrun with in the 1950s; he is a tragic figure who represents in his person an aspect of the process humankind undergoes in the novel. Because of his precognitive perception of his own future, Jones is, in effect, doomed to relive his own history without being able to alter it, and yet without knowing where it will ultimately lead. Jones' unifying vision for humanity also imposes an innate re-enactment of the past.

Using the drifters as a fulcrum, Floyd Jones launches himself into political power by employing a rhetoric and ideology analogous to Hitler's writings on race and *Lebensraum*. When Jones is interrogated after his arrest, the drifters are his principal topic of species-hatred:

"Intersystem colonization is possible," Jones [said]. "Why do you think the drifters are here? It's obvious – they're settling. They're doing what we should be doing: they're out searching for habitable planets." ... *Drifters* was a key word with Jones; visibly, the word triggered off something deep and basic inside him ...

"You don't particularly like them," Cussick observed.

"Like them?" Jones looked ready to explode. "Drifters? Alien life-forms coming here, settling on our planets?" His voice rose to a shrill, hysterical screech. "Can't you see what's happening? How long do you think they'll leave us alone? Eight dead worlds – nothing but rock. And Earth: *the only useful one*. Don't you see? They're preparing to attack us ..."⁹

Tapping the migration myth, Jones interprets the arrival of the drifters as a sign of impending interspecies conflict, and uses this as a catalyst to gain converts and transform his religious movement – The Honorable Church of God – to a political one, "Patriots United." The race war motif and the imperative to expand territory by interstellar colonization are the key points of Jones' political agenda; both evince strong parallels with that of the Third Reich. In the third and fourth chapters of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, one can see the virulent populist anti-Semitism of the Third Reich in its planning stages. This was achieved by focussing on a single enemy, basing anti-Semitism on the scientific truth of "racial knowl-

8. This is in line with the "encephalization myth." See Misia Landau, *Narratives of Human Evolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP 1991) for her catalogue of human evolution myths derived from paleontology.

9. *Jones*, pp. 41-42.

edge," applying Darwinian derived notions of population pressures on a nation-state, glorifying warfare as participation in the struggle for survival, and, finally, recognizing Jews as worthy opponents in this struggle.¹⁰ In *Mein Kampf*, the monomaniacal focus of race hatred is a political strategy, and Jones' hatred of the drifters is used in a similar way. It is the conversion of racism to a political platform which is defamiliarized and challenged in *The World Jones Made*.

Significantly, the drifters are not just victims of Jones's heated rhetoric. Deliberate, well-organized attacks are made on these creatures wherever they are to be found. The Omaha Falls attack – where an organized group burns a stranded drifter alive – is a vividly portrayed scenario of the Patriots United pogrom against the drifters species body. This occurs in spite of explicit government protection: the drifters "have ... been placed in the category of Wards of the State." Categorizing and guaranteeing the innocuous nature of the alien species body is done by the Department of Public Health, which demonstrates Dick's uncritical assimilation of the state's concern with the contiguity of the species body, as well as their "natural" right to protect it. Jones' fervent species hatred is successfully transferred to his followers, as the "red headed man" demonstrates both by his nausea in coming in contact with the drifters, and his "deep and lasting satisfaction, knowing that he personally had killed the alien life-form." The fight against the drifters is not just to take place on home territory, it is to be extended to their "point of origin" where "the real business begins," that business being the species equivalent of genocide.¹¹ But the race war motif is just one half of Jones' appeal; the other is a *Lebensraum* argument. Later in the novel, at a massive Nazi-type rally in Germany, Jones shouts out to the crowd: "We must strike out! ... Beyond the world, beyond the dead systems. It is our destiny. The race cannot be denied its future. Nothing will stop us. We cannot be defeated."¹² Ideology, method, hopes and aspirations of Jones' movement make an allegorical fit with the Nazi's rise to power; and at one point Floyd Jones is directly compared to Adolf Hitler.¹³

10. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Mannheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1943), pp. 118-51.

11. *Jones*, pp. 62-73.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 121.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

These issues are highly emotional ones, and Dick succeeds in portraying them as such. He distances himself from the "science" behind Jones' hatred for the drifters. But as a goad to fire humanity, and as a tactic to gain political power, Jones' rehashing of Hitleresque race-war ideology and its application to interstellar species functions too well. References to roving hoodlum gangs, shattered glass, arson, and politically motivated mayhem jog the *Krystallnacht* trope in a related myth cluster based upon historical occurrences of the Holocaust. The burning of the drifter is more than just a gesture of resistance to the ruling Fedgov authorities or the mandates of Relativism. Visceral species hatred by *Homo sapiens* of an Other is a prime motivating factor, one that Jones exploits for political ends.

It is ironic, then, that the drifters end up "sealing off" humanity, and that this realization marks the end of the Patriots United movement. In Jones' office, a "team of biologists" reveals that the drifters, far from being a suitable object for a massive military campaign, are vegetable: "Plants," Jones said. "They don't fight. They're helpless ... It's absurd." The vegetable nature of the drifters places them in another phylum altogether, and what was originally depicted as a species-war jihad is reduced to the ludicrous, flash burning of intergalactic weeds. The drifters' solution to the menace of mankind is to isolate the species, imprisoning them in the part of the universe that they have already discovered. "Beyond that ... the warships will simply disappear." The implications of this are clear: since the drifters can contain humans, and not vice versa, they are obviously superior. *Homo sapiens* are like "a virus. Something on that order. On that scale."¹⁴ In the interstellar evolutionary struggle sketched by Dick, the twin evolutionary imperatives of territorial expansion and warfare have blown up in humankind's collective face. *The World Jones Made* defamiliarizes these cultural myths, demonstrates their application as a political tool, and pessimistically predicts what may happen when humankind finally does make contact with other life-forms from the stars.

Fedgov's positive eugenics. In most of Dick's sf narratives, "negative eugenics" is the preferred technique of controlling human species devel-

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-59.

opment, weeding out threatening inferior or superior. However, Western societies' techniques of power to accomplish what Louis Althusser refers to as the "reproduction of the means of production" are usually more prosaic, and these are largely naturalized in Dick's works. In *The World Jones Made*, the Federal government ("Fedgov") actively cares for the special needs of the nuclear family as part of its repertoire of *positive* eugenics techniques.¹⁵

When Doug Cussick's wife, Nina Longstren, becomes an anti-Fedgov political activist, it compromises her qualifications for motherhood according to the Eisenhower-era sensibilities in which the book was written. Nina is often absent all night long while Doug is working, and their son is then left in the care of the babysitting machine, which, unlike other machines in Dick's novels, is impersonal; it "clicks." Motherhood seems an onerous, dull task; no joy is expressed by Nina over her son, only a qualified ennui. When Doug's associate comments about the infant's eye and hair color, Doug responds: "The perfect human being: my powerful intellect and [Nina's] beauty."¹⁶ This has the ring of a fatherly platitude, but in terms of eugenics myths, it is an expression of what each conjugal union should accomplish, for the good of the species. The terms of the Cussick's divorce, however, illustrate what apparatus assumes ultimate responsibility for the *Homo sapiens* species body; the same that nurtures the mutants, and protects all life forms including the drifters, Fedgov. After his divorce, Doug reveals that "Jack has been entered in Fedgov nursery. Legally, he remains our son, but for all practical purposes we have no claim over him."¹⁷

Since the Cussicks attain a modicum of family harmony at the end of the novel after they have fled to Venus, there is probably nothing deliberately misogynist in Dick's portrayal of Nina. Rather, as her complete lack of interest in life demonstrates, there was something in the societal orga-

15. Michel Foucault emphasizes the role of the family as an object of the techniques of knowledge and power over the species body. In the development of "noso-politics," health of the general population becomes a political objective — "[It] serves ... to produce — under the best possible conditions — a human being who will live to the state of adulthood" See Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-77*. Ed. Colin Gordon. Trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper (New York: Pantheon 1980), pp. 172-73.

16. *Jones*, p. 76.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

nization under Relativism which cancelled out the joy of parenthood, or rather, the hope for the future that is part of it. While at the Northbeach bar, an unusual haunt for a family mother, Nina takes heroin. When her husband asks, "Do you really hate us this much?" She replies, "Not you, us. All of us ... it just seems so goddamn hopeless ... There's nothing. We're living deadness." The floor show reflects this on the biological level: an erotic performance between a mutant hermaphrodite couple who switch sex as they copulate. Even the procreative identity of sex is emptied of meaning. Under Relativism, you can be or do whatever you want, but in spite of the gratification, there is no issue. On Earth, amid the ideological battle of Jones' "Crusade" vs. Hoff's Relativism, the Cusicks' nuclear family dissipates. By participating in the migratory myth of human evolution, this family is reunited and perhaps even made more fruitful.¹⁸

The interplanetary migration also helps another marginalized group to thrive. The tribulations of the Venus mutants open the novel and return to occupy much of the second half. They are marked both as Other and same: when they are first presented, their role as biologically Other is emphasized; half way through the novel, the explanation of their creation, their position as victims of Jones' pogroms, and their wish to free themselves completely from Earth once they "escape," serve to emphasize their biological and cultural sameness. When the mutants are first shown in the Refuge, the eldest, Louis, asks: "What is it all for? ... There must be a purpose. A reason for us." The possibilities the mutants have arrived at – that they are "superior mutants," "War-time sports, generated by radiation pools" – iterate the post-nuclear holocaust sf-genre frame. The *Homo sapiens* species body is a malleable thing with a normative standard (undamaged genes), and many possible degraded (mutated) versions of abnormal. In spite of their obvious status as genetic Other, this scene engenders a strong empathy because these questions are basic human concerns. The government maintains their artificial environment at great cost, and therefore the mutants have a reason to assume a purpose for their existence, not God-given, but state-given. The continued integrity of this nascent species body is wholly

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-85.

dependent upon an effective state apparatus which cares for their health and security.¹⁹

Eugenics, then, is the source for most of the myths of human evolution in *The World Jones Made*. When Doug Cussick takes over the protection of the mutants half way through the book, the scientist supervisor, Dr. Rafferty, explains the (almost human) nature and origins of the mutants, first by pointing out their bourgeois affinities, and then by explaining the techniques which were employed to make them an Other. When Cussick first enters the Refuge, household accoutrements, books, and a copy of *The Wall Street Journal* support an image of middle-class normalcy. And it is Rafferty's declared paternity which exposes the nature of their biological affinity with *Homo sapiens*: "[They're] my children."

"Figuratively, you mean."

"No, I mean literally. I'm their father. Their embryos were removed from my wife's womb and placed in an artificial membrane. I sired each one of them; my wife and I are the parents of the whole group."²⁰

Also in this explanatory didactic interlude, Dick refers in passing to the biological womb of the Venus mutants, the invisible wife of Dr. Rafferty. Rafferty, through his combined role as biological father and biological scientist does what no woman can do: *control* the direction of the mutation. Thanks to Rafferty, the unwieldy and unpredictable consequences of nuclear war on the human gene pool has been overcome. The unreliable female womb, which has played havoc and produced numerous "wartime sports," has been replaced, and this is the way the apparatuses of power of the Federal World Government want the species to progress.²¹ Eugenics, or nascent human genetics, however we wish to classify Rafferty's technique, has removed the negative aspect of mutations – it actually invites

19. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

21. Rosi Braidotti writes that "The *topos* of women as a sign of abnormality, and therefore as a mark of inferiority, [is] a constant in Western scientific discourse." She has also pointed out that in early modern times the female was regarded as an unreliable reproductive vessel, subject to the vagaries of weather and the mother's gaze on some fascinating item in her immediate surroundings. See Rosi Braidotti, "Mothers, Monsters, and Machines" in *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (New York: Columbia UP 1994), pp. 75-94.

them, in spite of high mortality – and has enabled some variety of man to adapt to the alien environment of Venus. And it has accomplished this by replacing the natural womb with the artificial. Atypically for Philip Dick, in *The World Jones Made*, the *Homo sapiens* species body has been created, not detected; nurtured, not “euthed”; and, most significantly, specifically designed never to be a contender for the *topos* Earth.

In the twelfth chapter the “science” behind the difference of the Venus mutants’ species body is trotted out: Rafferty was explaining the general theory behind the Refuge and the mutants when

... Cussick interrupted. “[They’re] not modeled after Venusian humanoid life-forms?”
 “No,” Rafferty agreed. “They’re new creations, not imitations. The original human embryos were altered on the phenotype principle: we subjected them to nonterrestrial conditions – specifically, to a scale of stress similar to those operating on Venus ... As soon as the altered babies were born they were popped into V-type incubators: media again reproducing the Venusian pattern. In other words, we warped each embryo, and we continued to apply the stresses after the babies were born. As you realize, if human colonists land on Venus they won’t survive. Fedgov has tried that; it’s a matter of record. But if there were a few specific physical changes, it might be possible to keep a colony alive ... In time, we knew, the progeny would mutate in response to external pressures. Gradually, subsequent generations would be remolded along survival lines. Many would die but some would struggle along. Eventually we’d have a quasi-human species, not physically like ourselves, but, nonetheless, human beings. Altered men, fit to live on Venus.”

“I see,” Cussick said. “This is Fedgov’s solution.”²²

This is the only place where explanatory didactic discourse surfaces long enough for clear analysis.²³ Dick blends a Lamarckian evolutionary approach (“the progeny would mutate in response to *external pressures*”) and the Darwinian (“Many would die but some would *struggle along*”).²⁴

22. *Jones*, 115.

23. While not a real procedure, the “phenotype principle” as Dick uses it here has that armchair didacticism essential to an integration of what could pass for paradigmatic science. In general, evolution proceeds by variation in an organism’s genetic properties (its “genotype”) manifesting some outward characteristic in the organism, a “phenotype.” This characteristic is then subjected to the trials of natural selection.

24. *Jones*, p. 115, emphases added. This rival to natural selection is attributed to Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, though it had a foundation in common sense even before his formulation of it, roughly contemporary with Darwin’s work. Basically, external pressures would affect the genes so that characteristics acquired from environmental constraints would be inheritable. The model for this is the (false) assumption that the blacksmith’s son will have a genetically determined stronger arm.

It is here revealed that the government has long been dedicated to interplanetary migration of the human species. Changing the human to fit the environment is the technique of power employed to avoid the inevitable extinction implicit in the Darwinian master narrative: "If we succeed, we'll have conquered totally. The human species will be indestructible."²⁵ There is an unsettling ambiguity in the change that this technique achieves. On the one hand, the mutants are biologically distinct from *Homo sapiens*; on the other, they are bred to "represent" the species, to enable humankind (or, some kind of human) to migrate to other territories and thrive. In general, when the mutants ponder their nature, they stress their Otherness. Dr. Rafferty, their creator, accentuates the sameness, their human-ness. They are, after all, his children.

Nowhere is their "humanity" more apparent than when they finally arrive in their "native" environment. Once the mutants' distress about their ultimate purpose is satisfied, they quickly establish themselves as an independent colony, effectively achieving an agrarian society in the image of the American homestead farm. Basal survival – food and shelter – seems assured, but species survival is still an open question. Louis, the patriarch of the colony, is hesitant to view Dieter and Vivian's newborn. Part of the anxiety may be that Louis' wife, Irma, is with child. At last, he "looked. And it was all right." The mutated "normalcy" of the baby is an assurance of the viability of the new species, reinforcing the connection between the reproductively successful nuclear family and the welfare of the species body. Frank takes Louis aside:

"This is the best thing that's happened," Frank said. "Have you considered the alternative? Suppose the baby had been normal – an Earth baby, geared to an Earth environment. Suppose all our progeny reverted. Yes, that's the term. Reversion. Suppose we hadn't been able to pass this on? Suppose we were sports, not true mutants?"

"Well, we're not."

"Thank God for that. The eight of us would have lived out our little life-spans and then died. That would have been the end of the race. Some race."²⁶

25. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-93.

While *Homo sapiens* on Earth have come to the realization that they have lost the battle with the drifters, the Venus mutants illustrate a group that is aware of its success as a viable species. Louis and Frank's use of "scientific" concepts shows that they were evaluating the future of their community and "race" in biological terms, and the newest inhabitants of Venus seem to be poised for ascendancy.

Not so with the native fauna. It has already been pointed out that the Venus mutants were not based upon any Venusian hominid life form, but upon human. But, it is revealed in the last pages that there actually is a native life form, the wuzzle. As Frank and Louis take in the innovations of Dieter's farm, they spy a group of

"... silly looking animals he's got tied up ... what the hell are they for?"

"God knows," Louis said. He leaned into the cabin and said to Dieter: "What are those things standing around out here?"

Loftily, Dieter answered: "That's my herd of wuzzles."

"What are they for? You going to eat them?"

With dignity, Dieter explained: "The wuzzle was the dominant species. Intellectually, it's the most advanced indigenous life-form ... They're going to be our helpers," Dieter revealed sleekly. "I'm teaching that particular herd to perform routine chores. So our minds will be free for constructive planning."²⁷

The formerly dominant life form is now reduced to imprisonment and slavery. And, in line with species migration scenario, the winner of the struggle displaces and replaces the vanquished. When Frank tells the news of the birth to the Cussicks, Nina asks: "'It's healthy?' 'Healthy as a wuzzle,' Frank said. 'In fact, it's the new wuzzle. The replacement wuzzle, a better wuzzle to take the place of the old'."²⁸ So, after the tension over their future is relieved, the Venus mutants are not just a viable species, but clearly the ascendant one. And their behavior toward the wuzzles in particular makes it clear that they are as human as the Earthlings they left behind.

The Earth-born mutants and the wuzzles re-stage the positions of same and Other with an ironic twist. With the mutants, Dick indicates that the only way the Human species can cheat the inevitability of evolutionary

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 194-95.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

demise and extinction is by becoming the Other, and therefore necessarily embracing the notion that our biological uniqueness is secondary to our cultural. Humanity's treatment of the drifters and the mutants' treatment of the wuzzles both reflect the historical realities of the Holocaust, slavery, and European colonization; *Homo sapiens* is depicted as the bully on the block of the interstellar neighborhood.

The family, the success of procreative conjugal arrangements, and care of the children after birth are the concern of various state apparatuses. The discourses of the species body underwritten by the Darwinian master narrative and the paradigm of eugenics are, for the most part, uncritically naturalized. It is a matter of course that the unthreatening nature of the drifters is determined by a public health organization. Until it was unseated by Floyd Jones, Fedgov seemed to be doing the right thing; creature comforts, peace and a modicum of civil liberties were features of their rule. Its major mistake was that it underestimated the emotional yearnings of humanity, the need to feel that they were "striking out," fulfilling the imperative of the migration myth of human evolution.

Myths of the American West in *The World Jones Made*. The migration motif of the Darwinian master narrative is often colored by a spatiality and an ethos that also suggests the historical and imaginative experiences of the American West. Dick's novel uncritically employs two distinct history-based metanarratives which describe and justify settlement on the Frontier. One features the yeoman farmer, discursively explored in Frederick Jackson Turner's vision of a democratic nation with the political and economic enfranchisement of the landowner centered on the homestead or freeholder farm.²⁹ What this myth may lack in narrative content it more than makes up for in prescriptive doctrinal blessing; the agrarian utopia is the ideal expression of what the new nation should become: agrarian, democratic, and harmonious.

In the closing chapter of *The World Jones Made*, a species evolution motif is superimposed on this myth of the American West. Once the mutants land on Venus, they are on their own in a challenging environment, and require reference points to make sense of the new landscape,

29. For detailed description on the character of this cultural myth see Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP 1950 and Leo Marx *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (London: Oxford UP 1964).

so they adopt this agrarian myth. Anchored to the myth icon of the homestead farm, the text spins out its recognizable features. Dieter has domesticated a "dobbin" whose "feet began rhythmically to pound" as it pulls a primitive cart. As the reader follows the motion of the cart and the trip to Dieter's homestead, the topography of the yeoman farm is superimposed on the Venusian geography.

Behind them, Louis' cabin dwindled. He and Irma had single-handedly built it ... The cabin ... was surrounded by areas of cultivated land. The so-called *corn* grew in dense clumps; it wasn't really corn, but it functioned as corn ... Standing glumly in the shed beyond the cabin were a variety of indigenous herbivores, drowsily munching moist hay. A number of species had been collected ... Already, ten types with edible flesh had been catalogued, plus two types secreting drinkable fluids. A gargantuan beast covered with thick hair served as a source of muscle-power. And now the big-footed dobbin that Dieter used to pull his cart.³⁰

Corn, cart and cabin, suggest the rest of the barnyard. They may not call them cows, but they eat like cows; they may not call it milk, but it is secreted from the animals and is drinkable.

This progression can be seen as part of the liberation from Earth, a necessary step on their way to create uniquely Venusian solutions within the framework of their own burgeoning native culture.

None of them really wanted to go on from the point at which they had left off. In actuality they wanted to start from the bottom up. It was not a replica of Earth-civilization that they wanted to create; it was their own typical community, geared to their own unique needs, geared to the Venusian conditions that they wanted.

It had to be agrarian.³¹

But the myth which helps them make sense of the foreign landscape also limits the possible responses to that novel situation. Their unique agrarian solution illustrates the quintessence of the independent yeoman freeholder farm, with the addition of some of the conveniences of its mythic heir, the suburban home: crops, cabins, domesticated animals,

30. *Jones*, pp. 148-49.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

irrigation, sanitation, and electricity. In spite of their declaration to the contrary, a replica of Earth is what they are creating; their successful application of the old metaphor to the new reality would allow nothing else.

A variant of the theme of ethnogenesis inherent in Theodore Roosevelt's historiography of the American West permeates *The World Jones Made*, and it is here that the myths of human evolution overlap with the national myth cluster. Because of its vivid narrative content, Roosevelt's frontier dynamic, described by Richard Slotkin in *Gunfighter Nation*, has had a powerful imaginative and ideological force in society. As author of a series of myth-historiography narratives, notably *The Winning of the West*, Theodore Roosevelt combined the appeal of romance narrative with Social Darwinism and the then current theories of Aryan migration in Europe to describe a myth of origins for the burgeoning country about to embark into "forays" of military imperialism. Slotkin terms the frontier dynamic inherent in this myth a *regeneration through violence*. "According to this myth-historiography, the conquest of the wilderness and the subjugation or displacement of the Native Americans who originally inhabited it have been the means to our achievement of a national identity ..."³²

In Theodore Roosevelt's historiography, the leaders were of "virile" Anglo-Saxon stock. Because of the racist ideology explicitly expressed in this theory, both mythic and historical conflicts took on an Old Testament tinge, expressed in terms of race against race, "in which one side attempts to destroy its enemy root and branch." The only suitable outcome was annihilation of the enemy by "savage warfare," which condones torture as well as the slaughter of non-combatants.³³ The development of the race expressed in this myth-historiography, which embraces Social Darwinism, the theory of ethnogenesis, and interracial conflict where the survival of civilization is in the balance, is among the themes which science fiction has adopted most heartily from the mythic West. And by tapping into the Darwinian master narrative, this version of the American West casts the development of national identity as analogous

32. See Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, pp. 10, 42-43.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

to the evolution of a species body through the dynamics of the struggle for survival.

Jones enters the stage as the harbinger of the Indian warfare frontier ethos; he describes both the drifters' activity and his solution in terms which echo with some of the strains of the Mythic West. As mentioned above, the drifters are the center of Jones' xenophobic *astro-politik*; they are the focal point around which his rebellion against Relativism begins. His interpretation of their arrival on Earth fits the mold of myths of the American West, but presented with a paranoiac back spin which first places earth as the victim/host in the Indian warfare scenario of the regeneration through violence motif. Then the same motif is used against the offending creatures by imbuing the population of Earth with the urge to mount a crusade, annihilating the drifters and at the same time exploring other star systems to find an Earth-like environment. Jones' explanation of the drifters' activity is based upon his unique application of the myth to the "historical" circumstances: the drifters are undergoing a "separation" which will lead ultimately to their "regeneration." And his political program begins with the imposition of this reading on all humanity.

With his relentless energy and vision, Jones preaches his reading of the alien visitation that slakes humanity's thirst for purpose, meaning and hope. Jones' myth-ideology enables him to gather the masses around him by identifying the drifters as invaders and mandating "savage war" on them at home, and by sending out scout ships to exterminate them and look for inhabitable planets. True to the topography of the Mythic West and the theories of development which underwrite it, Earth, the civilized center, is "overpopulated [and] undernourished," corrupted beyond repair, but the universe could supply "[e]ndless resources." If one accepts these mythically corroborated premises – the true nature of the drifters, the corruption of the civilized center, and the bonanza of resources on the other side of the interstellar frontier – then Jones' answer is the only answer: "ON TO THE STARS."³⁴

The multiplicity of cultural myths in *The World Jones Made* may be presented in a more schematized fashion. Three regimes of myth are present, each in a "pure" and a "combinatory" form: the Myth of the Amer-

34. Ibid., pp. 41, 61, 73, 103.

ican West, the Third Reich, and myths of human evolution. However, use of these independently is rare in the novel. More toward the thematic kernel of *The World Jones Made*, are instances where the myths conflate and collude. Icons, plot, and topoi entwine the Third Reich and Theodore Roosevelt's American West in the migration-*Lebensraum* dynamic, the racial-species hatred of savage war and the pogrom against the drifters and the mutants, and in the ethnogenesis subtext, that national character is linked to the struggle for territorial expansion. Little cognitive dissonance is created by an overlap of eugenics and the Third Reich; on the contrary, they support and amplify each other. But the cohabitation between the myth of American identity (American West) and one indicative of an un-American identity (Holocaust) is rather more puzzling.

The solution I suggest is that the Third Reich and Theodore Roosevelt's frontier thesis are distinct applications of the Darwinian master narrative, and where there is a common source in two myth vocabularies, translation and conflation are facilitated. Both call for a migration necessitated by growth, and there is a transforming influence of the process; in both cultural myth clusters there is a sense that whatever doesn't kill us makes us stronger. It is noteworthy that, even though science and history are distinct disciplines, and their respective research is rhetorically incommensurable, at the level of cultural myth, parallel narratives of expansion and development dominate popularly perceived explanations of what makes Americans, American, and what makes humans, human. Educated popularizers have played a role in this, no doubt, so that nation building and national character are subsumed under a popularized Darwinism.

Myths of human evolution and the myths of the American West both seek to answer the question: how did we become what we are? The confluence of these in a science fiction novel alerts us to the complex character of the repertoire of cultural myths that can be called upon in any given society. Darwinism raises the specter of extinction, but gives the possibility of expansion and transformation; the American West is one topos where this possibility was seized, at least in the imagination. The attraction of the storied explanation of identity is complemented by a certain usefulness, social cohesion requires them. But periodic reflection that exposes the cultural myth repertoire to scrutiny is also an essential safeguard if we are to prevent our stories from dominating us.