

精编 英美科幻小说史

(英文版)

王 艳 刘晓娟 许 洋 著

南开大学出版社

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A Survey of British and American Science Fiction

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前 言

科幻小说是西方近代文学的一种新体裁，著名科幻文学研究者达科·苏文将其定义为：“科幻小说就是这样一种文学类型，它的必要的和充分的条件就是陌生化与认知的出场以及二者之间的相互作用，而它的主要形式策略是一种拟换作者的经验环境的富有想象力的框架结构。”¹ 科幻小说在 20 世纪得到空前的发展和繁荣，并与主流文学、文化相融合，发展成为当代西方一种不容忽视的文学和文化现象。美国著名科幻小说家托马斯·迪什(Thomas M. Disch)曾在 1998 年宣称：“科幻小说已经以一种微不足道的或意义深远的，显而易见的或潜移默化的方式渗透到我们的文化之中。”² 在当代的西方世界，科幻小说已成为最受人喜爱的读物之一，学术界对科幻小说的研究也日益升温。《精编英美科幻小说史》旨在向读者介绍西方科幻小说的发展历史、代表作家和经典科幻作品。

本书在编排上具有以下特点：

1. 本书按时间顺序编写，清晰地勾勒了英美科幻小说从起源至今的发展轨迹，介绍了科幻小说发展的各个阶段的历史背景、重要作家和作品，以及科幻小说的特点。

2. 在作家选取上，以各时期、各类型科幻小说的代表作家及其作品影响力为首选原则，并对所选作家的代表作品作较为详细的介绍和评论。

3. 作为科幻文学的重要组成部分，科幻电影在科幻文学领域中的地位不容忽视。本书在最后一章简要介绍了科幻电影的发展轨迹，以及各时期的重要作品。

4. 为使读者了解科幻小说、电影的基本类型和代表作品，掌握科幻小说批评的基本术语，如“Hard SF”“Soft SF”“Space opera”“Utopia SF”“Dystopia SF”“Cyberpunk”等，本书后列有四个附录：①科幻名词解释；②按类别划分的科幻小说代表作家名单；③各类型科幻电影一览表；④历年科幻作品大奖“星云奖”和“雨果奖”的获奖作品和作者的名单，以方便读者做进一步的学习和研究。

此外，为确保语言的准确无误，作者特别邀请了美国朋友 William Graham 对本书的语言进行了认真的修改，以确保本书的质量。

最后要特别提出的是，在本书的写作过程中，作者参考了大量的国内外资料，在此对其作者表示诚挚的谢意！由于本书的篇幅有限，尚有一些知名作家和作品未能包括其中，在此谨表歉意。囿于作者的学识和水平，书中定有可商榷之处，恳请专家和读者指正。

作者

2016年6月

Contents

Chapter One Science Fiction before the Genre	1
1. Context and Early Precursors	1
2. SF in the 19th Century and Early 20th Century.....	8
3. Mary Shelley.....	16
<i>Frankenstein: or, The Modern Prometheus</i>	19
4. H. G. Wells.....	24
<i>The Time Machine</i>	28
<i>The War of the Worlds</i>	32
5. Edward Bellamy.....	38
<i>Looking Backward: 2000-1887</i>	39
Chapter Two The Magazine Era: 1926-1960	43
1. Hugo Gernsback and <i>Amazing Stories</i>	43
2. Golden Age.....	46
3. Isaac Asimov.....	49
<i>Foundation Series</i>	54
<i>I, Robot</i>	61
4. Robert A. Heinlein.....	64
<i>Starship Troopers</i>	70
<i>Stranger in a Strange Land</i>	71
5. Arthur C. Clarke.....	76

	<i>Childhood's End</i>	81
	<i>2001: A Space Odyssey</i>	83
6.	Aldous Huxley	87
	<i>Brave New World</i>	91
7.	A. E. van Vogt	95
	<i>The Voyage of the Space Beagle</i>	102
8.	Ray Bradbury	107
	“Frost and Fire”	114
	<i>Fahrenheit 451</i>	116
9.	Frederick Pohl	121
	<i>The Space Merchants</i>	125
	<i>Homegoing</i>	127
Chapter Three New Wave and its Aftermath: 1960-1980		131
1.	Historical Background	131
2.	The New Wave	136
3.	The Rise of Feminist SF	141
4.	Philip K. Dick	145
	<i>The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch</i>	153
	<i>Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?</i>	154
5.	J. G. Ballard	158
	“The Voices of Time”	162
	“The Impossible Man”	163
6.	Ursula K. Le Guin	166
	<i>The Left Hand of Darkness</i>	176
	<i>The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia</i>	181
7.	Joanna Russ	187

<i>The Female Man</i>	191
“When It Changed”	193
8. James Tiptree Jr./Alice Bradley Sheldon	195
“ <i>The Girl Who Was Plugged In</i> ”	201
“Houston, Houston, Do You Read?”	202
9. Suzy McKee Charnas	205
<i>Holdfast Chronicles</i>	207
Chapter Four SF in the 1980s	211
1. A Brief Surey of the SF in the 1980s	211
2. Cyberpunk	216
3. William Gibson	222
<i>Neuromancer</i>	224
4. Bruce Sterling	230
<i>Islands in the Net</i>	233
5. Orson Scott Card	237
<i>Ender's Game</i>	240
6. Sheri S. Tepper	245
<i>The Gate to Women's Country</i>	248
7. Octavia E. Butler	252
<i>Xenogenesis Trilogy</i>	255
Chapter Five Contemporary SF	259
1. A Brief Surey of Contemporary SF	259
2. Pat Cadigan	265
<i>Synners</i>	268
3. Neal Stephenson	270
<i>Snow Crash</i>	273

4. Kim Stanley Robinson	277
<i>Mars Trilogy</i>	281
5. Joe Haldeman	284
<i>The Forever War Series</i>	288
6. Iain M. Banks	295
<i>Use of Weapons</i>	298
7. Dan Simmons	301
<i>Hyperion Series</i>	303
8. Stephen Baxter	306
<i>Coalescent</i>	310
9. Paul J. McAuley	314
<i>Child of the River</i>	318
<i>The Secret of Life</i>	319
10. Ian McDonald	321
<i>Chaga Saga or Evolution's Shore</i>	324
11. China Mieville	326
<i>Perdido Street Station</i>	329
12. Nicola Griffith	333
<i>Ammonite</i>	335
Chapter Six Science Fiction Film: An Overview	337
Notes and References	349
SF Terms	362
Lists of Major SF Authors by Type	369
Lists of SF Films by Type	375
Nebula and Hugo Award Winners	379

目 录

第一章 早期的科幻小说	1
1. 背景和先驱	1
2. 19 世纪和 20 世纪初的科幻小说	8
3. 玛丽·雪莱	16
《弗兰肯斯坦：或当代的普罗米修斯》	19
4. 赫伯特·乔治·威尔斯	24
《时间机器》	28
《世界大战》	32
5. 埃德华·贝拉米	38
《回顾：2000~1887》	39
第二章 杂志时代：1926~1960	43
1. 雨果·根斯巴克与《惊奇故事》	43
2. 黄金时代	46
3. 艾萨克·阿西莫夫	49
“基地”系列	54
《我，机器人》	61
4. 罗伯特·海因莱因	64
《星船伞兵》	70
《异乡异客》	71
5. 阿瑟·克拉克	76

《童年的终结》	81
《2001：太空漫游》	83
6. 奥尔德斯·赫胥黎	87
《美丽新世界》	91
7. 范·沃尔特	95
《小猎犬号飞船之旅》	102
8. 雷·布莱伯利	107
《冰霜与烈火》	114
《华氏 451 度》	116
9. 弗雷德里克·波尔	121
《超标准人》	125
《回家》	127
第三章 新浪潮及其影响：1960~1980	131
1. 历史背景	131
2. 新浪潮	136
3. 女性主义科幻小说的崛起	141
4. 菲利普·迪克	145
《帕默·艾德里奇的三个烙印》	153
《合成机器人梦见电子羊吗？》	154
5. J. G. 巴拉德	158
《时间话语》	162
《不可能的人》	163
6. 厄休拉·K. 勒奎恩	166
《黑暗的左手》	176
《一无所有》	181
7. 乔安娜·露斯	187

《女性男子》	191
《当世界改变后》	193
8. 小詹姆斯·提普垂/爱丽思·B. 谢尔登	195
《插电的女孩》	201
《休斯敦，休斯敦，你听到吗？》	202
9. 苏兹·麦基·查纳斯	205
“赫德法斯特城”编年史	207
第四章 20 世纪 80 年代的科幻小说	211
1. 20 世纪 80 年代的科幻小说概述	211
2. 赛博朋克	216
3. 威廉·吉布森	222
《神经漫游者》	224
4. 布鲁斯·斯特林	230
《网络岛》	233
5. 奥森·斯科特·卡德	237
《安德的游戏》	240
6. 雪莉·泰珀	245
《通往女性国度之门》	248
7. 奥克塔维亚·巴特勒	252
“异种生殖”三部曲	255
第五章 当代科幻小说	259
1. 当代科幻小说概述	259
2. 帕特·卡蒂甘	265
《合成人》	268
3. 尼尔·斯蒂芬森	270
《雪崩》	273

4. 金·史丹利·罗宾逊	277
“火星”三部曲	281
5. 乔·霍尔德曼	284
“永远的战争”系列	288
6. 伊恩·班克斯	295
《武器浮生录》	298
7. 丹·西蒙斯	301
“海伯利安”系列	303
8. 斯蒂芬·巴克斯特	306
《联合》	310
9. 保罗·麦克沃雷	314
《大河之子》	318
《生命的奥秘》	319
10. 伊安·麦克劳德	321
《查加》	324
11. 柴纳·米耶维	326
《帕迪杜街车站》	329
12. 妮可拉·格里菲斯	333
《菊石》	335
第六章 科幻电影：概述	337
注解和参考文献	349
科幻名词解释	362
科幻小说代表作家名单（按类别划分）	369
各类科幻电影一览表	375
历届“星云奖”和“雨果奖”获奖作品	379

Chapter One

Science Fiction before the Genre

1. Context and Early Precursors

The Scientific Revolution

Science fiction (SF) began in the late Middle Ages, roughly concurrent with the Scientific Revolution, an era associated primarily with the 16th and 17th centuries. The revolution was sparked by the publication of Nicolaus Copernicus'¹ *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres* (1543), in which he proposed the heliocentric theory of the solar system. Upon examining the records of the motions of heavenly bodies, Copernicus contended that the sun was the center of the universe, with the earth and other planets revolving around it. In medieval Europe, people generally accepted the concept that the earth was the center of the universe, and that all other objects moved on circular orbits around it because this geocentric model was consistent both with people's common sense and with the biblical account of the cosmos. Copernicus' heliocentric cosmos became an important

champion for the cause of science in its contest against religious faith, and served as a landmark in western thought. Since then a properly materialist understanding of the universe has percolated through to the general culture.

Another two important figures whose discoveries gave Copernicus' theory more credibility were Johannes Kepler and Galileo Galilei.² Kepler was a German astronomer who concluded in 1609 that the planets moved about the sun in elliptical orbits, not circular orbits as supposed by Copernicus' original model. Galileo's main contributions to the acceptance of the heliocentric system were his mechanics, the observations he made with his telescope, as well as his detailed presentation of the case for the system. The discoveries of Kepler and Galileo challenged Aristotle's geocentric cosmology and marked the paradigm shift of the old Universe into the new.

Kepler's laws of planetary motion and Galileo's mechanics culminated in the work of Isaac Newton, whose laws of universal gravitation combined terrestrial and celestial mechanics into a unified system describable through the use of mathematical formulae.

Admittedly, the great changes at that time took place not merely in the areas of astronomy and mechanics. Similar achievements could also be seen in such diverse fields as optics, biology, medicine, chemistry and other sciences, which altogether challenged the entire system of ancient authority, transforming the longstanding religious comprehension of existence (which was

essentially a magical apprehension of the cosmos), and introduced a new, mathematical, non-magical discourse for science to contemplate. Historically then, science fiction was in large part a response to the cultural shock created by the discovery of humanity's marginal position in a universe fundamentally inhospitable to man.³

SF in the 17th and 18th Centuries

The new discoveries and ideas during the Scientific Revolution expanded people's imagination, and offered people new ways of thinking about the world. Writers of the time captured the shift and filled the imaginative vista in radically new and materialist ways. Johannes Kepler was the first to make his imaginative speculation on the basis of solid science. In his *A Dream, or Lunar Astronomy* (1634), Kepler related a tale of a young Icelander named Duracotus, who travelled to the moon with the aid of a witch and met with some weird inhuman alien life forms. The book includes a detailed scientific speculation as to what life might actually be like on the moon, where each day and each night lasts about two weeks. It is supported by a series of lengthy scientific notes, exhaustively justifying Kepler's speculations with reference to his scientific observations. Some view this book as the first genuine SF novel.

With the great advances in the understanding of the cosmos, science fiction became a vigorous new form of writing in the 17th century. Francis Godwin in his farcical account of *The Man in the*

Moone or, a Discourse of a Voyage Thither by Domingo Gonsales, the Speedy Messenger (1638), playfully blended the new cosmological lore of the scientific revolution and the new geographical knowledge of the age of discovery with the artful fancy of an inventive imagination. In the story, the Spanish protagonist flies to the moon by harnessing a flock of special geese; and once he gets there, the lunar world and occupants are vividly described. Another noticeable early speculative account of lunar voyaging is John Wilkins' earnest essay *The Discovery of a World in the Moon Or, A Discourse Tending to Prove that 'tis Probable There May be Another Habitable World in that Planet* (1638), in which he imaginatively extrapolates from scientific data and proposes that man will one day journey to the moon. Cyrano de Bergerac, in the sprightly and witty lunar voyage *The Other World, or the States and Empires of the Moon* (1657), makes his protagonist fly from France to Canada and then to the Moon by employing a series of imaginative modes of transportation, including a sort of rocket, which transforms the possibility of spaceflight from being merely a fantastic flight of imagination into a scientifically plausible means of transportation.

Although the moon is a common extraterrestrial venue, the more wide-ranging cosmos is also approached. The female protagonist of Margaret Cavendish's *The Description of a New World, Called the Blazing-World* (1666) finds a new planet attached to the Earth at the North Pole and is eventually made its empress. Eberhard Christian Kindermann relates a journey to