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## **Investigating Heterotopia and Post-Apocalypse in J.G. Ballard's *The Drowned World* (1962)**

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## **Dedication**

To my dear parents for believing in me and making me the best person I can be.

To my lovely sisters, nieces and nephews who make my life brighter everyday

To my dear friends Baaless, and to my friend Ms. Cherifi Zohra, who put up with my craziness through all these years, with whom I spent the last five years and learned to grow as a person and who I won't trade them for the entire world.

**Zerouala Mohamed Ben Youssef**

## **Dedication**

To my parents and family members who were the support, especially my grandmother, may god have mercy on her soul.

to my wonderful Baaless friends, my second family.

**Alleg Mohamed Taki Eddine**

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## **Abstract**

The Foucauldian notion of heterotopia has been a debatable subject of study, especially when paired with other concepts and theories in literature. The present dissertation investigates how heterotopia matches perfectly with the concept of post-apocalypse when reading J.G. Ballard's novel *The Drowned World* (1962). Furthermore, it explores the concept of post-apocalypse in regards to its themes and characteristics. On the other hand, this dissertation also examines the Foucauldian concept of heterotopia and how it originated, with a study of the different sites that Foucault deems heterotopic. Hence, the current research undertakes an analytical approach to study the concepts of heterotopia and post-apocalypse in the novel due to the accessibility it offers in reading the setting of the novel and also to the protagonist and the other characters present in *The Drowned World*. This study ultimately concludes that because heterotopia is labelled a placeless place, in addition to its features listed by Foucault, provides a useful insight in reading the importance of the city of London in the novel, in addition to the new characteristics that can be analysed in relation to the protagonist.

**Keywords:** Heterotopia, Michel Foucault, *The Drowned World*, J.G. Ballard, Post-apocalypse.

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## **General Introduction**

Since the dawn of history, mankind has always tried to communicate, whether with each other or even by leaving remnants for the coming generations. Literature is regarded as one of those mediums that humans use to prove their existence and to transfer their thoughts and emotions into a written form. Literature would then go to establish itself as the mirror of life. It is the tool that humans use to comment on the social or political aspects, it is also a means for people to share their emotions, discuss their beliefs, and convey their opinions. Literature, like many other forms of art, has witnessed several changes in its cycle most notably in the period of the first World War. During this period, there had been a shift from a general optimistic vibe towards a more dark and pessimistic feeling especially after the struggles and pain that the shocking horrors of the war had left behind.

The aftermath of the war was a precedent in history. The world has never seen destruction and chaos on that scale. Literature like many other forms of expression had witnessed a great shift in content. Writers embraced the pessimism they drew upon from real life. Hence, dystopian literature emerged. It is the genre of literature that is concerned with tyranny and oppression. In a dystopian setting, the government has total control over its citizens, deeming free will and freedom of speech as taboos that should never be even mentioned. Dystopian worlds are brutal and dark, often unpleasant to be in.

Dystopian literature started growing in popularity. Consequently, gaining a wave of attention and an audience which led to an emergence of several subgenres. With the stellar advancements the world has witnessed in science, literature followed suit. Therefore, the science-fiction genre of imaginative literature that explores concepts such as technological advancements and space exploration in addition to time travel came to light. This genre in

particular took the world by storm due to the novelty of the ideas and techniques that it presented. Notwithstanding the excitement people had for the scientific leap that was achieved in the century, other people believed in the bad side of this leap. Some people saw this advancement as being the death of humanity, leading to the emergence of post-apocalypse. Post-apocalypse is the genre of fiction that relates to the period after the world has ended, where societies try to rebuild the ashes of the past.

*The Drowned World* (Ballard 1962) is considered as a founding pillar in the post-apocalyptic genre of literature. It sparks the interest of many critics to analyse it due to the varying concepts that the novel exhibits. Furthermore, Ballard's work can be interpreted in regards to different concepts of literature. In this regard the post-apocalyptic theme is the ideal way to interpret this work since the novel is set in a near future setting that is ravaged by a natural phenomenon.

There exist several writers who embrace the genre of post-apocalyptic fiction, like Margaret Atwood, Cormac McCarthy, and J.G. Ballard among others. These writers contribute to the genre differently. J.G. Ballard is the writer of *The Drowned World* (1962) This novel is regarded as a harbinger of climate change. It tells the story of a ravaged Europe consisting only of lagoons that hide beneath a remnant from the past, the city of London. Ballard includes several literary concepts in the novel, several researchers believe that Ballard celebrates the concept of heterotopia that was presented by the French thinker Michel Foucault in *The Drowned World*. It is a concept that describes spaces as being disturbing, inclusive, and transforming. These spaces are referred to as the 'other'.

Patrick A. McCarthy explores the novel from the concept of allusions. In his article entitled *Allusions in Ballard's "The Drowned World"* (1997), McCarthy suggests that Ballard drew inspirations from the likes of T.S Eliot, and James Joyce the feeling of disdain to modernist beliefs. McCarthy adds that Ballard's use of allusion which is a tool used excessively in modernism associates him with the writers of the movement. *Reading Climate Change in J.G. Ballard* (2013) by Jim Clarke examines the novel from an eco-literacy perspective. Clarke states in his article that Ballard wrote his famous novel *The Drowned World* and *The Crystal World* in a time when climate change was not even given the name. Clarke also argues that both novels take a climatological approach towards apocalyptic dystopia. Identity is a key theme in the post-apocalyptic setting, most characters find themselves lost and have to search for their true nature. Megan Mendell's dissertation *Space, Place and Identity in Yevgeni Zamyatin's We and J.G. Ballard's The Drowned World* (2006) explores the theme thoroughly. She asserts that the characters in both novels gain a new self-awareness due to their exposure to nature. Mendell further defends that the character of Kerans in the novel finds a new identity in relation to nature, because it offers protection he did not find privately. Where most readings on *The Drowned World* are focused on the interpretations of notions such as apocalyptic, post-apocalyptic and dystopian elements, Christopher James Duffy on the other hand attempts to explore the novel from an entirely different view. In his book, *Heterotopic Spaces in Selected Works of J.G. Ballard* (2015) Duffy tries to investigate the impact of Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia on the different works of Ballard. He focused on the physical environment and the psychological effects of this environment.

These aforementioned studies present a variety of scopes from which Ballard's stellar novel *The Drowned World* can be seen from. However, the different studies conducted on the novel seem to neglect the relationship Ballard builds and the unfamiliarity he bridges between the two concepts of heterotopia and post-apocalypse. Hence, this dissertation attempts to present a new perspective on how the author bridges the gap between the two concepts and merges them in the same work. Interpretations on Ballard's novel focus mainly on the theory of the apocalypse and post-apocalypse, neglecting the importance of the spatial study that helps the reader better understand the novel. Therefore, this dissertation tries to link both concepts in relation to the characters and the setting provided in the work of Ballard.

The aim of this research is to explain and investigate the relationship between post-apocalypse and dystopian fiction, and between post-apocalypse and the concept of heterotopia. And to demonstrate the role of heterotopia in rendering the postapocalyptic world of Ballard's novel. Furthermore, this research includes both the characters and the setting in dealing with the novel, and how both theories of post-apocalypse and heterotopia are achieved in the novel. Moreover, this work tries to clarify and understand the ambiguity surrounding the relationship between both theories in the novel. In addition, this dissertation also examines Michel Foucault's definition of heterotopia, with a thorough reading on the different heterotopic sites that he presented. This dissertation also aims at explaining how heterotopia is a perfect lens to read *The Drowned World* for the new perspectives that heterotopia offers in regards to reading post-apocalypse. Mainly in regards to Ballard's London and its heterotopic nature.

This dissertation explores the novel of J.G. Ballard *The Drowned World* with an attempt to examine heterotopia and post-apocalypse, and the new lenses that studying post-apocalypse through heterotopia presents in regards to further understanding the novel. Therefore, the main

question of this study is: To what extent does heterotopia, as an analytical tool, help us get insight into the author's postapocalyptic vision?

in an attempt to answer this question, a set of other questions must be raised:

- 1- What is the relationship between dystopia and post-apocalypse?
- 2- What is heterotopia? And how does it relate to post-apocalypse?
- 3- How are heterotopia and post-apocalypse concepts achieved in *The Drowned World*?

This dissertation suggests a number of hypotheses in an attempt to answer these questions:

- 1- Dystopia and post-apocalypse are related by being unified with the genre of science fiction since the post-apocalypse is a subgenre of science fiction that is set in a dystopian universe.
- 2- The concept of heterotopia was first introduced by the French thinker Michel Foucault, it is related to the study of space. Heterotopia is defined as sites that mirror and distort at the same time. Heterotopia and post-apocalypse are related in the way that they portray the world, a post-apocalyptic world is heterotopic because it exists and at the same time it does not.
- 3- Heterotopia in *The Drowned World* is mainly achieved through the character of Kerans, and London, the sunken city. The themes of despair and allusions which are recurrent in post-apocalypse help the writer to illustrate better how London is considered a placeless place. post-apocalypse in *The Drowned World* is achieved by how Ballard portrays Europe in the division of lagoons. Also, the theme is achieved through characters such as Dr. Kerans and Colonel Riggs.

This study follows an analytical approach to examine this literary work with respect to Michel Foucault's heterotopia. This concept can be studied from different views due to the fact that although Foucault presented multiple real-world sites that can be regarded as heterotopic sites, there still exists a confusion amongst scholars on the true nature of what consists a heterotopia. Therefore, this study explores the concept with the aid of the post-apocalypse in literature.

This dissertation is made up of three chapters. The first one is devoted to examining the concepts of dystopia, the definition, characteristics, the rise of the dystopian literature, and the shift from utopia to dystopia. It also explores the concept of post-apocalypse, with regards to the characteristics and features of the concept. The second chapter deals with the concept of heterotopia by Michel Foucault and how it was presented, in addition to the different sites that form heterotopia. The third chapter provides an analysis of J.G. Ballard's novel *The Drowned World* by understanding how heterotopia is achieved through the theme of post-apocalypse.

## **Chapter 1: Framing Dystopia and Post-apocalypse in a Theoretical Context**

### **Introduction:**

Ever since the human race existed on planet Earth, they have been looking for ways not only to communicate. But, to leave a trace for the people who proceed them to know of their existence. Many ways of self-expression were found and invented by our kind. Firstly, to communicate and to leave a legacy behind. Art and literature are the most famous ways that the human kind found its calling.

Literature saw its most substantial change, along with the rest of the world, after the first World War broke, bringing the world into utter chaos. The effect that the war had on almost every aspect of life certainly did not exclude the ways people expressed themselves. With the end of the World War came the beginning of a new genre in Literature, dystopian fiction. This chapter, therefore, aims at exploring this genre of literature, it also aims at investigating what distinguishes dystopian fiction from other literary genres. Moreover, this chapter will also try to identify the post-apocalyptic genre of fiction in literature and its relation to dystopian fiction.

### **1.An Introduction to Dystopian Fiction:**

Dystopia can be identified as the genre of fiction that describes a fictional world that is ruled by a state of a totalitarian regime. This setting often presents prominent social issues. The origin of dystopia can be traced taking into account the influence of its counterpart, utopia.

Dystopia was first coined by John Stuart Mill in the British parliament in 1860, referring to the fall of the economy and lack of freedom (Ashley). Dystopian fiction distinguishes itself with a set of elements such as despair and lack of hope. A dystopian setting is often regarded as uncomfortable, unsettling, and very disturbing to be in. Mainly because it depicts the worst state humans can reach in the lust for absolute power and dominance. The genre sheds the light on the misfortunes of the human race when power is reserved to those who are fortunate enough to be born in a rich environment, and ultimate sufferance to those unfortunate people who have to work their way through from the ground.

## **1.2 Characteristics of Dystopian fiction:**

While dystopian literature shares many features with its neighboring literary genres of the likes of apocalyptic fiction, some distinct characteristics set it apart. A dystopian setting usually comes from a traumatic and disturbing background (the aftermath of a war, natural disaster, manmade disaster). Also, dystopian settings in literature tend to depict a society where less fortunate classes such as middle and lower, experience harsh living conditions than those of many fortunes who are regarded as the higher class, because of bureaucracy and tyranny, “When humans begin to be treated like machines which only process information to obtain or to anticipate a certain result, the so-called “end product” will be more often than not, a dystopian society.” (Dima Laza 2)

Therefore, a dystopian setting can be described as a land of heaven for the fortunate higher classes, and a living hell to those who are less unfortunate who were born and ruled out by their society as a lower class.

## **1.3 Exploring Dystopian Societies in Literature:**

Dystopian societies tend to be extreme in their system of government, meaning either there is no apparent governing power at all, or a tyrant and oppressive regime as a sole governor in contrast. Cormac’s McCarthy *The Road* (2006) is a dystopian novel that exhibits no clear governing system, people with enough food and supplies to survive the harsh world of McCarthy are the people who possess and execute power. In contrast, George Orwell’s *1984* (1949) represents an oppressive governing rule that is comprised of totalitarianism, which means that the state has unlimited authority over its people. Moreover, dystopian societies are often divided by certain criteria such as intelligence, wealth, and abnormal abilities. In Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), people are divided in Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon. *Divergent* (2011) by Veronica Roth divides society into factions: Dauntless represents the brave, Amity represents the kind, Erudite highlights the intelligent people, Abnegation who depicts the selfless people, and Candor which shows people who are honest.

The dominant aspect in a dystopian society is propaganda which is primarily initiated by the totalitarian government to drive people to believe that salvation exists only in the hands of the government. Furthermore, dystopian settings are usually set in the future, hence the

technology in the world is far more advanced than what we have today, “ These two fictions—and many others in this same vein—give the fear of autonomous technology its most obvious and unambiguous form: the machine literally becomes man's master.” (Beauchamp 59)

#### **1.4 The Characteristics of a Dystopian Protagonist:**

The dystopian protagonist has many distinguishable sets of characteristics that separate him from other literary protagonists. A dystopian protagonist is often stranded in the world he lives in and finds it a tough task to escape. George Orwell’s leading character in his famous novel *1984* Winston Smith can be seen as a perfect example of this. Being a typical dystopian protagonist, he faces constant struggles in the society he finds himself living amongst, which leads him to look for ways to escape this tough situation.

The protagonist in a dystopian setting has a firm belief that the way the society that he is residing is not on the right path. He believes that there is something wrong with his people. the protagonist in Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985), Offred, embodies this very same concept. Offred believes that women should have equal rights to men, and attempts to fight for her belief. By the same token, the dystopian hero through their perspective, help the reader arrive at a coherent understanding of the downsides of the dystopian world they are living in. The Man from Cormac’s McCarthy *The Road* helps the reader understand what it is like to be trapped in a world where if you do not kill, you are most likely going to be killed. (ReadWriteThink)

#### **1.5 The Different Types of Control in Dystopian Fiction:**

A totalitarian government usually leads its citizens to believe that the way they are treated cannot be found in any other place in the world, leading them towards the assumption that they are living their best life which signifies a perfect embodiment of total government control. However, there exist other forms of power within this genre.

Corporate control is the regime that evolves around big corporations having complete control over the lives of people. The notorious Umbrella Corporation<sup>1</sup> is a perfect example of this type of control. These corporations operate thanks to advertisements and media influence.

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from the famous video game horror series Resident Evil, Umbrella Corp is a notorious drug company that is responsible for a global pandemic that resulted in a virus spreading known as the T-Virus to control the world.

These manipulative means lead the general public into believing that corporations are the saviours of humanity. *The Running Man* (1982) by Stephen King explores this type of control through the main protagonist Ben Richards, when he accepts a dangerous game of survival, however this game is manipulated by media to depict the participants as savages and scary.

Bureaucratic control is the type of control that involves people being brainwashed into blindly following the government. Where the regime bans basic human rights and limits the freedom of expression to persecute any ideas of revolution or rebellion. Inspired by many real-world events that follow the same path, this type of control exhibits a dominant place in dealing with dystopian fiction.

Dystopian fiction commonly uses a near future setting. Therefore, technology in dystopian settings is far more advanced than that of today. As a result, this leap of scientific advancement can even beat the human race and control it. The type of control is referred to as technological control. In such setting, computers and robots take control over society and tend to exclude the human race from the government. *The Terminator* (1985) by Randall Frakes is the perfect embodiment of technological control, his novel depicts a ravaged world dominated by robots and computers.

Psychological or religious control is another type of dominance in dystopian fiction. Those people who hold power and dominance tend to use religion and shape it in their own favour to convince people that this is the divine reason they are born to serve, which makes those who even think of disobeying being labelled as satanists and as embracers of the devil. (ReadWriteThink) Whereas a psychological control focuses more on an ideology that is shared by a certain group of people who believe that they have finally decoded the secret of life, therefore they label people who disagree with them as savages and weak-minded. George Orwell's novels like *1984*, *Animal Farm* (1945) represent these two types albeit to a lesser degree.

With all this being said, dystopian fiction depicts a governing system that is in most parts considered totalitarian, which means that those who are in power believe that there is no other

alternative other than deceiving people into thinking that they are living their best lives, using means such as media and limiting the personal freedom of thinking to achieve their goals.

There exists a plethora of ways to control societies. Corporate control is the type of control that includes corporations dominating power through advertisements and products with the help of media. In addition, bureaucratic control explores the idea of a government limiting the existence of freedom, severely punishing thinking or feeling or even actions that may hint to freewill. They see their people as marionettes that can be controlled as they wish to control them. Furthermore, a society where humans are seen as inferior due to the rapid advancement of science and technology is labelled as a technologically controlled society. In this setting, science has advanced so far to the point that it turned against the human race. With the help of artificial intelligence, people are no longer needed in the government. Instead, they are forced to obey the rules of the machines and their orders or face the imminent faith of death. Finally, religious and psychological control is another form of governing in dystopian settings. As the name suggests, societies are governed either by a religious cult that imposes strict regulations on people, or blindly following an ideology that they believe that is going to be the solution to every problem.

## **1.6 The Rise of Dystopian Fiction:**

To adequately trace the history of dystopia, we must first take a look at the neighbouring genre that is utopia. Utopia is considered as the genre that gave life to dystopia. However, defining utopia itself is a very difficult task. Due to the sheer amount of definitions that it possesses. In 1516, Sir Thomas More<sup>1</sup> coined the term, translating it from the Greek word *ou topos* which translates to no place (British library). He wanted to create a fictional world where crime and injustice do not exist at all, hence imaginary. Ruth Levitas explains the difficulty of defining Utopia as:

More than more academics, Scholars in utopian studies suffer from lack of agreement and clarity on the central term of their subject-matter. No definitions,

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas More was an English lawyer, social philosopher, author, statesman, and noted Renaissance humanist.

set of definitions or general characterizations have proved to be lucid, free from sticking problems of inclusions or exclusions and capable of winning relative consensus. (qtd. in Kechida 31)

While More is regarded as the person who coined the term utopia, the origins trace back to Plato. In his work *The Republic* (376 BC) Plato discusses the idea of several men arguing on what is considered as just and what is considered as justice. It is a work on individual morals that serve as an allegory on personal morals and standards. On the other hand, dystopia represents a society in which everything has gone wrong, it is the embodiment of a bad place. First coined by John Stuart Mill<sup>1</sup> in 1868 in the House of Commons, "It is, perhaps, too complimentary to call them Utopians, they ought rather to be called dys-topians, or caco-topians. What is commonly called Utopian is something too good to be practicable, but what they appear to favor is too bad to be practicable."(OED). Though his perception is different from that of what dystopia is today. He refers to the social-economical system of dystopia feeling more natural than that of utopia. In the sense that utopia was too good to be true, which the same cannot be said about dystopia.

The use of the dystopia in literature did not appear until about 50 or more years later. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, just before the first world war broke out, there was a constant feeling of anxiety and concern over the situation that the world was experiencing, and pessimistic predictions on where it was going to end up with. Jack London's *Iron Heel* (1907) prophesied the breaking out of the war. The novel follows the story of America being controlled by a system of oligarchy, and how the people reacted and fought against this system of government. While *Iron Heel* can be considered as one of the first dystopian modern writings, the genre was established by Yevgeni Zamyatin's *We* (1924), the novel takes place in a near-future setting, 29<sup>th</sup> century. It follows the story of an engineer called D-503 who lives in a totalitarian city, One State. Although he upholds a respectable position in society, he and his kind are not considered as humans but only referred to with numbers. As the story unfolds, D-503 records a diary of the events that occur to him, he starts to construct his own ideas and feelings later in the story. The connotation

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<sup>1</sup> John Stuart Mill was an English philosopher, political economist, and civil servant. He contributed widely to social theory, political theory, and political economy.

of using 'we' is that the diary he was recording represents not only his ideas and emotions, but that of all the people he was involved with.

Before *We*, many other utopian writings included some aspects of what later became known as dystopian fiction, albeit to a lesser degree. *We* sets the ground for a dark, enigmatic and often times totalitarian setting for novels that proceeded it which contributed in enlarging the genre with more darker predictions for the future.

Consequently, after the two world wars came to a tragic end, societies still lived in constant fear of almost everything, the two wars really highlighted the lines mankind can cross without taking any consideration to the consequences. However, this was the age of technology, as time progressed, technology evolved as well. Societies became more industrial, rural areas became a sight of rarity if not extinction all together. As a result, science fiction was created, which is a genre of speculative fiction that imagines a futuristic world with advanced science.

### **1.7 The State of Present Dystopia:**

Contemporary dystopia cannot be judged by the same standard as its predecessor. While the old vision of dystopia was bided with a set of features that distinguish it from other types of literature. Contemporary dystopia on the other hand expands and merges with multiple other genres of literature, creating a hybrid space that makes it almost an impossible task to define the concept of contemporary dystopia. Therefore, the classical definition of dystopia can safely be regarded as expired when interpreting contemporary dystopia.

Dystopia has seen a huge shift over the course of the years. From exploring the themes of war and disasters, to a shift towards natural disasters and contagious deadly viruses. While dystopia embraces cynicism and despair, many contemporary writings moved towards a bleak of hope, a positive look towards the future. However, after the events of 9/11 people were brought back to the feelings of the past. Extremists led many people to live in a never-ending cycle of anxiety. In addition, the humongous rapid advancement of technology helped to spread the belief that artificial intelligence will soon take over the world or that simply the world is slipping to idleness.

To sum up with, contemporary dystopia is vastly different from that of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While the old version of dystopia touch on clear ideas, the contemporary version tends to

submerge and expand towards other neighboring genres. There are many contributing factors that led to this shift in the genre. The aftermath of the war being a leading cause. With the new generation having not witnessed the horrors of war, contemporary writers decide to expand to other convoluting issues in the world. Nevertheless, when the attack on the World Trade Center happened, it brought the world straight back to where it was almost 80 years ago. People were panicked, thousands of deaths and injuries, and the world started declining towards despair and disbelief which lead many writers to take inspiration from the events and portray it in their stories.

### **1.8 The Shift from Utopia to Dystopia:**

As stated earlier, utopia was first to emerge, then was followed by dystopia. Throughout the years, the world as a whole and the literary medium in particular experienced an ongoing shift from the positive vibes of utopia to the ugly mess of dystopia, due to many reasons.

First, the aftermath of the two world wars. After the two wars people started seeing the true nature of people when it comes to greed, and survival. They realised that humanity is nothing more than a costume. Many people lost their lives, and others lost their loved ones, leaving millions with injuries, both physical and psychological (UN). It is safe to say that the wars had the biggest impact on the shift. In addition, the massive leap in technological advancements, industries were becoming mainstream, leaving rural areas as a period from the past. The technological advancements that the century had seen were unprecedented, which led many to believe that this could possibly backfire, and advancements would be the doom of the human race. Also, the rise of the absurdism movement had a huge role to play in the shift. People came to a conclusion that the world is meaningless and arbitrary, hence the embracement of despair and hopelessness.

All in all, since dystopia is a relatively new concept, it cannot be defined without its counterpart, utopia. Throughout history and in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a huge shift from the utopian optimism towards a dystopian pessimism due to many reasons. The two world wars had a massive impact on the psyche of people which resulted in a feeling of despair and a sense of being lost. Moreover, the industrial shift took a toll on people because it was unprecedented.

## **2. Beyond the End of The World, Post Apocalypse:**

For decades there have been speculations about the end of the world. The tales of impending destruction and battle for life inevitably interest people. While apocalyptic fiction has been a common genre for a long time, post-apocalyptic fiction is still a fairly infant genre. A little distorted may be the line from apocalyptic to post-apocalyptic literature. The only distinction is that the destruction of earth is happening within the apocalyptic world. Whereas the post-apocalypse is about the events following a massively catastrophic event, where survivors have to get used to a completely new way of life and try to rebuild their society.

### **2.1 An Overview of Post-Apocalyptic Fiction:**

Post-apocalyptic literature is set in a world or a civilisation following such a catastrophe. The timeline can be occurring shortly after the catastrophe, reflecting on the condition or mindset of the people who survived the disaster, or even longer to trace the aftermath of the catastrophe and how people have adapted since. Often incorporating the idea that the life of pre-disaster civilisation has been ignored. Claire P. Curtis suggests that "Postapocalyptic fiction exists at a crossroads...between science fiction, horror, and Utopia[n] and dystopia[n] concepts." (7) Post-catastrophic books often depict the outcome of a catastrophic incident that can range from nuclear warfare, plague, extraterrestrial invasion, impact case, global disruption, dysgenics (genes), supernatural phenomenon, extreme climate change, and ecological collapse or some other disaster you might imagine.

Mary Shelley wrote her post-apocalyptic novel *The Last Man* in 1826. The work is regarded as the first written post-apocalyptic book in science fiction literature. Shelley's book is notable because it was published at a time where people knew little to nothing about atomic bombs, nuclear power, or other man-made mass destruction techniques. Plague is also a significant theme in the genre. A tragedy is caused by a devastating plague in the gothic short story of Edgar Allan Poe, *The Masque of the Red Death* (1842). H. G. Wells is one of the early established writers in the genre of science fiction, he predicted many events that took place years after his works. For example, in his short story *A Dream of Armageddon* (1901) he shows a real concern about scientific advancements' disruptive potential. H. G. Wells predicts

the creation of an atomic bomb, in the novel *The World Set Free* written in 1913 and published in 1914, and the use of nuclear power plants. He portrays a devastating nuclear war which will wipe human civilization out of the planet to allow the rest of mankind to build up a new and more civilized society. (Parrish)

For most of their works, science fiction writers have expressed fears and worries for society. Looking back at the history of post-apocalyptic literature, we are actually moving through the nineteenth-century period to the reality of human worries and concerns. As mentioned above, several classic pieces of post-apocalyptic fiction of the 19th and early 20th centuries use the plague threat as a leitmotif. In literature, the topic has been turned into fear of a laboratory-artificial virus. However, general pandemic concern has held its position. In the 1950s, post-apocalyptic literature reflecting humanity started to grow after a nuclear holocaust. This fictional representation is definitely tied to the widespread fear of nuclear weapons.

Our current situation is overcome by being aware of the danger, worrying about it, being unafraid to talk about it, to share it, to discuss it. Threats such as nuclear war and climate change are present in modern post-apocalyptic literature, the theoretical worlds of fiction are suitable for exploring a future through open social discourse. The post-apocalyptic literature allows us to explore the concerns, fears and anxieties of different societies. The post-apocalyptic fiction often represents concerns of nuclear weapons, pandemics, ecocatastrophes, overreaching technology, totalitarianism, religious extremism. (Houfková 61)

## **2.2 The Characteristics of Post-Apocalyptic Fiction:**

The consequences of a catastrophic event are often the center focus in post-apocalyptic novels. Although, writers devote a portion of their work to explain what life was like before the apocalypse to give readers a reference point. Post-apocalyptic fiction tends to have certain characteristics that set it apart from apocalyptic fiction, and other forms of fiction as well.

One of the main characteristics that distinguish the post-apocalyptic genre is the brutality that mankind can possess when it comes to survival. This genre of fiction highlights the worst of humanity whether it is killing, looting or even cannibalism. *The Road* (2007) By Cormac McCarthy, and *Metro 2033* By Dmitry Glukhovsky (2005) are the best examples in which this idea is well represented. Also, the technological advancements play a big part of post-

apocalyptic fiction, often times writers in this genre try to highlight the shortcomings of the technological leap, leading their readers to believe that this leap may actually be the doom of the human race. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* (1968) by Philip K. Dick is a prime example of the mentioned characteristic.

### **2.3 The Different Settings of Post-Apocalypse in Fiction:**

In the post-apocalyptic genre of literature, writers tend to have various visions on how the world is formulated. First, there is the type where all surviving people use firearms and tools of destruction to survive, this type embodies the Darwinian concept of survival for the fittest. In this setting, everyone is hostile, rendering survival as a top priority. This setting is often referred to by critics as last man standing and is most common in the settings where braindead people that are usually referred to as zombies are present. Moreover, writers such as Kass Morgan choose to tackle the post-apocalypse differently, Morgan interprets the genre through rebuilding and reconstructing where people come together in an attempt to restore civilisation using the remnants of the past. This is embodied in her novel *The 100* (2014). Thereafter, in post-apocalypse fiction, some settings are distinguishable by limiting the danger outside of a safe area. This type is referred to as the city of evil. It denotes that the threat lays beyond a fortified place, or city. *The Hunger Games* (2008) by Suzanne Collins can be exemplified in this type of post-apocalyptic fiction. (PA Fiction)

### **2.4 Features of Post-Apocalyptic Fiction:**

Literary genres tend to enjoy a sense of variety when it comes to features, each literary genre is distinguishable by applying a set of different elements that makes the genre special and recognizable even from other similar literary genres. The post-apocalyptic literature can be distinguishable in literature through seven main features.

First, the artistic feature. Post-apocalyptic literature provides readers with an aesthetic, creative and inventive image of the world even when it is dark and ravaged. Writers of the genre tend to give their settings a sort of ambience that is both unsettling but also pleasing to describe. Also, post-apocalyptic writings have an informative feature, meaning that they tell the story even outside of the plot, whether it is through description of places, or moods of characters among others, this type of fiction expands knowledge of the real world and the comprehension of the

reader. Moreover, post-apocalyptic literature shapes the system of beliefs and values for the reader and enhances their imagination. This is known as the formative function. In addition, the realistic evocative feature is the use of rational language and terminology to give readers an impression of realism. Adding to this, post-apocalyptic literature educates people in the fields of history, politics, ecology. Consequently, Informing the readers on what the world used to be like before it was doomed this feature is called educative. As a conclusion, post-apocalyptic and dystopian genres have become very common among people, with various iterations of the consequences of the end of the world. Including, but not limited to, vampires, zombies, and alien invasion books or movies. Since they tackle new creatures that trigger new fears.

Post-apocalyptic literature is seeing an unprecedented growth of popularity. Whether it is books like *The Road* (2006), *World War Z* (2006) and *Things We Didn't See Coming* (2009), or movies like *The Book of Eli* (2010) and *Dawn of the Dead* (2004). People are intrigued by the idea of the end of the world and what that may result in should it ever occur in the real world. People expect to stop doomsday altogether. Yet sometimes they also wonder about it. What would that feel like? What would spark it? Will it be everyone's end or survivors remain? And what is it like for those lucky survivors? These are hard questions to address, partly what makes the genre so popular. To discover the mystery. (Houfková 63)

### **Conclusion:**

Dystopian literature is labeled with its tyrannical nature and lack of freedom as it serves as a pessimistic portrayal of economic failure. It appeared first during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, forging an imaginary world controlled by a totalitarian regime where everything is being monitored in society, even thoughts and emotions.

Dystopian literature enjoys a rich set of elements that set it apart from the other genres in literature. Having a world that is based on a tragic background is one of those elements. Dystopian fiction also tries to use tragedy as a dominant feeling in the world to portray a sense of despair and hopelessness. Throughout its history, several mainstream writers embraced the movement and contributed to its growth. Eric Arthur Blair, or literary known as George Orwell is regarded as the face of dystopia, his 1949's novel *1984* is regarded as the perfect resemblance of dystopia in fiction. Others also contributed to the genre, the likes of Margret Atwood,

H.G.Wells, and Aldous Huxley all had a big role to play when it comes to enriching the genre of dystopia.

Dystopia throughout the years branched into many other subgenres, one of the most common genres in literature especially in recent times is post-apocalypse. The genre of literature that deals with the aftermath of the end of the world, is a mixture of science fiction merged with social, economic and political advancements, it provides a connection between a potential future and the current state earth and humanity. Also, it tells the readers that their decisions and experiences lead to the future. The reader has a great opportunity to examine the dreams of the future that they want to become true, and how their actions lead to that future. Like other genres of literature, post-apocalyptic fiction enjoys a rich set of characteristics. For example, post-apocalyptic fiction is usually brutal in its nature, depicting the true nature of man when it comes to survival. In addition, the post-apocalypse genre is witnessing an unprecedented growth whether it is in fiction, enriched by themes of undead people and deadly viruses, or other forms of media such as movies and video games.

## **Chapter Two: Understanding the Concept of Heterotopia**

### **Introduction**

Michel Foucault introduced the concept of heterotopia to the world in his famous lecture *Of Other Spaces* (1967). In this lecture, Foucault discussed the meaning of space and highlighted the different spaces that can be interpreted and analysed. Heterotopia seems to follow the same pattern of utopia and dystopia. Hence utopia refers to a place that is enjoyable and safe, and dystopia refers to a place that is enigmatic and dangerous. Heterotopia can be regarded as a place that is different, it exists in a context of its own. In contextualizing heterotopia, Foucault introduced six principles which set the ground for the concept. Moreover, Foucault gave many real-life examples that can be considered as being heterotopic spaces, like cemeteries and gardens. In addition, heterotopia shares some features with dystopia and utopia, and can be considered as utopian debris.

### **1. Towards an Understanding of Heterotopia:**

Heterotopia is not an easy concept to grasp despite the many examples provided by either Foucault or the different interpretations that were provided by critics in an attempt to clarify what is the meaning that the concept upholds. Although Foucault demonstrates the features of

heterotopias in his text *Of Other Spaces* (1967), he does not distinctly mention its effects. Thus, his definition may imply either defiant or disciplinary, it surely describes the realm of space, the relationships between these spaces, and the distinction between a place and a non-place.

Foucault considered heterotopias places that usually disturb life's normalcy. Places other than natural tend to bring improvements to the community. Foucault indicates that heterotopias are nothing but positive, that are the effective products of a society. Such spaces or locations are places where social organisation takes place, and public policies fall into effect. Heterotopia can also be defined as a "economized public life" (Dehaene and Caeter 4) political problem where these other places are regained in post-civil society. Heterotopias are believed to be locations that somehow reflect the weaknesses of social spaces.

Foucault clearly discusses the issue of emplacement and questions the space adequacy. According to Foucault, demography is the prime example that describes the problem of place. It is regulated by society's multiple conflicting impulses (private-public, work-leisure, family). This may indicate that these spaces have not experienced desacralization, as Foucault says, and spaces that combine socio-political qualities and fantasy illusion. (qtd in. Dehaene and Caeter 29)

Foucault states that they are hard to reach or change. He describes two forms of emplacements utopia and heterotopia. Heterotopia is a physical representation or approximation of a utopia, or a parallel space, such as a prison. Unlike heterotopias, utopias are imaginary locations "Utopias are sites with no real place." (Foucault 3) For instance, Foucault uses the mirror as utopian since it is a placeless place. It both exists reflecting a real life image but also does not exist since the image it is reflecting not concrete.

## **2. Foucauldian Principles of Heterotopia:**

Foucault introduced the concept of heterotopia with regards to space. Although his examples and clarifications are still a topic of debate even in contemporary time, Foucault established six main principles that govern heterotopic spaces.

The first principle states that heterotopias are present in all cultures. Consequently there exist two distinct types of heterotopias, crisis and deviation. Crisis heterotopias are reserved, special or revered places for community members in times of crisis<sup>1</sup>, crisis participants are representatives of young adults, the elderly and pregnant women. As an example of a crisis heterotopia, a nineteenth-century boarding school is a sacred, entirely independent venue for teenagers. Historically, these classes were put into different locations, with their own behavioural rules while still retaining an overarching relation to society. Foucault believes that crisis-type heterotopias are vanishing in contemporary society. Instead, they are replaced by the second type which is deviation heterotopias. These are places reserved for members of society whose conduct deviates from the norm. An example of a heterotopic site of deviation is the prison, because those who are sentenced to prison went against the social norm, they are admitted to places that are reserved for people who are abnormal to existing social rules and instructions. It is also important to note that nursing homes and psychiatric hospitals, according to Foucault, may be viewed as either crisis heterotopia or deviation.

The second principle that governs heterotopia explains that sites that are represented as heterotopias are not static, they are changing constantly overtime. Foucault supports his argument by referring to the emplacement of the cemetery in 19<sup>th</sup> century France. Before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, cemeteries were placed at the center of the city as a sign of pride and hierarchy. But after the plague, cemeteries were moved to the side of towns in fear of the spread of the plague.

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<sup>1</sup>Crisis in this context means a spontaneous state of being which is significantly different from what people consider as normal.

Foucault explains this change as a move driven by anxiety from death. Therefore, heterotopias are a subject of social change.

The third principle notes that heterotopias combine many spaces. Unlike utopia that is known for its homogeneous views, designs and styles. Heterotopia is about heterogeneity, controlled 'otherness' and opposition. It has "the power to juxtapose in a single real place several spaces, several emplacements that are in themselves incompatible" (Dehaene and Caeter 19) Foucault uses the traditional garden as an example. While being a beautiful sight to gaze at from afar, there are many dangers lurking within it.

Heterotopias arrange multiple times and can be regarded as a parallel to that existing space. This is the fourth principle of heterotopia. They can be linked with multiple slices of time. There exist two subtypes within this principle, heterotopias can either be accumulative or festive. Accumulative heterotopias are those spaces that have the ability to store the past, present, and future into an archive, making these archives untouched by time and frozen. Libraries are a perfect example of these heterotopias. On the other hand, festival or transitory heterotopias are those spaces that work in a temporary manner, sites such as festivals produce a sense of joy for a precise period of time before they are empty again.

Heterotopias have a system of entering and leaving space. Both in isolating heterotopia, and also in making it penetrable. The heterotopic platform is usually not publicly available as a public place. As such, there exist two types of entries. The first of which is mandatory, as in jails or military base. Whereas the second type requires people to possess privileges and purgation, such as the Muslim hammam or Scandinavian saunas.

The final principle states that heterotopic spaces have a special connection with residual space, either as an elusive space or compensatory space. For example, illusion heterotopias like brothels reveal the interiors of our imaginary worlds. On the other hand, heterotopias of compensation like the Puritan colonies, show the disorderly and disorganized essence of the our most disciplined public spaces (Foucault 8), thus heterotopias allow us to face our illusions and construct new illusions about the utopias we cannot have.

### **3.1. Foucauldian Sites in a Heterotopic Context:**

Foucault's 1967 lecture *Of Other Spaces* is shrouded in confusion when dealing with the concept of heterotopia because it was not explained thoroughly and clearly. Nevertheless, Foucault provided his attendance with multiple examples driven from real life in an attempt to further clarify the concept.

#### **3.1.1 The Ship as a Heterotopic Site:**

Foucault describes the ship as heterotopia par excellence. The ship is “a piece of floating space, a placeless place.” (Foucault 9) It operates in the space between ports, between nations, and between steady points according to its own principles. Since the sixteenth century, the ship was both the primary tool of economic growth and the greatest reservoir of imagination. Foucault notes that in “non-boat cultures, fantasies dry up, spying takes the place of adventure, and police take the place of pirates.” (9)

#### **3.1.2 The Cemetery as a Marginalised Heterotopic Site:**

By the end of the 18th century, Foucault observes that cemeteries were located inside or next to the church in the center of the city and were often strongly connected with the holy

afterlife and eternal salvation. However, early in the 1800s cemeteries were relegated to the suburbs in a "bourgeois appropriation"(Foucault 6), aimed at saving lives of people, especially with death increasing victims related to the plague. Furthermore, because death is individualised everyone deserves their own space. Therefore, the suburban graveyard becomes the city of the dead, a place where all will lay eternally and separately, and a kind of sanctuary for death. A cemetery is considered a heterotopic space since the tombs create a perfect city for the dead, each positioned and shown according to their social rank. The cemetery offers visitors the impression that their deceased relatives still have presence and status, symbolised by their tombstones. It is a simulated utopia of life after death, but it still reflects the real world where blood relation, wealth, and power play a central role.

### **3.1.3 The Garden as an Illusionist Heterotopic Site:**

Foucault recognizes the garden as a heterotopic site, because it is real space meant to be a perfect reflection of multiple environments. The garden is the world's smallest piece, yet it is the idealised image of it at the same time. For example, English gardens imitate nature's irregularity, French gardens' straight lines praise man's control of nature, and Japanese gardens represent nature's sense of balance. Gardens seek to revive an ideal, utopian nature. In doing so, they reflect their contemporaries' convictions. Foucault defines gardens as illusion heterotopias. "Their role is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory" (Foucault 8). Foucault contrasts Persian gardens with mat or carpet: "the garden is a rug onto which the whole world comes to enact its symbolic perfection, and the rug is a sort of garden that can move across space" (Foucault 6). Foucault sees the Persian rug as a sort of mobile garden that enable the gardens' cosmic symbolism to be carried into rooms and houses.

### **3.1.4 The Museum as a Heterotopic Site of Time:**

Foucault presents the museum as a heterotopia of time. It puts together diverse entities from various times in a common space that seeks to enclose the entirety of time a unity protected from loss through time. Thus, the museum follows a double paradox. It comprises endless time in a finite space, and it is both a space of time and a timeless space attempting to freeze time in period rooms which slices time into fixed pieces. A museum is a palimpsest<sup>1</sup>, a constant accumulation of time, " [a heterotopia] in which time never stops building up and topping its own summit" (Foucault 7). Ethnographic museum is an example of both a heterotopia of crisis and a heterotopia of deviance which contains specimens of cultures and history in an effort to establish a position outside time.

### **4. The Foucauldian Conception of Power:**

Michel Foucault tries to redefine the concept of power by rejecting the old definitions, he tries to justify his vision with the attempt of novelization. While his ideology and view do not necessarily construct a ground-breaking definition of power, it does, in fact, support the belief of disbanding the old way of ruling by "cutting off the king's head" (Foucault 121) by shining the light on the contemporary execution of power, including corruption, and theories of power that may contribute to a more settled state of dominance. It is important to state that Foucault believes that the concept of power does not stand on its own, meaning it cannot be defined as an entity, but rather it is the relations existing in power that are constituting the term.

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<sup>1</sup> a manuscript or piece of writing material on which later writing has been superimposed on effaced earlier writing.

According to Foucault, power is heterogeneous, which means that it does not stand alone. (Rocchio) It is always born of something other than itself. Also, power intertwines with other social relations such as technology, friendship, family, body, gender. All of these existing relationships help form the concept of power. Limiting the fact that power as a concept is homogenous. Foucault states that from a series of unbalanced, heterogeneous, and unstable relations patterns are formed as a bigger picture of power instead of being one single entity. Thus, power relations are not minimised to any particular process but exist simultaneously:

Power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; [and] as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them. (Hurley 92)

These relations, often teeny and routine, are the basis of what forms the bigger, more visible techniques and strategies of the individuals, institutions, or groups who are more often than not deemed to inherit the relations of power.

## **5. Heterotopia as a Site of Resistance**

The nature of power has been a recurrent subject of discussion among many writers, thinkers, and politicians. Many hypotheses have been suggested in an attempt to give a definite answer to the question of the nature of power. Foucault is one of these contributors as he seeks to discover the nature of power, its consequences, and ways of execution in modern history.

Each one of these critics who are interested in the concept of power tackles it as they perceive the concept to be fit. Foucault, for example, chooses to tackle the concept away from traditional norms. He addresses the concept of power through immense analysis of the

microscopic relations<sup>1</sup> that bide the concept, these relations help in the understanding of power from a wider perspective rather than limiting it to the concept alone. In the same way that relations of power cannot be minimized to domination, they cannot be in contrast with resistance. Hence Foucault denotes “Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.” (Hurley 95)

Peter Johnson believes that there has not been any direct link between heterotopia and resistance. However, Johnson believes that Hetherington tries to link between Foucault’s heterotopia and Van Gennepe’s liminality, Johnson believes that liminal spaces share the concept of resistance with those of heterotopia as being sites that counter dominance. Van Gennepe asserts, “In general, the term [heterotopia] has been used to try and capture something of the significance of sites of marginality that act as postmodern spaces for resistance and transgression- treating them in many ways as liminal spaces.” (qtd in. Johnson)

## **6. Investigating Heterotopia in Literature:**

Heterotopia is a site that exists in the real world and can be localisable, unlike concepts like utopia which is imaginative and cannot be realised in the real world. Foucault explains that places such as cemeteries or gardens are the perfect example of heterotopia, a placeless place. The space of literature holds somewhat a similar stand. Literature can be viewed from a similar angle. it is both non-existent and existent at the same time. “literature space is deeply ambiguous and similar to Foucault’s description of the heterotopia mirror: nowhere and here.” (Johnson)

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<sup>1</sup> Referring to the Foucauldian conception of power, relations such as family, and technology that make power heterogenous.

The notion of heterotopia is a rather juvenile concept in the space of literature. However, many writers reference the concept when explaining their settings and characters. Edmond De Goncourt's<sup>1</sup> novel *La Fille Elisa*, (1877), specifically his explanation of brothels and how they are depicted as a timeless place. This explanation serves as a connotation that heterotopic spaces exist in fiction, and can be enriched by the setting of the fiction, as well as the characters.

### **6.1. Investigating Heterotopia Through Dystopia:**

Heterotopia is the amalgamation of different places. If utopia is considered above and dystopia below, heterotopia is placed at the middle ground. A sort of deconstruction when interpreting the concepts of dystopia and heterotopia to further understand the relationship between the three concepts of utopia, dystopia, and heterotopia. The fictions of utopia and dystopia thus become discursive in reality. Therefore, utopias and dystopias that are classified as degenerate are considered as heterotopic. Heterotopias are the places in which people operate daily, these places are not singular, and can be multiplied and juxtaposed, and found everywhere. (Hugh)

To sum up, Hugh describes heterotopia as a multiplicity of places instead of a single place, he states that heterotopias form a middle ground between utopia and dystopia. Also, he claims that to adequately analyse the concepts of heterotopia, dystopia, and utopia there needs to be a deconstruction of all these concepts. Moreover, Hugh believes that degenerate utopias and dystopias are considered to be heterotopic spaces.

#### **6.1.1 Exploring Heterotopia as Utopian Debris:**

Foucault in his explanations of the concept of heterotopia often refers to utopias as a means of explanation to his concept. Although the two concepts of utopia and heterotopia differ

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<sup>1</sup> He was a French writer, literary critic, art critic, book publisher and the founder of the Académie Goncourt

in the fact that heterotopias are realised, concrete spaces. Whereas utopias are fictional and imaginary. Heterotopias are often open and prone to be reversible.

Heterotopic spaces are described as a mirror because they reflect an existing place. Foucault's examples of heterotopic spaces are represented as utopias in the world. Nevertheless, some other spaces can be regarded as less 'utopian' that can also be regarded as heterotopic. These places include brothels, saunas, Muslim 'hammam', festivals, and vacation villages.

A brief sideways examination of these established material places is provided by Foucault on this utopian debris not to predict the future, but to examine the present. Unlike what critics like Hetherington and Harvey attempted to tackle, heterotopias and utopias cannot be grasped by reading utopian values in heterotopias. Instead, Foucault deals with spaces that are referred to as being ideal, flawless, extravagant, and heavenly as an attempt to use them as a means of discovery of the past, with regards to the impact on the present. Heterotopia serves as a reminder to learn from the fragments of utopia to have a better life. Foucault's previous works, whether historical, psychological or political were carried out in the hope of providing significant and valuable political effects, and to make the knowledge of the past serve as a guide on the experience of the present. (Johnson 17)

## **Conclusion**

Indubitably, the concept of heterotopia that Michel Foucault introduced in the spatial discourse is a precedent that still garners attention and raises debates, more than fifty years after its introduction. Sites of heterotopia are plenty, from cemeteries to museums and gardens. These sites explain the concept of heterotopia because they are localisable and can be identified in real

life. Heterotopia is not a common concept. Most critics shy away from treating the concept due to the complexity and ambiguity surrounding it. However, when heterotopia is being discussed, the concept raises a plethora of questions to be analysed and interpreted in many different ways.

Peter Johnson provides useful insight on utopia concerning heterotopia. Foucault referenced heterotopia frequently as being adjacent to utopias, although opposing. Foucault demonstrates that heterotopias are represented utopias because the latter is imaginary and fictional, it cannot be realised in the real world. Thus, heterotopia emerges to localize and represent utopia in real life. After all, heterotopic sites are real and recognizable. Moreover, Foucault presents an analysis that supports consulting the present rather than predicting the future, heterotopias are a critique of the present society, and what can be made better to ensure a brighter future.

### **Chapter 3: Exploring Heterotopia and Post-Apocalypse in J.G. Ballard's *The Drowned World***

#### **Introduction:**

J.G Ballard is a well-known British writer who is regarded by many as the main figure of post-apocalyptic literature. His writings always portrayed a world ravaged by a natural phenomenon that would shape the current civilisation and change the world upside down. Ballard has been described by his peers as an advocate for nature, because of his growing interest in dealing with the various natural threats that endanger our planet. His writings always seem to include some sort of a disaster related to nature, where people find themselves governed by nature after they have been governing over it for so long. This chapter aims at investigating the post-apocalypse concept in relation to the climate change and how it effects the surrounding environment in the novel. Also, it aims at exploring Michel Foucault's notion of heterotopia in different contexts in the novel.

### **3.1.1 The Post-Apocalypse: The Case of J.G.Ballard Examined**

Ballard is a renowned British writer who has written several books. *The Atrocity Exhibition* (1970), *Hello America* (1981) and *The Drowned World* (1962) are the most notable pieces Ballard is famous of. These aforementioned books are all fictional but in different contexts. *The Drowned World* is a science fiction novel first written in 1962 in London. The introductory section by Martin Amis reveals that the fictions written by Ballard are in fact predictions to incidences that could happen in the future. The situations described are observed today with many calls globally to incentive wake up calls for various threats that endanger the planet. Therefore, the Sci-fi books of Ballard are written after thorough research into imminent trends and foreseen consequences in future. Jim Clarke investigates the novels written by Ballard *The Drowned World* and *The Crystal World* (1966) through this scope of natural disasters, especially climate, in his work entitled *Reading Climate Change in J.G. Ballard* (2013). Clarke

claims that the writer takes a climatological<sup>1</sup> approach in writing about apocalyptic dystopia, he also discusses that Ballard clings to the idea of climate to change but also deviates from the meaning of the word that is common in contemporary times, “Before there was climate change, there was nonetheless climate fiction.” (Clarke 1)

The post-apocalypse theory of literature describes the end of the world and civilisation in terms of technology. In other words, the known world is vanished and replaced by an environment resembling the current world. However, this new world is roughly assembled from the remnants of the current world. Albeit lacking the meaning structures. The theory as presented in Ballard’s book seeks to dispute the apocalyptic theories just ideology, which projects the end of the world and a completely new beginning. The topic is a common genre of science fiction, and Ballard explored this theory in his novel with the period for the phenomena set in future. As mentioned earlier, several books by Ballard focus on science fiction with predictions trying to describe events likely to happen several years to come. The post-apocalypse subject follows the revolutionary changes that continuously support these theories. Lorenz J. Firsching refers to Ballard’s fiction as ambiguous apocalypse, he argues that Ballard seeks to apply the experience of ambiguity in his works, by using his characters as a means to do so.

This is precisely the experience which Ballard seeks to evoke in his early novels: the experience of ambiguity. By showing the experiences of the main characters on three levels, Ballard at once

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<sup>1</sup> The scientific study of climate, scientifically defined as weather conditions averaged over a period of time.

exposes the fragmentary nature of our perceptions of reality and suggests that unexpected connections exist among these fragmented perceptions. (Firsching 308)

### **3.1.2. Exploring Post-Apocalypse in the World of Ballard's Novel *The Drowned World*:**

Ballard uses different aspects to describe the post-apocalypse in his novel. The human population has dwindled, and gives an impression of being faced out. The water and heat have become a major threat to human existence. The author draws us into the diminishing rate of reproduction and the desire to save humanity. However, leaving the protective shelter that the characters are in, means having the strong possibility of being exposed to solar radiation due to the rate of radiation levels that had happened progressively up to that point. The post-apocalyptic state is a progressive condition, which means that it does not occur once. Instead, it takes years of continuous human activities on the planet that result in an alteration to the normal climatic order. During the apocalypse, the majority of the human race is faced out as seen in the case of this novel. Post-apocalypse describes a new beginning to humanity. The characters who managed to survive as described before form the remnants of the former culture and the beginning of a new one (Ballard 7).

The post-apocalypse in the modern era, therefore, does not mean the end of the world in its entirety but rather the reshaping of human existence after surviving a major crisis. In the novel, Ballard begins his narration by presenting Dr Kerans from whom we learn the new environment and measures being taken to survive.

The solar disc was no longer a well-defined sphere, but a wide expanding ellipse that fanned out across the eastern horizon like a colossal fireball, its reflection

turning the dead leaden surface of the lagoon into a brilliant copper shield. By noon, less than four hours away, the water would seem to burn. (Ballard 8)

The fact that Dr Kerans is still alive after the disastrous activities that took place rendering the planet inhabitable is a sign of expected human transformation that will adapt to the new environment. In the successive passages, the author reveals the daily routine of Dr Kerans involving biological testing. This is a sign of the process that is the creation of new order as biology plays a major role in understanding and reshaping human form (Ballard 8). Therefore, the post-apocalyptic setting in *The Drowned World* features accelerated evolution, tropical temperatures and flooding. The characters in the novel use the opportunity presented by the shattered civilisation to seek new meanings in the present world, and fulfill the unconscious urges and modes of perception.

### **3.1.3. Ballard's Europe in the Post-Apocalypse:**

The whole of Europe is submerged under a tropical ocean as a result of global warming. The novel was however written before the era of global warming and the author rather described the high temperatures that resulted in ice melting which submerged the entire European civilization, covered under a lagoon. Dr Kerans and his team are tasked with the work of mapping the old Europe cities and Camp Byrd was the first on the list to be discovered. When Strangeman and his group manage to drain the lagoon in their quest to loot, London is also discovered in the process. Europe is divided in two regions, the Arctic and Antarctic as the only habitable places, the submerged cities of Europe were abandoned due to the high temperature. The two settings of fading civilisation submerged underwater, and the jungle are further explained in the novel as the images of stores abandoned surrounded by a lagoon and gymnosperms surrounding a hotel (Ballard 9).

Initially, the element of the post-apocalypse is defined when the author presents a landscape that is vague and confounding, none of the places are given names, serving a feeling of mystery. Europe is reconstructed as the novel proceeds with Camp Byrd as the first one with strange floral. Ballard's description of the Ritz and its surrounding areas reveal the extent of the damage.

Too many of the other buildings around the lagoon had long since slipped and slid away below the silt, revealing their gimcrack origins, and the Ritz now stood in splendid isolation on the west shore...rich blue moulds sprouting from the carpets in the dark. (Ballard 10)

Further into the novel the author describes the continuous rise of the flood, which now covers the entire first six floors of the building. However, the pre-apocalypse elements are still visible as he continues to describe Europe through the eyes of the mentioned city. For example, he compares the mould sprouting on the carpet as an addition to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century splendour of the rag on the floor (Ballard 11).

### **3.1.4 J.G. Ballard's Climate Change and Post-Apocalypse:**

Climate influences human activities, some stay put and adopt different means of survival, while others move to new areas. Ballard is famous of incorporating the dilemma of climate change in almost all of his writings. He is described by his colleagues as an activist for nature, as he deals with issues that are not common in the medium of writing.

### **3.1.5. The Increased Temperature and its Influence on The World of J.G. Ballard:**

Climate change as portrayed by Ballard describes the current term known as global warming. The world is inundated due to the melting ice caps as temperatures continue to rise. Besides, the title itself describes the climatic upheaval as it becomes the linking aspect of the novel to all other activities and people. At the beginning of chapter one, the normal routine of people is disrupted, they have to work for a limited number of hours and at a particular time of the day. The reason being alluded to is the high temperatures that heat the water at the lagoon, rendering the movement around nearly impossible. Also, the sun no longer shines as it used to be. Instead, it continuously widens into an ellipse as opposed to the “well-defined sphere” (Ballard 8).

Climate change also manifests through the flooded water that forms a lagoon and has submerged most of the lower compartments of the Ritz hotel occupied by Dr Kerans. The nearby buildings have all been superseded by the high-water level. The described condition is due to the melting ice impacted by the soaring temperatures. The cities were abandoned and Colonel Riggs patrol ensuring that those who remained behind were evacuated as the cities continued to sink. The information comes out through Colonel Riggs revelation to Kerans asking for his help. The post-apocalypse climate change provides an opportunity for human beings to explore different modes of survival. Strangeman arrived at the lagoon with his group of followers, due to his desire to loot London he managed to drain the lagoon. Chapter two further expounds on the climatic change by mentioning other contributing factors such a diminished gravitational pull, which reduced the barriers that protected earth from solar radiation (Ballard 12).

The post-apocalyptic climate change, therefore, creates new ways for humans to develop survival techniques. For Dr Kerans has an air conditioner strong enough to combat the high

temperatures. The working conditions are also fixed in a manner that fits the changes. For instance, as explained earlier, Dr Kerans goes to work in the morning and returns just as the sun begins to get hotter. Also, during one of colonel Riggs visits, we learn that his men have to live on drugs to survive the effects of bacteria that tend to multiply more during high temperature. Colonel and his men move around Europe mapping the cities. "...they sat inertly in a row against a bulkhead. The continuous heat and the massive daily doses of antibiotics drained all energy from them..." (Ballard 13). Even though individuals like Dr Kerans work during times when the weather conditions are favourable, others like the colonel and his group do not have a choice. The post-apocalyptic weather is hostile however, resulting in human beings to adopt mechanisms to survive the environment.

### **3.2.1 Exploring Post-Apocalypse in the Characters of *The Drowned World***

Each character in the novel has different ambitions that they hope to fulfil, therefore, they adopt diverse mechanisms to fulfil their needs. Diverging from asserting control to a comment on science, and even representation of resistance.

### **3.2.2 The Character of Dr Robert Kerans in relation to Science and Post-apocalypse:**

Dr Kerans represents individuals born after the apocalypse, therefore have little information about the world before. The successful quote shows that among the mentioned characters in the book only Bodkin had experienced the previous world. "Apart from a few older men such as Bodkin there was no-one who remembered living in them—and even during Bodkin's childhood, the cities had been beleaguered citadels, hemmed in by enormous dykes and disintegrated" (Ballard 20). The biologist spends the majority of his time trying to understand the status of the earth through studies conducted by others before him, however, he believes that no

one bothers to follow his scientific work. The character is at the verge of giving up hope for regaining human civilization. He continues to detach himself from any form of civilisation. For instance, when Dr Bodkins ,his assistant, recollects his memories of the city as one of the few people who experienced civilisation before it was overtaken, Dr Kerans shows no interest in the contents. The reaction affirms his belief that human civilisation is ending and, in its place, a different world is being created from these remnants. Dr Kerans also represents science at this point and its inability to provide a solution to the post-apocalyptic situation.

The vulnerability of humanity is challenged through the eyes of the doctor, he looks older than his age (forty years), the heat, diseases, and contaminated water have taken a toll on his body. The character compares his current dilapidated image to his former self as he observes himself through the mirror. “Although he was only forty, Kerans’ beard had been turned white by the radio-fluorine in the water... A chronic lack of appetite, and the new malarial, had shrunk the dry leathery skin under his cheekbones” (Ballard 11). The post-apocalypse world reduces the human ability to combat illnesses, besides it looks like the environmental changes also weaken immunity.

The doctor doubles up as a physician, he treated people in dire need of medical attention before they were transferred to safety. Due to the intensity of the apocalypse calamity, it is expected that medical professionals will be present at the scene, however, the situation is different here. The described scenario represents the possibility of people multitasking due to the low population. The post-apocalypse period will contain only those who managed to survive and as explained earlier, the tough weather conditions have negatively affected reproduction. The surviving generation has to adjust as a means of creating resilience.

### **3.2.3 Portraying Colonel Riggs as an Authoritarian Character**

Colonel Riggs is the supreme commander in charge of all activities and people around London, others need his permission to carry out any assignments. Ballard introduces us to the leadership side of the colonel through the following quote "...Riggs had overall authority for the testing station and Kerans should have asked his permission..." (12). Through the statement, we also learn that the post-apocalyptic world maintains the same or an equal leadership structure of that of the current world. The colonel seems to bridge between the characters in the novel. Due to his leading role, he must be updated constantly of the progress each person is making in their tasks. While most of the people he is working with prefer isolating themselves and interacting only when it is necessary, Colonel Riggs seems to cross these boundaries. "This growing isolation and self-containment, exhibited by the other members of the unit and from which only the buoyant Riggs seemed immune..." (Ballard 14). The social aspect of the post-apocalyptic world is revealed, the hardships force people to resort to solitude. A few people like the colonel manage to keep up conversations perhaps because of the nature of his work.

### **3.2.4 Lieutenant Hardman's Representation of Resistance**

Hardman symbolizes a group of escapists who finds it difficult to adjust or confront the post-apocalypse situation and rather prefer an alternative. The described character is perceived as disillusioned by the rest of the team. However, he persists on moving to the South to the jungle, despite the perceived threatening conditions, mosquitoes for instance. The writer describes how nature can influence the behaviour of a person driven primarily by survival instincts.

I've always understood that our duty was to stay on here as long as possible and make every sacrifice necessary to that end. She noticed Riggs peering over his shoulder at the bar. "What's the matter, colonel? Looking for your punkawallah?"

I'm not going to get you a drink if that's what you're after. I think you men only come up here to booze. (Ballard 26)

Ballard tries to identify the confusion that comes with the post-apocalypse where people struggle to establish some form of order.

The character of Hardman also embodies the blink of hope in the post-apocalyptic world of Ballard. Unlike the other characters, Hardman decides to pursue the voices he is hearing to head south of the jungle despite the dangers that lie beneath the safe area of The Ritz. In a sense, Hardman is fighting nature itself. Hardman believes there is a path to the south, this hope he holds drives him away from his people in a journey towards salvation. "It is in their interrelationship that generative hope and the postapocalyptic present become greater than the sum of their parts, a dialectic that defies synthesis due to its pairing of theses that make up two opposing sides of the same existential coin." (Lempert 204)

### **3.2.5 The Character of Strangeman and the Role of Mob Control**

The character of Strangeman along with his crew introduce us to another aspect of the post-apocalypse that is the exploitation of the situation. Strangeman displays his affinity to wealth and luxury items, he uses the calamity to loot items together with his group of black followers. "... crisp white suit, the silk-like surface of which reflected the gilt plate of his high-backed Renaissance throne, presumably dredged from some Venetian or Florentine lagoon" (Ballard 82). The material worth that Strangeman values show that there is hope for humanity in the post-apocalypse era. The character has traversed the world looting everything he sees in the acquisition of his throne.

Strangeman also represents a group of people who are courageous and keen on confronting the natural world which is trying to take over human civilisation. The character's crew collect treasures, even though the future is bleak, they believe in living for the day. This attitude represents life after the apocalypse, humanity might be marred by many challenges, especially those posed by the climate. However, people like Strangeman believe in enjoying their time while it lasts. The character breaks rigidity observed in the novel through the first seven chapters, and bring life to the story. Through his character, we learn the diversity of the human personality, those who allow situations to define them and those who seize an opportunity to define circumstances. "Strangeman represents blind human ambition, as he clings to power by propagating a myth about himself (i.e., that he is dead) and attaches value to the artifacts he loots, suggesting he believes in the possibility of a future for mankind on earth." (LitCharts)

### **3.3. "To See a World in a Grain of Sand": Exploring heterotopia in *The Drowned World***

The heterotopic subject covers a major part of *The Drowned World* novel. The term describes other spaces, which contain different factors or things as opposed to the rest. The term seems to contradict utopia, which represents perfection. The mentioned spaces have a layering meaning than what meets the eye. This means that at first instance a person will have a narrow perception of these spaces, which can be likened to seeing the world in a grain of sand. However, probing further into the presented scenario reveals much more details and information. Heterotopia presents two worlds in the same context. However they are incompatible. For instance, the mirror example of Foucault shows one virtual world reflected in the mirror and the real world, the two are in the same context but cannot be combined. "In the mirror, you see yourself while you are in fact in another place. By these examples, Foucault highlights the

meaning of “heterotopia” as a space of intangible otherness: particular type of space that reflects the slippage between the familiar and the unfamiliar between reality and utopia” (Johnson)

The first chapter of the novel introduces us to the first instance of heterotrophic perspective, Dr. Kerans’s hotel suite presents a different space from that of the outside. The air is cool due to the running air conditioner. On the contrary, the temperatures the typical external environment was marred with high temperatures, giant gymnosperm growing on abandoned buildings and lagoons. Kerans’s hotel room is a world within the wider outside environment, it presents a different scenario that contrasts the external surrounding.

...giant gymnosperms crowding over the roofs of the abandoned department stores four hundred yards away on the east side of the lagoon... By noon, less than four hours away, the water would seem to burn...but this morning, he found himself reluctant to leave the cool, air-curtained haven of the hotel suite.  
(Ballard 8)

The author deliberately begins his narration by introducing us to the heterotopic perspective as a means of showing the extreme damage of the climate change concerning mechanisms conducted by the individual for survival purposes.

The second instance of heterotopia is the lagoon, one would assume that it is a mass of land covered with water. However, Colonel Riggs and his group of army men are moving around the area mapping the flooded area. Below the water mass exist dangerous iguanas, which seems to consume anything that goes near it. Besides, the animal there is something more important in the sunken city of London. Even though it is mentioned in the early chapters, the actual picture of this city is portrayed with the arrival of Strangeman and his group. They are on a quest to loot

treasures. Before revealing the world below the water, we are introduced to Stangeman's boat and crew. The character looks white compared to his black fellows, Strangeman and his team are two contrasting worlds (LitCharts). Besides, Dr. Kerans, Bodkin, and Beatrice's skins were pale hence placed in a similar world as that of the black men. "Kerans' heavy sunburn, like that of Beatrice and Dr. Bodkin, made him virtually indistinguishable from the remainder of the Negro crew... Strangeman alone retained his original paleness, the effect emphasized by the white suit he had chosen." (Ballard 84)

Inside the boat, we are introduced to a sophistication beginning Strangeman's seat, which the author describes as a "Renaissance throne" (Ballard 82). The author describes the ship in a way that takes the reader through a mental tour of the interior of the vessel. The mental image created contrasts with the external environment, which is harsh and intolerable. "The interior of the ship was decorated in a similar pastiche baroque. The bar, now dark and closed, at the forward end of the observation deck was like the stern castle of a ceremonial galleon, naked gilt caryatids supporting its portico" (Ballard 84-85). *The Drowned World* presents heterotopia not just by comparing the environment but also by the people as explained above.

### **3.4. Examining Dr. Robert Kerans as a Heterotopic Character**

The bathroom scene, as Kerans was shaving, introduces us to the heterotopic character of the protagonist. The doctor observes his features as he shaves his hair, he observes his physique in the mirror, which is a bit older for a 40-year-old person. The heat caused by the scourging sun, malaria and lack of appetite have affected the character. The narrator describes the features as having been dormant during the early adulthood of the character. The world reflected as the doctor shaves his beard, and the real one are the same, albeit different in the placement. This

means that even though Dr. Kerans can view himself in the mirror, he cannot merge what he sees on the other side to his current world.

The character tends to isolate himself from other people. Generally, this is a measure taken by other existing characters with the exceptions of colonel Riggs and Strangeman. However, during the solitude instances Dr Kerans's mind wanders off to a different world where he visualizes the end of humanity and human civilization as portrayed in the quote below

it satisfied him to think that he was the last guest who would stay at the hotel, identifying what he realized was a concluding phase of his own life—the northward odyssey through the drowned cities in the south, soon to end with their return to Camp Byrd and its bracing disciplines—and this farewell sunset of the hotel's long splendid history. (Ballard 10)

The heterotopic aspect is revealed with the introduction of a different world that conflicts with the current in which Kerans stands. At this instance, the character visualizes the end when he believes that he might be the last guest at The Ritz since the place will eventually give in to the rising water. The two worlds exist within each other but cannot merge because one has to give way to the other.

Dr Kerans experiences the dreams that Beatrice, Bodkin, and colonel Riggs' men have been suffering for some time. The author draws the audience to a scene where nature seems to overpower humanity. The gigantic lizards and snakes in the water seem to be taking over the world. The scene in the dream and the actual world that the character is in seem to mirror each other but separated by what appears to have momentarily existed in the mind of Kerans and the consistent reality.

### **3.5. Investigating the Importance of The Lagoon in Forming Heterotopia**

The water that makes up the lagoon acts as the external space and portrays the human limitations in their existence. The restrictions force humans to find other means of navigating or existing in this world. For example, to navigate from one place to the other, People have to use a boat or a ship. The vessels, therefore, form other spaces that are different from the lagoon existing in the same world but unable to merge and create one realm. The Ritz hotel and the floating testing stations are placed strategically in relation to the lagoon. The author describes the strategic location of the Ritz as a building that has managed to overcome the rising water even though the rest of the neighboring buildings have been submerged, rendering them invisible. “Ritz now stood in splendid isolation on the west shore...” (Ballard 10). The isolated building explanation, and the fact that it is in the lagoon, sparks a heterotopic image in the mind of the reader. The other space in which the hotel is situated seems to disrupt the otherwise perfect consistency of the lagoon when observed from the surface. The water surface, therefore, portrays the limitations of humans when combated with natural circumstances forcing them to craft other spaces as a coexistence strategy.

The lagoon acts as a mirror through which the author describes the surrounding environment. The reflection of the actual world, such as nature and human form and the sun, are observed. Even though this work is described as science fiction, the author uses heterotopia to bring the fiction closer to reality. For example, the tendency of a person to stare at their reflection or that of the environment in the water is something a reader can relate to. The lagoon plays the role of reminding the reader of some aspects that are usually not given much attention but play a significant role in constructing this fictional environment.

Dr Kerans seems to observe his features keenly as they reflect his real personality. “Leaning on the balcony rail, the slack water ten storeys below reflecting his thin, angular shoulders and gaunt profile...” (Ballard 9). The reflection provided by the lagoon and the world on top brings the reality of two connected worlds but one unreachable by the other because of its virtual nature.

So far, the situations described above are on the surface of the water, describing a common outer space existing in the same environment but completely separated. However, within the lagoon, another heterotopic context is formed. The lagoon covers another world within it, such as buildings, alligators, and plants. Besides the mentioned, the city of London lies below this mass of water. The lagoon, therefore, plays a significant role in informing the readers of other spaces. The civilisation sinking below the lagoon creates a different sphere underneath, ranging from the physical appearance to content within the two spaces. When Strangeman and his crew drain the lagoon, completely overlooking the warnings from both Bodkin and Dr. Kerans, the other world masked by the lagoon appears. The following quote describes the amazement that Kerans, Beatrice, and Bodkins had when they witnessed water draining out of the lagoon.

Kerans felt Beatrice seize his arm...She gazed out at the emerging city...Those pumps are powerful. The water is going down by a good two or three feet a minute. We're not far from the bottom now. The whole thing's fantastic! He gazed out brightly at the emerging streets in the dim light around them, the humped backs of cars and buses appearing through the surface. (Ballard 107-109)

The revelation of the other world provides the reader with a glimpse of the other sphere. This aims at portraying the capability of human intelligence and ambition. The lagoon is flooded back to its original state by Dr. Kerans, as was shown at the beginning of the novel.

### **3.6. London as a Heterotopic Symbol of Foucault's Cemetery**

Foucault's cemetery example has been cited as one of the perfect illustrations of heterotopia. When a graveyard is mentioned, the first thought that comes to mind is a space for the dead. The same concept reflects in the submerged city of London. Each instance the name appears, the reader's mind is taken back to the area as a habitat containing the pre-apocalypse civilisation covered in water. The infrastructure, buildings, and other valuables, such as cars, are buried under the water just like the dead. These two worlds are incompatible, but the external space has learned to accommodate the outer view of the internal, which is the grave. For instance, in the novel, when Strangeman manages to drain the lagoon, Beatrice could not stand to witness the world that she had never seen before. The character was accustomed to the lakes that have since formed the new world. 'But it's all so hideous. I can't believe that anyone ever lived here. It's likesome imaginary city of Hell. Robert, I need the lagoon' (Ballard 111). Therefore, this proves that characters such as Beatrice, who were born when the floods were present, have a different view on the world. London, without the lagoon, creates a conflict in its current sphere, and characters that never witnessed the ancient civilisation, prefer having the city stay in its submerged state.

London, as a heterotopic space, is also displayed in its symbol of transition where the human civilisation ends, and nature takes charge. Foucault's cemetery symbolises the end of life of which the living are not quite sure what happens in the other world. At the same time, the post-apocalyptic London is merely imagined by individuals such as Dr. Kerans. The characters

were born an era after the apocalypse, therefore, they do not have precise knowledge of life before the flooding began . Therefore, London has experienced a transition in which the previous occupants who experienced civilisation, witnessed in the type of building constructed, the means of transportation such as cars and buses, among other things. On the other hand, the world the author introduces us to has been utterly transformed, where the conventional means of transportation are water vessels such as ships and hydroplanes.

Just like the cemetery serves as a historical site that stores memories of people who once dwelled among the living, London serves the same purpose as a heterotopic space. Individuals such as Bodkins have childhood memories of what it was like to be in a civilisation.

Dr. Bodkin, twenty-five years his senior, had actually lived in several of them, both in Europe and America, and spent most of his spare time punting around the remoter water-ways, searching out former libraries and museums. Not that they contained anything other than his memories. (Ballard 20)

The memories of Dr. Bodkins plunge the reader into accepting the current world as the present time. London is therefore viewed as a memory which the current generation of post-apocalypse individuals can only imagine. As stated earlier, individuals such as Beatrice and Dr. Kerans were perplexed by what they saw, as water drained from the lagoon. Despite having an actual glimpse of this civilization, all they had was an implication of a world different from the accustomed one. Besides, they still could not tell how life was before the apocalypse.

### **3.7. Authority in The Drowned World and its influence on J.G. Ballard's Heterotopic London**

Various characters display their authority in the novel. Some characters display their position of power in relation to their role as an embodiment of that power, Colonel Riggs. While

others like Strangeman assume the position of sovereignty to fulfil personal goals. At the beginning of the story, the author displays the relationship between Bodkin and Dr. Kerans. The latter is the main man at the testing station, while the former is the assistant. There are no conflicts in this relationship, as each individual plays their role as intended. Colonel Riggs is the overall command and has to be notified on the updates that take place. The character shows a great deal of respect to those who follow his orders. For instance, he only enters Dr. Kerans's penthouse upon invitation. Also, the colonel implores Dr. Kerans to persuade Beatrice to leave and head south with the rest of the crew. Riggs can easily use his power to force her to leave. However, he chooses to use less authoritative means to convince her. Dr. Kerans also describes Riggs as a leader, and a benevolent; "Kerans found the Colonel intelligent and sympathetic, and with a concealed reserve of droll humor" (Ballard 13). The colonel manages to get along with all the surrounding people.

The nature of the leadership that exists under colonel Riggs's sway (before moving to South) is a balanced one. The environment presents some form of order in the heterotopic space. The characters have made peace with the lagoons and have adopted ways of navigating through the flooded water. We learn that issues such as looting are prohibited, and the colonel ensures that his subjects are protected. The following quote ascertains this statement "Nominally such looting was highly penalized..." (Ballard 81). This displays the type of law and order that defined the lagoons when the colonel was present.

The coming of Strangeman introduces a different kind of leadership. He does not accept being contradicted. The term bigotry could best describe this condition. For instance, Strangeman dislikes Dr. Kerans because he is the least impressed by what the character believes to be

significant accomplishments. (LitCharts) The response Dr. Kerans gave to Strangeman when he showed them a collection of treasures he had amassed was not digested well by the character.

Well, Kerans, what do you think of them ... Impressed, Doctor? Kerans managed to take his eyes off Strangeman's face and glanced at the looted relics. "They're like bones," he said flatly... "Bones? ...Kerans, you're insane! Bones, good God. Kerans turned to leave the hold. In annoyance, Strangeman rushed after him, pressed the palm of his hand in Kerans. (Ballard 86)

Strangeman seemed annoyed by the fact that another person held a different view of material things that seemed to conflict with what he believed. The character uses his authority to harass Kerans, as shown in the quote. Another incidence occurs in chapter 9 when Strangeman forces Beatrice to dive in the lagoon, to gather information about the treasure he hopes to collect. Beatrice then refuses the order, forcing Dr. Kerans to volunteer. The kind of leadership displayed contradicts that of Colonel Riggs as explained earlier. The heterotopic environment produces different leadership mechanisms, depending on what individuals hope to gain.

The authority shown by Strangeman is also exploitative. For instance, his crew are seen as inferior to him. At some point, Dr. Kerans wonders how the character manages to control the men. His followers seem to obey his orders blindly. For instance, the group continues to follow Strangeman's instructions, despite the harsh effects of the extremely hot weather conditions. Contradictory to this, Strangeman enjoys the cool temperatures afforded by an air conditioner. "The jungle was motionless in the immense heat, the alligators hiding in whatever shade they could find. None the less, several of Strangeman's men were messing about in one of the scows, unloading some heavy diving equipment..." (Ballard 82). Among all the characters, Strangeman seemed to be aware of time. His ambitions meant using all possible means to attain his goal.

## Conclusion:

All in all, *The Drowned World* is a novel written by J.G. Ballard in 1962, he is a British writer and essayist famous for his work on nature and climate. Ballard is said to have prophesied the climate change dilemma that the world is currently experiencing long before it was scientifically proven and named. Ballard warned of the dangers that the heat can cause to humans, both physical and mental. *The Drowned World* reaffirms his assumption, the novel is set in a futuristic Europe doomed by a flood that reshaped the continent and divided it into a set of lagoons. The novel is told through the perspectives of several characters.

Post-apocalypse is a recurring theme in Ballard's writings, and *The Drowned World* follows the same path. The novel is set in a world that is adapting to the changes that the natural disaster imposed on it, the flood wiped the previous civilisation in its entirety leading people to live with only remnants from the past. Consequently, the setting itself is a theme of post-apocalypse in the novel. Furthermore, the constant heat that is present in the novel also alludes to post-apocalypse. Through the use of this extreme condition, Ballard is able to highlight the changes that his characters go through as the novel progresses. As well as the setting, the writer also uses the characters in a post-apocalyptic theme. For example, the protagonist Dr. Robert Kerans is shown as a pessimistic, passive character who believes that the disaster doomed humanity. In contrast, the character of Hardman represents resistance in the novel. Though the situation is tough and hope seems lost, he tries to always look for the light, which leads him towards the south of the jungle in search for salvation, but instead he found damnation.

In addition to post-apocalypse, there exists an inspiration from Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia in J.G. Ballard's *The Drowned World*. The novel draws on the concepts that the French thinker establishes as an identification of what can be defined as heterotopic. In *The*

*Drowned World*, the drowned city that is discovered by the character of Strangeman embodies Foucault's concept of heterotopia, Ballard also uses his characters as heterotopic figures. It is important to note that the lagoon also serves as a figure of heterotopia in the novel. Ballard uses the lagoon also to demonstrate the heterotopic nature of his work. Therefore, the different spaces present within the lagoon help to form heterotopia. Likewise, characters in the novel also serve the concept of heterotopia mainly in the protagonist Dr Robert Kerans. The protagonist realises heterotopia in one of the acts in the novel where he is looking at a mirror, he grasps that the image of his reflection is not real but he is also staring directly at it, which hints at a placeless place.

## General Conclusion

This dissertation attempted to analyse *The Drowned World* novel, written by J.G. Ballard, through the scope of the post-apocalyptic theme. All of which was by shedding the light on the spatial literature, and the concept of heterotopia, presented by Michel Foucault.

The study aimed to investigate both concepts of dystopia and post-apocalypse. Since dystopia prospered after the First World War, the genre gained a respectful amount of attention in the literary field. Dystopia can be defined as the genre of fiction that is concerned with the pessimistic view on the world. Dystopian fiction settings usually involve a tyrannical rule that manipulates the people through the use of propaganda or other deceptive means of control. Dystopian fiction involves many types of control bureaucratic, psychological, and corporate among others. In addition, the dystopian protagonist is often distinguishable with a set of characteristics. In addition,

This work also tried to define and understand the post-apocalypse as a genre, which is of imaginary fiction that deals with notions like time travel and space exploration, in addition to power and control. It is also regarded as a subgenre of science fiction. The post-apocalypse setting is set after a catastrophe that caused the end of the world; this catastrophe can be natural as it can also be manmade. Survivors seek shelter and supplies, in addition to ways of rebuilding the old civilisation. This genre garnered a massive audience recently. In addition to fiction, several movies and video games that are based in a post-apocalyptic world are the most successful pieces of entertainment today. As a result of the conducted research, post-apocalypse and dystopia both share similar points but are different in others. Hence, post-apocalyptic fiction is often dystopian in its system of government, with the use of an important element which is propaganda. In *the Drowned World*, Ballard applies several themes that can relate to dystopia. It

is especially incorporated with the protagonist Kerans, through which Ballard shows how the world is chaotic and out of the norm.

Moreover, this study attempted to investigate Michel Foucault's heterotopia, which was presented in a lecture he had in 1967. Heterotopic spaces are out of the norm and different, some critics like to call them as "other", giving these sites a sense of alienation. Among the sites that Foucault issued as heterotopic is the site of the cemetery, which is the most discussed site in the studies of heterotopia. Especially in relation to the two of the principles that form heterotopia. First in the concept of the cemetery having the ability to mutate and transform in different historical contexts, an example is given by referring to the 18<sup>th</sup> century French cemeteries being moved from the center of the city to the outskirts in fear of the plague. Also, the cemetery presents a spatio-temporal place, which is important in the heterotopic context.

In relation to the previously mentioned theories, this thesis sought to apply both heterotopia and post-apocalypse to *The Drowned World*. J.G. Ballard's novel is a stellar work of fiction, regarded by many as one of the greatest pieces written in history. The novel envisions a futuristic Europe flooded and torn to pieces. In this novel, there exists many themes that can be explored. This work dealt with the analysis of both the post-apocalypse and heterotopia in an attempt to find a link between the two theories.

Post-apocalypse in *The Drowned World* can be found in both the setting and the existing characters in the novel. After the doom of civilisation due to the flood, places like Camp Byrd are found for the purpose of recollecting and reconstructing the remnants of the past, a new beginning for the survivors who are seeking a rebuilding of the civilisation. This signifies the theme of redemption that is of a great importance in the post-apocalyptic context. Moreover, the continent of Europe in itself constructs an element of the post-apocalypse. As a result of the

flood, the continent is now fully drowning in an ocean, divided by lagoons that are nameless. Through the lack of names for places, the writer serves the feeling of ambiguity to the reader, imploring him to believe that this place is mysterious and can be dangerous.

Ballard shows a constant affection with the theories of the French thinker Michel Foucault. Heterotopia is described by critics as a placeless place, which means it both exists and does not at the same time. In the novel of *The Drowned World*, a drowned city of London is found beneath the lagoon when the character of Strangeman decides to drain it to loot the treasure when they discover the city. London therefore exhibits the notion of heterotopia that Foucault celebrates.

In addition to the drowned city, the characters in *The Drowned World* also tend to formulate the concept of heterotopia in the novel. Kerans, the main protagonist, allows the writer to highlight the elements of heterotopia, as he is depicted as a pessimist and desperate character. Also, as the story unfolds, some characters, including Kerans, start to experience a set of dreams that are weirdly connected. One of the characters even asks the protagonist if he experienced them long before he actually does. These dreams mirror the real world, but are imaginative, a kind of heterotopia.

From the study conducted and the results gathered, we can deduce that dystopia and post-apocalypse are definitely related and can be used in correlation. In addition, post-apocalypse is becoming an important part of the history of literature due to the audience it garnered in the last century, making the genre one of the biggest in literature as well as various other forms especially in entertainment. Moreover, heterotopia as a spatial study needs a careful consideration since the existing knowledge and research conducted in the field is scarce and

barely touches the surface. This study tried to merge the concept with post-apocalypse in order to analyse the novel of J.G. Ballard *The Drowned World*.

In conclusion, the work of J.G. Ballard on the novel definitely sparks an interest among literary enthusiasts. While this work scratched only the surface, further studies must be conducted for the purpose of further understanding Michel Foucault's heterotopia.

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