

# Literary Research, Science Fiction and Society: Elements of Methodology.

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## Résumé:

Cet article est une réflexion théorique autour des problèmes méthodologiques relatifs à la recherche en littérature. Les notions de littérature et société deviennent complexe lorsqu'il s'agit d'aborder la science fiction: genre marginal et pourtant si visionnaire. Nous avons soulevé la difficulté d'investir un genre fantasmagorique, utopique et souvent illusoire. Dans cet article, il est question d'éléments de recherche en science fiction, et plus précisément de la science fiction politique. Robert A. Heinlein fut choisi pour illustrer une démarche pluridisciplinaire autour de l'objet et de la méthode.

ملخص:

يعد هذا المقال محاولة نظرية للإشكالية المنهجية المتعلقة بالأدب، حيث أصبحت مفاهيم الأدب والمجتمع معقدة وشائكة بالنسبة للخيال العلمي بصفته فرعاً مهماً على الرغم من رؤيته الاستشرافية ونود هنا توضيح مدى صعوبة البحث في نوع استعاري خيالي مستمد من فكرة المدينة الفاضلة (يوتوبيا) و. يتعلق الأمر هنا بعناصر بحث في الخيال العلمي وتحديد الخيال العلمي السياسي. أما اختيارنا لروبار. هينلين فهو مقارنة تقوم على تعدد التخصصات وتكاملها في هذا المجال من حيث المنهجية والرؤية.

## Introduction

Literature has been responsible of a great number of social and cultural changes all over the world, at different ages. All over, wherever there is a glimpse of liberticidal temptations (the muting of press, the imprisonment of intellectuals, or the persecution of dissidents), literature emerges as a mythical savior to counter-act all forms of obscurantism, and further, awaken the people to the surrounding threats: threats that are not forcibly seen the common mortals.

Literature is predicated on a set of ideological principles that overshadow rhetoric and aesthetic considerations. These principles are united in one idea; the concept of subversion. The majority of literary authors endorse creative writing to out-speak a certain discontent. A great majority adopt a taboo-breaking posture for egocentric or altruistic reasons. Authors

evolve in an iconoclast, rebellious, and insolent manner for the sake of deploring ostensible injustice, and trying to figure out solutions to end it.

Taboos include a wide range of areas running the gamut from religion, to sexuality, passing by morals, political doctrines, and economy. In politics Noam Chomsky describes the indispensable role of literature in what he calls "Orwell's Problem". That is a state apparatus, adopted by dictatorships, to insemminate an ensemble of beliefs within the social unconscious in order to manipulate their outlooks on such fundamental things as: lifestyles, thought, language, and culture. Chomsky undertakes an insightful meditation on the power of literature to harass people onto changing their minds, and questioning their certainties about society and history:

*"...I've been always resistant consciously to allowing literature to influence my beliefs and attitudes with regard to society and history. There are things I resonate to when I read, but I have a feeling that my feelings and attitudes were largely formed prior to reading literature. (...) Literature can heighten your imagination and insight and understanding, but it surely doesn't provide the evidence that you need to draw conclusions and substantiate conclusions. I can think of things I read that had a powerful effect on me, but whether they changed my attitudes and understanding in any striking or crucial way, I can't really say. People certainly differ, as they should, in what kinds of things make their minds work. I don't really feel that I can draw any tight connections "*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Noam Chomsky. *The Chomsky Reader, biographies, etc.* Online excerpt from: Google books. December 2007.

The underlying affirmation displayed in the above excerpt presents a series of obsessions over absolutism and propaganda. It can act as an anti defamation tool: an alternative to the casual discourse formatted by politicians. It does a certain work of simulation on reluctant brains. It acts on the anesthesia provoked by propaganda, and endows people with extra-lucid vision of their environment in its full ugliness and anomalies. Literature and writing in general, cannot be dissociated from political protest. Even apolitical works are the definition of politicization, as not writing about politics is a political move. There is (in literature) a constant endorsement of strong attachment. The Latter binds literature to some political discourse. The main motives gravitate around the vague idea that writing nourishes outstanding political resolution, and ongoing (disturbing) philosophical corpuses, as well.

## **1. Science Fiction and Politics**

Beside non fiction, Science Fiction monopolized the exploration of consistencies and inconsistencies; actions and reactions; the "self" and the "other" altogether in imaginary, but politicized contexts. Science Fiction is concerned with the search of an absolute truth. But the irony lies in its predication on the unreal, or the not-yet-real. Out of this confrontation, a formidable stylistic figure is born. The genre manifests peculiar defiance towards propaganda (including all literary genres), but employs propagandist schemes to oppose the mainstream propaganda: fear, sensationalism, subliminal imagery...and so on.

This risky position of Science Fiction made of it the object of despise of all forms of literary expressions. The "serpent-de-mer" of SF being political struggle, drove confrontation with other genres on political grounds, involving the supremacy and hierarchy of one genre in comparison to others, and the burning question of literary legitimacy and respectability. Each genre (Roman Noir, Heroic Fantasy, and Erotic Literature, for instance) claims a deem "natural" right to rule of genre-specific literature. Historically (time being the maturation factor to genres), it was SF which triumphed over the other genres, merely because of its crystal clear affiliation with political matters. The

engagement in political discourse comforted SF in its relentless quest for legitimacy.

In its laborious mutation, SF fiction established frail criteria; a sort of genre standards; compulsory for academic recognition. These high standards provide that the only receivable works would be those which blend high aesthetic exigencies with (more or less) punctual reference to political questions. A failure to observe the golden rule, would result in a degradation of a work down to the category of leisure, and entertainment. The place given to propaganda and counter-propaganda is similar to Smith's (1939) own conception:

*'Propaganda' is not used here as an invidious term. It is used to describe works consciously written to have an immediate and direct effect upon their readers' opinions and actions, as distinguished from works that are not consciously written for that purpose or which are written to have a remote and indirect effect. It is possible that conventional critics have learned by now that to call a literary work 'propaganda' is to say nothing about its quality as literature. By now enough critics have pointed out that some of the world's classics were originally 'propaganda' for something<sup>2</sup>.*

SF and Literature in general consented to play with/against propaganda to contribute in creating a social effect. The latter can be a commentary, a manifest, or a call for revolt. Excessively paranoid (some would say schizophrenic), literature began to render the imperceptible fluctuations of communication schemes; calling for scandal every time there is a smell of propaganda.

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<sup>2</sup> Bernard Smith, *Forces in Literary Criticism*, 1939. Online excerpt. Source Eng.wikipedia.org. December 2007. Second Source: Barnes & Nobel free readings. Retrieved on November 2007.

Literature and power enticed a necessary question on the possible co-existence of the two of them in the public sphere. Despite their seduction-flirt-rejection relationships, literature and politics score mutual accusations ranging from lobbyism and blackmailing to persecution and even annihilation attempts. The "serpent-de-mer" shows again in the form of a legitimate question: can there be literature without politics?

## 2. Literature and politics: A necessary relationship?

Modern literature (1914-1945) had been deeply marked by the teachings of the two World Wars; specters of totalitarianism and dangerous drifts occupied the minds, and works of writers – with one question: how come? In the aftermath of WWII, literary men questioned the rapidity with which humanity descended so promptly on the threshold of apocalypse.

Accusative fingers pointed political propaganda as the first diffusion, and convincing mode. Mistrusted and suspicions prevailed over politics, language, and communication in general. The decade of McCarthyism confirmed those fears; paranoia ruled. People started to question the truthfulness of political discourse, and the veracity of historical facts.

*"Now, it is clear that the decline of a language must ultimately have political and economic causes: it is not simply due to the bad influence of this or that individual writer."<sup>3</sup>*

Orwell expertly hooks the major problematic of literature and political power. He points the weakness of language<sup>4</sup> when it becomes the hostage of demagogic political intentions. Orwell accuses lobbies, corporations and oligarchies of several things. The gravest one is the perturbation of the logical order, onto the "fascization" of the world via the manipulation of words. The only rampage would be the instinctive

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<sup>3</sup> George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language". Google Books. Retrieved on December 2007. Second Source: voidspace.org. July 2007.

<sup>4</sup> See Ludwig Wittgenstein.

vigilance of writers; able to detect and assaults the drifts premises.

Modern writing expects devoted rejections of inhumane thoughts: despotism, fanaticism, injustice...etc. Moreover, a tacit belief in the necessity of vigilance vis-à-vis power and its representatives was created. Another handy move was the deliberate deconstruction of iconic imagery surrounding cult figure (Hitler, Mussolini, Mao, Peron...etc). The cult for evil, and evil representation were definitely demonized; the very little sympathetic thought towards despots is reprehensible by a feeling of guilt.

André Malraux<sup>5</sup>, the color-bearer of this modern thought has achieved a considerable intellectual contribution. He rendered an on-the-spot testimony of the post-war social horrors and the distortion of reality, within modern democracies, when it comes to endangering the political interests of any given country. Imitated by Hemingway (*For Who the Bell Tolls*), Jones (*The Thin Red Line*) and others, Malraux has forced everyone to look into the troubled relationships politics have with literature, causing, all the way, some conceptual lash backs to the notions of truth, evil, acceptance, adjustment and iconoclasm.

The politicization of literature and fictionalization of politics have blurred the considerations of literary theory and helped the emergence of Science Fiction; an apparently harmless apolitical genre, but which can be perverted to the maximum. Modern writers<sup>6</sup>(from which came the greatest Science Fiction minds) consider themselves and society as being in psycho-historical crisis. Through essays and novels, they dramatically depict what dangers can ensue when history is forgotten and neglected.

More accurately, literature – as one formidable expression of human genius- contains fertile grounds for intellectual debate. One can merely question of the role of literature in achieving progressiveness. How many human/humane advances did literary creations help to settle? Or, from a universal perspective, what are the effects of writing on the development of mass ideologies and thinking systems? Obviously, a look at the monotheist religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), at political pamphlets (*MeinKampf*, *The Communist Manifesto*) or any 1990's

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<sup>5</sup> See *La Condition Humaine*.

<sup>6</sup> Those who, in the 1920s and 1930s, witnessed the rise of totalitarianism.

nihilistic fiction (*American Psycho*, *Generation X*) would confirm the view that writing (Fiction/ Non-fiction) is generative of thought, debate, behaviour and ultimately models, religions, social and moral to name only a few.

Science-fiction as genre was tremendously liberating for authors and incontrollable minds. Freed from the conventional restrictions (logic, coherence, authenticity), SF gave birth to the best and worst portrayals of the future of the future; mankind, technology, power and other aspects of human activity. In the vast realm of sci-fi production, appears elite made of much respected authors, who were hailed, not only for the delightful entertainment they supply, but also for the subtle and pertinent views they expose. Jules Verne, Frank Herbert, Philip Dick, and H.G. Wells have earned cult status. Furthermore, they set basis of nowadays SF bases and myths.

### 3. Heinlein A Special Case

Robert Heinlein is a separate example of a particular controversial author. This immensely rich oeuvre is ambiguously considered by critics as one insightful vision of the future. Whereas for others, it is the work of a twisted mind. The heated conflicts around Heinlein are centred on his Novel: *Starship Troopers*. But what in position does Heinlein situate his view of Utopia in front of two monuments of dystopian fiction: *Nineteen Eighty-four* and *A Brave New World*.

The most sensitive part of *Starship Troopers* is its fascistic resonance. Indeed this anticipation fiction narrates the heroic crusade of an army of multiracial young men and women against the devastating danger of ravenous "Bugs". A threat - menacing the planet -, and the world (USA) as a strong, mesmerizing confederation holds the keys for salvation. This Utopian depiction of power issues in the future contrasts sharply with the usual pessimism of two sci-fi novels (*1984* and *Brave New World*), which, statically, tend to foresee the future as a darkly oppressive logical consequence of men's past and present deeds.

As it is described, in Heinlein's novel, humanity finally overcame basic conflicts (religion, race natural, natural richness, cultural differences...) and focused on one meaningful and universal enemy: the bugs. The

idyllic image would barely stimulating questioning save that the Heinlein Utopia is intrinsically based on authoritarianism, self-abnegation, monolithically structured thought, militarism, and ultimately holistic thinking. In *The Novels of Huxley* (Inspired by the Hitler<sup>7</sup> model) and *Orwell* (Inspired from the Stalinian<sup>8</sup> model), Fascism is attacked, and shown as the greatest wickedness man has ever created and performed.

Yet, Fascism remains a galvanizing term, often misused, confused or simply mistaken. Thus, we approached these multifaceted issues from different angles, political, philosophical, anthropological, educational and aesthetic. As a matter of fact, the enumerated aspects of the *Starship Troopers* Federation are essentially those of any fascistic regime. Furthermore, the ambiguous personality of Heinlein (often libertarian) makes this pamphlet highly misleading. There is a crypto-fascist subtext that contrasts with the emancipating discourse of *Stranger in a Strange Land*. On the other side (*Brave New World* and *1984*), the stigmata of WWII and the Red Scare, are back-lashes reminding the current world of how (more) horrible the planet would be under the rule of totalitarian dictators. Thus, *Starship Troopers'* value lays in the reception of that work. Heinlein readers can be confused as to the inconsistency of the author's editorial line.

#### 4. Object and Method

On the uses of studying Utopian SF, one must bear in mind that literature, as a timeless and edgeless artistic expression, magnetizes readers in a whirlpool of emotional and intellectual challenges; confronting them to different levels of complex issues – dealing with society, unspeakable feelings, and the joy of identification and understanding. Heavily communicative, literature installs a sort of intimacy between the creation and the reader to reach a quasi-orgasmic aim, consisting in understanding the intention of the writer via a seductive game of encoding and decoding.

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<sup>7</sup> Genetic selection and race selection.

<sup>8</sup> Denial of pluralism, and the rooting of the “pensée unique”.

The pleasure ratio gets increased and magnified when a reader gets in contact with science fiction. This genre is predicated on constant renewal and the creation of possible worlds<sup>9</sup>. Through embodiments of teleological speculations (what could, should, would, or must be), this artistic experience endows writers with dissection tools to explore the depths of human nature, in surreal future frameworks.

1984, for instance, enabled Orwell to question the tensional connections, existing between abusive power and logical rules (freedom, love, and existence) inside a totalitarian simulacrum of a state. Orwell, thus, unleashed a set of stylistic communicative structures, loaded with allegories, to defend a personal position against full-all despotic regimes. He composed, using science fiction, a genre that is not restrained by logic and rational (common in classical literature), and justifies this use by the capacity of science fiction to venture in creative areas, the access of which is restricted to other genres.

Science fiction gets a noticeable distinction, from other genres, in its imaginative and speculative resources. It has the technical audacity and analytical intelligence that arouse gigantesque potential for criticism and aesthetic expressivity. Regardless of its temporal choices (past or future), science fiction proves to be a ruthless expert-eye-tool in dissecting culture, ethnical tensions, class clash and so on. Its projections into the future enable us to preview the pace of evolution, and the possible drifts. By anticipating the unknown, it comforts men and women in a secure and alert expression mode.

This article is predicated on the study of the Fascist Utopia in science fiction. Studying *Starship Troopers* may serve as an insightful and inspirational handbook in non-literary issues? Topics of education, patriotism and youth – seen from the scope of a piece of prose – are considered into material life exigencies for the present world.

Put in intertextual and interdisciplinary backgrounds, two questions interpolate the legitimacy of this methodology: the first one wonders about the feasibility of submitting to analysis something which did not come to exist. The second deals with the validity and reliability of

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<sup>9</sup> This is called the 'exploration' or 'heuristic' thesis

criticism of science fiction discourses and their interpretability within the context of a changing world. A third element invites itself adjacently between the two issues; the opposition of culture (text) and nature (context): both of them are randomly either constant or relative (emphasis must be made on the fact that culture is more relative than nature).

The clash between these methodological certainties, ironically, leads to the constitution of an intellectual dead zone. The latter is generally studied under interdisciplinary paradigms. The multiplication (and overlapping) of disciplines grants researchers the possibility to investigate "non-droit" zones; those in which providing answers would not be the real objective, but rather the dexterity of the method.

The set of non-answers, unspeakable issues, cul-de-sacs and failure confessions are the strength attributes of interdisciplinary studies. In this field, failure is not a sign of weakness, but rather precious contributions in the concept of incommunicability. This theme has appeared in Science fiction with the birth of Cyberpunk<sup>10</sup>. The novels we chose to study have been released before the rise of Cyberpunk, but the re-readings of Orwell, Huxley and Heinlein cannot be done aside from the Cyberpunk prism. Heinlein's novel is to disperse the interpretative paradigms. The two other novels may serve as a theoretical background. Triangulation of several research methods may ensure a full coverage of the topic's complexity.

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<sup>10</sup> In Cyberpunk, future is associated with global corruption of mega-corporations. The increasing rise of technology and the cities has led to irreversible environmental damage and the increasing isolation of the powerless individual. The twisted individual has to stand against the forces of greedy politicians. The influential philosophical doctrine under which a scholar should approach any SF text has to be dark, prophetic and cynical. Gibson's *Neuromancer* has predicted a high-tech hyper state and predicted two decades earlier the 09/11 tragedy. The three books under scrutiny contain a considerable and substantial amount of political ideas which take significance in the post 09/11 USA. One collateral consequence of the research is the construction of parallels between the books' content and the current foundations of the mainstream educational and political philosophy. Our work is meant to transcend the novel: fruit of the golden Sci-fi age, and go into the core of the political corpus in order to reveal the genius of an author or his insanity. Furthermore, the regard of the subtext is a way to consider alternatives for the future of youth-related education. Our exploration of the future does not confine itself into the study of texts, but rather into the studies of ideas, leading further to the political projections found in each.

## 5. Complimentary Intellectual and methodological framework

Our research has been strongly influenced by Gadamer's methodology. The German intellectual has cleansed a great deal of the methodological doubts encompassing literary research, when started drafting the Utopian deconstruction out of three novels. In his legendary book *Truth and Method*, he stressed the incongruent incompatibility between "truth" and "method". Not only has he doubted in the abilities to reach relatives truths, but he further extended the same skepticism to natural sciences. In fact the main reproach he formulates toward humanities is their obsessive self-imposed calk of natural sciences methodologies:

*Because the human sciences prompt this question and thus cannot be fitted into the modern concept of science (...) the idea of science and knowledge on the natural sciences and seeking the distinctive feature of the human sciences in the artistic element (artistic feeling, artistic induction)... inductive have done more to advance the methods of logic than all the professional philosophers<sup>11</sup>*

His research in literature and art endorses intellectual distance from The German Classical criticism (Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey) which defines the texts interpretation as a speleological dive in search of the original meaning.

*"... The human sciences have their own logic [they are predicated on] showing that the inductive method ... is the only valid method ... Human science is too concerned with establishing similarities, regularities, and conformities ... which would make it*

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<sup>11</sup>*Truth and Method*. Ch 1 The significance of the humanist tradition for the human sciences (a) The problem of method. P7

*possible to predict individual phenomena and processes...in the field of moral and social phenomena, the use of the inductive method is also free from all metaphysical assumptions and remains perfectly independent of how one conceives of the phenomena that one is observing. One does not ascertain causes for particular effects. Thus it is quite important whether one believes, say, in the freedom of the will or not - one can still make predictions in the sphere of social life<sup>12</sup>."*

Gadamer suggests an antagonistic approach to research in humanities, in which the affect is not evicted. Historical perspectives offer a uterine context which enables the growth and diversification of semantic directions. Gadamer tolerates a 'historically affected consciousness' into a semi-chemical process of fusion: the marriage of the researcher's cultural and historical background with the text(s)' folklore. Therefore, he sees no need in seeking cold objectivity, as far as the object itself is not seeking, and demanding objectivity.

Temperamentally, *Truth and Method* is not a sacrosanct scripture, it possess a set of limitations. In front of complex oeuvres, it displays shortcomings in relation with classical works (those gathering consensus). Yet, it remains a high-quality methodological guide to researchers; a least those who encounter u-turns in anti-academic research. Gadamer legitimizes all approaches, as far as they maintain a logical sense of argumentation

In literary research one may face several conflictive issues. One was finding the utilitarian delicacy and tact to approach the question of utopia from a semi-scientific viewpoint:

*[Gadamer] defended the epistemological independence of the human sciences, what is called the method in modern science remains the same everywhere and is only displayed in an especially exemplary form in the natural sciences. The human sciences [including literature and art] have no*

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.p.5.

*method of their own. Yet one might ask, with Helmholtz, to what extent method is significant in this case and whether the other logical presuppositions of the human sciences are not perhaps far more important than inductive logic. Helmholtz had indicated this correctly when, in order to do justice to the human sciences, he emphasized memory and authority, and spoke of the psychological tact that here replaced the conscious drawing of inferences...*<sup>13</sup>

We opted for the above-stated inductive method as more suitable research type for literature and art topics from a sociological outlook. Inspired by Gadamer's belief in the necessity of free-minded research, we opted for a slightly anti-academic approach, bearing in mind the urge for plausible argumentation scheme to sustain our affirmations and denials, as well:

*"The involvement of free decisions - if they exist - does not interfere with the regular process, but itself belongs to the universality and regularity which are attained through induction"*<sup>14</sup>

This idea brought forward the ideal of a universal research, tainted with regularity in argumentation, serenity in the approach of the object(s), and humanism. The latter is an actual revolution in the field of humanities methodology. The classical critical schools emphasize on the detachment of the subject from the object. Gadamer evokes the need for personal fusion into the object for the sake of attaining humanism. In his own words, Gadamer stipulated a new perspective: humanities have to mark

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid p.4

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. p8

their difference with natural sciences, by overwhelming the regular inferiority complex

*(...) the human sciences are a long way from regarding themselves as simply inferior to natural sciences. Instead possessed of the intellectual heritage of German Classicism, which overcame the outmoded baroque ideal of taste and of Enlightenment Rationalism; it had also given the idea of humanity, and the ideal of "cultivating the human"(Bildung zum Menschen)<sup>15</sup>"*

All in all, the efforts of Gadamer permitted the appeased approach of literary objects, in total accord with historical affect, and the mutual interaction between the text, context, intention of the writers, and the researcher's humanistic tendencies – non-dissociable with research in human sciences. Gadamer was the intellectual guarantee we sought to adopt, in this science fiction studies, and prevent awkwardness and speculative risks.

The endorsement of Gadamer's' views facilitation the imbrications of the other research methods (like futurology) with intertextuality and semantic partitioning. Gadamer's ideas were easy-to-transplant methodological hints, into interdisciplinary studies. His backing suppleness all imaginable combinations of disciplines coming across this work, ranging from history, to literary theory; anthropology and futurology; semantics and semiotics; psychology and sociology; political theory; moral and educational philosophy.

## **6. Methodological and Ideological problems: Starship Troopers Morals**

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid p4.

Concerning *Starship Troopers*, there are several critical areas of potential conflict. The first one deals with the complexity of providing solid theoretical foundations, while being unable to verify the concrete applications: futurology remains a human science overshadowed by inconsistencies and approximations. The reader of this article may feel that it does not contain enough information to sustain a full implementation of the need for authority and militarism. This is, in fact, absolutely accurate – it does not. There are two reasons for this: (1) this study was focused on providing a framework for debate, and providing a solid theoretical foundation for further in-depth studies, and (2) one of the findings of this study is that absolutism does not function when one attempt to build think tanks on issues regarding human nature. If this study has taught us anything it is that approaching undefendable and unsustainable theses is source of intellectual turmoil. Reaching perfection, when it comes to dissert on humanities and human nature, what is expected from any research is just approximation.

The purpose of research is to explore further the relationship between Utopia, Authority and their impact on fictional characters and the meanings of outdoor the societal messages sent about people's involvement in political activities. The second aspect of our research consists in deriving meaningful ideological patterns exposed in *Starship Troopers* into philosophical concerns. In other words, the two basic signifiers of the novel: philosophy of education and philosophy of youth would serve for an utter analysis of what the future of education might be, given that the solutions provided in the book are not systematically failing; on the contrary, they offer valid alternatives to laissez-faire education patterns

A second order of collateral problems would be on the significance of the quasi-judiciary defence we operate on the Heinlein case. The American writer trucks a reputation of fascist writer. Whether right or wrong, this work is likely to give the impression that we are pleading for the rebirth of authoritarianism and brutality in education. This sentiment is reinforced by the number of pages attributed to the topic, as well as the advertising of the political ideas in the book. The fact is we were aiming at rehabilitating Heinlein by softening the fascist connotations, and

displacing the litigious attention from the Godwin law to the possible positive teachings, unseen to casual readers. Indeed, the vehemence of the demonstration is not meant for Heinlein ideas, but rather for the sake of proving the prominence of futurology and interdisciplinary studies.

Back to the marginalization of Orwell and Huxley, not only have we invoked the will to avoid dispersion and dissolution, but also the exhaustive nature of the novels. Everything has been written on these novels, so we felt that the cameo appearance of these should offer a bifurcation from the casual dystopian fiction, towards a more assumed and self-conscious dystopia. Page after page, we realized that the relative originality of our work consisted in defending what is generally undefendable.

## **7. Interrelated problems: organization and priority**

This study was conducted from an interpretive paradigm that resulted in qualitative data related to youth's perceptions of meanings found in post-modern societies. The theories of Gadamer, Futurology, and the interdisciplinary theory were useful guiding frameworks because this perspective provided alternative viewpoints to the current thought. The three novels were analyzed through constant comparison. The subsequent readings resulted in decoding patterns with continual comparisons among the intertextual transcripts. This decoding process led to the development of themes. Therefore, *Starship Troopers* was established as a challenging work. We preferred not to get unglued in a constant redundant comparative scheme and elect the most daring work as the object of in-depth attention. Exemplary quotes and excerpts were selected to provide the approach to support the theories of the study. They were picked up from books, and on-line books.

The intertextual approach was applied to *Starship Troopers* and its film adaptation. We attempted to prospect the boundaries between the text and image, and shed light on the misleading, confusion and camouflage. We tried to avoid the comparison hazards by drawing an editorial guideline. The latter starts from literary materials (with special focus on Heinlein's book), and moves toward a multi-directional

semiotic study, involving the major themes and signifiers of the novel and film. This is what anthropologists<sup>16</sup> call the holistic approach,

## Conclusion

In regard to the encyclopedic nature of literature, a cross-disciplinary approach is recommended. In other words, there is a need of making meta-literary matters resurface. The imbrications of history, philosophy, education and psychology were utilized to innocent Heinlein for the excessive attacks, and normalize academic discussions on nonliterary issues that are part of a work of literature. Therefore, literary criticism got metamorphosed from linguistic and literary methods to mainly anthropological. Literary studies and anthropology studies merge and intersect in this case.

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<sup>16</sup> See POYATOS, F. (ED.) *Literary anthropology. A New Interdisciplinary Approach To People, Signs And Literature*. A'dam 1988. Foreword