

## ***IN A PRESCIENT MODE - SYNTHESIS***

Unhappy condition of humankind

**THE RECURRENT QUESTION WITH APOCALYPTIC NOVELS IS: IS THERE A WAY OUT?**

**HOPE DOES NOT COINCIDE WITH THE EXISTENCE OF A WAY OUT**

**WHETHER WE CAN RETAIN OUR HUMANITY**

Not about heroes or martyrs, but about solidarity, care, sympathy, altruism, mutual help.

Emphasis on the need to retrieve the sense and the time of nature in order to find ways out. Tuning.

**Collapse as a complex phenomenon showing resilience of communities and cultures**

Resistance is connected to persistence and insistence

Resilience is connected to change, adaptation, and the act of resetting

The three authors share a high degree of pessimism: we have reached the limits

Even though we have reached them, we can and will find ways of being resilience

Sense of place as a way of maintaining our bonds and preserving our cultural memory

Space and place are central

### **ENVIRONMENT-FUELLED NOVELS**

DERELICT AND ABANDONED, DOORWAYS OPEN, WINDOWS BROKEN AND INTERIORS DARK.

Denouement? Closure?

In *Submergence* and *The Carballan Army* the ending coincides with the apocalypse, which means collapse.

In *Salvage* there is a sense of sinister suspension.

### **WHY DO WE SAY THAT THE APOCALYPSE IS BOTH HISTORICAL AND TRANS-HISTORICAL, UNIVERSAL?**

Apocalypse etymologically: revelation

The apocalypse is a barometer; it tells us what is going on.

Anthropogenic

Things that are too much out of scale for us to contemplate are channelled into apocalyptic novels.

Dystopia and the apocalypse: the former is a representation of nightmarish futures, the latter describes humanity on the verge of annihilation and poses eschatological questions.

Resilience and preparedness, the sense of community

No palingenesis in these 3 novels, but a very vocal appeal to humanity, the sense of community and belonging.

The do not offer solutions to apocalyptic scenarios but point to belief that whatever solutions we may find, they have to be through a deep understanding of what makes us human.

## ***SUBMERGENCE***

**J. M. Ledgard**

### STYLE

In medias res, detailed descriptions of places, rich vocabulary

Stream of consciousness and epiphanies

Contemporary political problems such as ISIS as a form of extremism, climate change

Not direct apocalypse, but predictions about a near future

After the failure of Marxism we have to build up new ideals to counteract capitalism.

Why does he refer to utopia as a genre and **Thomas More** and **Francis Bacon**? Intertextuality, a fundamental feature of apocalypse as a genre. More and Bacon were imparting a lesson.

Are the protagonists compromised?

Sense of hope. Danielle still wants to go beyond what has already been discovered, beyond human limits, while James wants to react to terrorism.

Danielle is a marine biologist, she takes advantage of her physical appearance and wealth, she has had a number of occasional relationships, she is self-conscious and self-determined, autonomous and bold.

James More is a spy

Presence of love and a love story in an apocalyptic novel: what can save us is ability to establish significant relationships and develop a sense of community.

## ***CARHULLAN ARMY***

**Sarah Hall**

### **STYLE**

**Very narrative, descriptive, first-person narrative**

### **SOCIETY**

**Apocalyptic society, scarcity of resources, energy shortage and food scarcity, isolationism, shared houses**

Totalitarian society in which men and women are exposed to extreme deprivation, men predominate over women who are the only ones exposed to birth control measures. Society denies the most basic values of dignity and integrity, having become completely immoral.

What does the protagonist find when she reaches her destination? What are her expectations?

**SISTER** has become her name

Women are subjected to surgery to ensure birth control. Women are defiled.

**SENSE OF COMMUNITY** the protagonist is looking for

She is attacked, imprisoned and famished

### **MATERIAL CONTEXT**

**EXTREME PHYSICAL CONDITIONS**

**DEPRIVATION**

Sister meets Jackie

Jackie explains how the community works

**DISEASES, POOR HYGIENE**

**HERBAL MEDICINE, DRUGS**

### **IMMATERIAL CONTEXT**

Every woman has been assigned specific tasks

Are children born there?

Male children cannot be raised in the community and are sent away for adoption

The presence of men is strongly regulated. They live at the border, immediately outside the community.

**LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY**

Jack is seen as a goddess. She is the leader and has got the leadership and has received a strong military training. She imparts military training on the others.

**THE CLAIM IS THAT THE COMMUNITY IS BASED ON EGALITARIANISM BUT IN FACT IT IS HIERARCHICAL.**

Megan represents the new generation and has no idea of the world outside, she worships Jackie. Scene at the end in which she feels no empathy, she has become inhuman

Andrew and Sister used to have the same political stance, but he has changed over the years, he has become subservient to the totalitarian regime. Different forms of response: he adapts and it is easy, because it is an extreme patriarchal society, she rebels because women are sexual slaves.

**CARHULLAN ARMY: NAZI-RADICAL COMMUNITY**

**Efficient society**

**It fails because it ends up being a replication of the social dynamics in the world.**

*Animal Farm*

*Children of Men*

*The Handmaid's Tale*

*Swastika Night*

Jackie kills Chloe and her husband as they are the dissenters, they subvert the order.

**INTEGRITY – COMPROMISE – RESCUE**

The protagonist goes through these different stages

**A sense of place**

regional sense, interest in the margins of things. She feels the legacy of the place, *genus loci*. Closeness to the Lake District and the Romantics. Bucolic and Arcadian.

The protagonists are compromised

***SALVAGE***

**Robert Edric**

**STYLE**

Very descriptive, lots of details, settings described in a meticulous way.

Use of technical words such as cull

The sense of the apocalypse is creeping in

The plot develops on the relationship of the protagonist, who is an auditor, and of each single character with the environment. Even when there is not much going on, the place is at the centre.

Capital letters of institutions conventionally indicate a dystopian environment

Sense of impersonality

Totalitarian societies are based on the identification of the individual and his/her role. Human beings do not exist as such, *per se*, they exist because they fulfil a specific function

The female protagonist is a scientist and she is compromised, when she accepts to play by the rules instead of reporting.

The last scene is the end, the complete end. Snow covers all problems