

Contents

Organization	2
Welcome	5
Symposium Programme	9
Notes on the Speakers and Abstracts of Their Papers	16

Sixth International Aldous Huxley Symposium:

Organization

Motto: “Almería, You Have the Light for Love”

Theme: Aldous Huxley in Europe

Venue: University of Almería

Conference dates: 19 – 21 April 2017

Convenors: University of Almería and the International Aldous Huxley Society

Organizing Committee: Prof Jesús Isaías Gómez López (Departamento de Filología, University of Almería) and Prof Bernfried Nugel (University of Münster)

Contact: Prof Jesús Isaías Gómez López
Departamento de Filología, Facultad de Humanidades,
Universidad de Almería, 04120 Almería (Spain);
Phone: +34-950-214461
mobile phone (in urgent cases): +34-685624047
Fax: +34-950-015475
José Manuel Salmerón, Faculty Secretary for the
Humanities; Phone: +34-950-015560

Support: The International Aldous Huxley Society
University of Almería

Registration:

Wednesday, 19 April, 9:00–10:00 a.m., Facultad de Humanidades (C building), at the Entrance Hall of the building

Thursday, 20 April, 9:00–9:30 a.m., Facultad de Humanidades (C building), at the Entrance Hall of the building

Friday, 21 April, 8:30–9:30 a.m., Registration and Distribution of Certificates, Facultad de Humanidades (C building), at the Entrance Hall of the building

Cover design: Uwe Rasch, M.A., Münster

Cover:

“Pescadores de pájaros en Guadix” (1981), painting by Jesús de Perceval: courtesy of the heirs of Jesús de Perceval

Photo of Aldous Huxley: detail of the image on p. 4

Proofreading: Dr. Gerhard Wagner (University of Münster)

Formatting and brochure design: Uwe Rasch, M.A., Münster

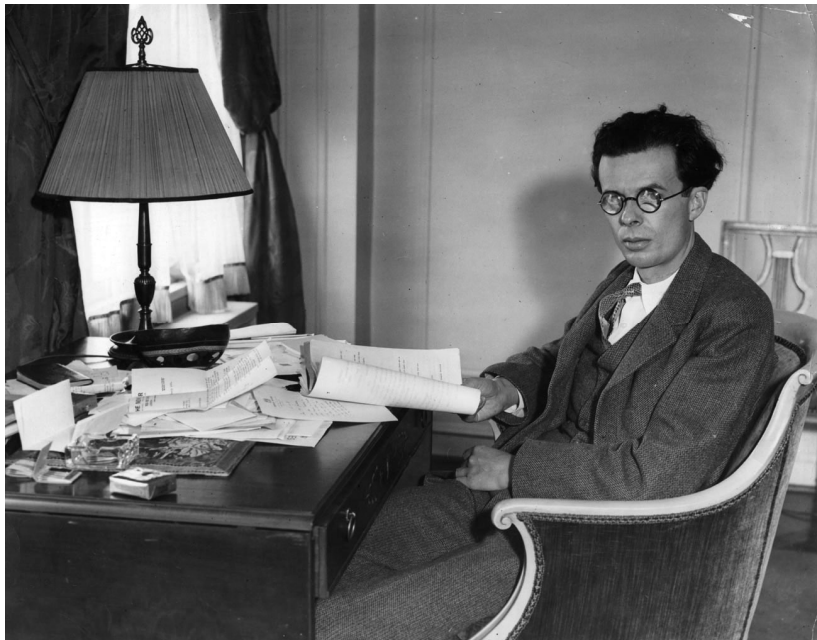
Printed by: LIT Verlag, Münster, Germany

The Sixth International Aldous Huxley Symposium is sponsored by
International Aldous Huxley Society
University of Almería
Cajamar



UNIVERSIDAD
DE ALMERIA





Aldous Huxley at Essex House Hotel, New York, 6 May 1933
(courtesy of Peter Wood)

Welcome

to the Participants of the Sixth International Aldous Huxley Symposium

For the fourth time the international community of Huxley scholars has decided to hold a symposium in a city that Huxley himself visited in the course of his worldwide travels. This time it is Almería in Spain that has attracted Huxleyans from all over the world, following the motto taken from Huxley's eponymous poem: "Almeria, You have the Light for lover." Against this backdrop, the general theme of the conference is "Aldous Huxley in Europe": it covers not only Huxley's European years (1894–1937) but also his American career (1937–1963), which is inseparably connected with European contexts. A special feature of the symposium is the Huxley Forum, a format introduced at the previous Huxley conference at Oxford in order to encourage discussion of an overarching issue in Huxley studies. In Almería it focusses on "Aldous Huxley and Self-Realization: his concept of human potentialities, his techniques for actualizing them, and his views of their social consequences," and the convenors are very grateful to Prof Dana Sawyer (Maine College of Art) and Julian Piras, M.A. (Belgium), for having organized it and co-ordinated as many as ten presentations in two large sections.

Earlier meetings of the International Aldous Huxley Society have taken place in 1994 in Münster, Germany, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Huxley's birth; in Singapore, in 2000/01, on the subject of "Aldous Huxley and the Challenges of the Third Millennium"; in Riga, Latvia, in 2004, on the subject of "Aldous Huxley, Man of Letters: Thinker, Critic and Artist"; in Los Angeles, in 2008, on the subject of "Aldous Huxley in America", and in Oxford, in 2013, on the subject of "The Condemned Playground: Aldous Huxley and His Contemporaries." Lists of speakers and their topics at these meetings are available on the Society's website: http://www.uni-muenster.de/Anglistik/Huxley/ahs_conferences.html.

The Aldous Huxley Society, founded in 1998, has two chief purposes: to promote the academic study of the works of Aldous Huxley, in particular critical editions, commentaries and interpretations, and to

make a wider public acquainted with the thought and writings of the author. Furthermore, the Society supports the Centre for Aldous Huxley Studies (CAHS) at the Department of English at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, and undertakes to organize academic meetings, further academic work of its members within the scope of its authority and possibility, cooperate with other societies devoted to the academic study of the works of Aldous Huxley and send delegates to international conferences. The Society possesses its own research library, and sponsors a journal, *Aldous Huxley Annual*, edited by Professors Jerome Meckier (University of Kentucky) and Bernfried Nugel (University of Münster), as well as a monograph series, "Human Potentialities," edited by Professors Lothar Fietz (University of Tübingen) and Bernfried Nugel.

Those interested in joining the Society should first consult its website and then apply to its Chairman, Professor Bernfried Nugel (<nugel@uni-muenster.de>).

One of the foremost English-language writers of the last century, Aldous Huxley (1894–1963) was an encyclopaedic man of letters in the traditional sense, that is, a thinker, critic and artist in one. After the radical scepticism of the first two decades of his career (1916–1936), which culminated in his world-famous satirical novel of the future, *Brave New World* (1932), he aspired, from the end of the 1930s, to a metaphysical expansion of his world-view and his image of humanity. Among the steps that clearly testify to this development are his foundation of a modern ethics in his essay collection *Ends and Means* (1937), his anthology (with comments) of excerpts from Western and Eastern mystics, entitled, in allusion to Leibniz, *The Perennial Philosophy* (1945), and his self-experiments with mind-expanding drugs, described in *The Doors of Perception* (1954) and *Heaven and Hell* (1956). At the centre of his later thinking was the notion of "actualizing human potentialities," depicted, for instance, in his last novel, *Island* (1962). Throughout his career, Huxley had a searching mind, always open to new insights and solutions of problems. His last great essay, *Literature and Science* (1963), shows him as a bridge builder between the humanities and the natural sciences; it closes with an encouraging remark typical of the later Huxley:

“Cheerfully accepting the fact [of man’s limited ability to explore the universe], let us advance together, men of letters and men of science, further and further into the ever expanding regions of the unknown.”

Within this mental framework Huxley worked also as a distinguished literary critic, art critic, and critic of society and culture. Several essay collections, such as *On the Margin* (1923), *Proper Studies* (1927), *Music at Night* (1931), *The Olive Tree* (1936), *Themes and Variations* (1950), *Adonis and the Alphabet* (1956) and *Brave New World Revisited* (1958) can still be read with profit and delight nowadays, especially because Huxley was doubtless one of the leading essayists of the twentieth century. His literary oeuvre is characterized by extraordinary variety: apart from essays, he wrote not only poems, short stories and dramas, but also novels and utopias. His first utopia, *Brave New World* (1932), was dystopia and anti-utopia in one, and *Ape and Essence* (1948) as well as his musical comedy version of *Brave New World* (1956) reveal that his anti-utopian thinking deepened over the years; even his so-called positive utopia *Island* (1962) provides no blueprint of a perfect society but a qualified picture of what might be humanly possible at the time of its composition.

To commemorate Aldous Huxley, the International Aldous Huxley Society (Münster, Germany) and the Aldous & Laura Huxley Literary Trust (Los Angeles) have set up an oak bench in Compton Cemetery (Surrey) near the grave of the Huxley family. On the top rail, as Huxley’s call for continuous awareness, a quotation from *Island* has been carved: “Here and now, boys!” Almost all the books, manuscripts and letters he kept at his home in Los Angeles were destroyed in a brush fire in 1961. Some surviving materials are housed at the UCLA Library, which also acquired materials from Mrs Laura Huxley’s residence in the Hollywood Hills in 2009.

After Huxley’s death in 1963 interest in his work has been growing since the mid-1960s and gathering strength since the 1990s, with the foundation of the Aldous Huxley Society and its associated meetings throughout the world. With the death of Huxley’s only son, Matthew, in 2005, and that of his wife, Laura, in 2007, the long-

standing copyright problems associated with the filming of his best-known novel, *Brave New World*, had finally been resolved, but regrettably the film project under the direction of Ridley Scott and the production of George DiCaprio has not yet materialized. But at least there may soon be a new TV adaptation by Grant Morrison and Brian Taylor (see <<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/herocomplex/la-et-hc-brave-new-world-syfy-20160811-snap-story.html>>).

The Sixth International Aldous Huxley Symposium has been convened by the University of Almería and the International Aldous Huxley Society, but it is the participants who really matter: they will doubtless make it a further highlight in the tradition of international Huxley Symposia since 1994!

With all good wishes,
on behalf of the organizing committee,

Jesús Isaías Gómez López
Departamento de Filología,
University of Almería

Bernfried Nügel
Aldous Huxley Society
(University of Münster)

PROGRAMME

SIXTH INTERNATIONAL ALDOUS HUXLEY SYMPOSIUM

Motto: “Almería, You Have the Light for Lover”

Theme: Aldous Huxley in Europe

Convenors: University of Almería, represented by Prof Jesús Isaías Gómez López, and the International Aldous Huxley Society (AHS)

Venue: University of Almería

Dates: 19–21 April 2017

(Note: Unless indicated otherwise, all lectures are scheduled to be held at Aula Magna, Facultad de Humanidades C [University of Almería].)

TUESDAY, 18 APRIL 2017

19:30 Conference Warming (arranged by the Dean of the Faculty of Humanity) at Patio de Los Naranjos (University of Almería)

WEDNESDAY, 19 APRIL 2017

09:00–10:00 *Registration* at Facultad de Humanidades, Edificio Central C

10:00–10:15 *Opening Addresses* at Auditorio (University of Almería)

The Rector of the University of Almería

The Dean of the Faculty of Humanities

The Director of the Department of Philology

The Convenors:

The Chairman of the International Aldous Huxley Society (AHS)

Prof. Dr. Jesús Isaías Gómez López

10:15–11:00 *Keynote Lecture* at Auditorio (University of Almería)

Chair: Bernfried Nugel

Kirpal Singh: “Aldous Huxley in Europe and Beyond: Reflections on Cultural Landscapes”

Symposium Programme

11:00–11:30 *Break* (coffee and snacks at Edificio Central)

11:30–12:00

Chair: Jesús Isaías Gómez López

David King Dunaway: “Aldous Huxley and Spectacles”

12:00–14:00 *Huxley Forum I*

(arranged by Dana Sawyer and Julian Piras)

“Aldous Huxley and Self-Realization: his concept of human potentialities, his techniques for actualizing them, and his views of their social consequences”

Dana Sawyer: “An Appraisal of Aldous Huxley’s Psychedelic Insights”

James Spisak: “The Huxley-Osmond Correspondence”

Ronald Lee Zigler: “Aldous Huxley, Neuroscience and the Nonverbal Humanities: How Do They Humanize?”

Christopher Rudge: “Aldous Huxley, Neuropsychiatry, and the Evolutionary Potential of the Human Brain”

Irina Golovacheva: “Aldous Huxley at the Cradle of Bioethics”

14:00–15:30 *Lunch Break*

15:30–18:00 *European Traditions and Contexts*

Chair: Gerd Rohmann

Grzegorz Moroz: “Aldous Huxley and the Literary Tradition of the Grand Tour”

Alessandro Maurini: “Aldous Huxley in the Current European Liberal-Democratic Debate”

Jean-Louis Cupers: “‘Farcical History of Richard Greenow’ Revisited”

16:30–17:00 *Break* (coffee and snacks at Edificio Central)

Symposium Programme

17:00–18:00

Christopher Langmuir: “‘Arabie the Unblest’: Sources of *Arabia Infelix*”

Peter Wood: “Aldous Huxley’s Unknown 1934 Letter to René Schickele: A Mirror of the Writers’ Community at Sanary”

Bernfried Nugel: “‘The Silliest Line in Goethe’: Aldous Huxley’s Emendation of ‘Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis’”

18:00–18:45 *Keynote Lecture*

Chair: José Francisco Fernández-Sánchez

James Sexton: “Aldous Huxley and Architecture”

19:15 *AHS Opening Reception* at Patio de Los Naranjos
(University of Almería)

THURSDAY, 20 APRIL 2017

09:00–9:30 *Registration* at Facultad de Humanidades, Edificio Central C

9:30–11:30 *Huxley Forum II*

(arranged by Dana Sawyer and Julian Piras)

“Aldous Huxley and Self-Realization: his concept of human potentialities, his techniques for actualizing them, and his views of their social consequences”

Janko Andrijašević: “Spiritual Potentialities Gone Awry: Aldous Huxley’s Father Joseph”

Julian Piras: “The Mystical Experience: A Desirable Human Potentiality in Aldous Huxley’s Later Works”

Claudia Rosenhan: “‘A Green Thought in a Green Shade’ – Cosmic Consciousness and Human Potentialities in *Island*”

Symposium Programme

Robin Hull: “‘Knowledge’ and ‘Understanding’ in *The Perennial Philosophy*”

Uwe Rasch: “‘Magic in the Moonlight’: Belief as an Obstacle to Human Development”

11:30–12:00 *Break* (coffee and snacks at Patio de Los Naranjos)

12:00–12:45 *Keynote Lecture* at Auditorio (University of Almería)

Chair: Jesús Isaías Gómez López

Richard Samuel Deese: “Beyond *Brave New World*: The Post-Huxleyan Feminism of Elisabeth Mann Borgese”

13:00–15:00 *Lunch Break*

15:00–18:00 ‘*Brave New World*’

Chair: Jerome Meckier

Adam Parkes: “‘A Small Caste of Experts’: Huxley’s Fictions of the Twenties and Thirties”

Maxim Shadurski: “Aldous Huxley’s England in *Brave New World*”

Emilio García-Sánchez: “The Crisis of Beauty in *Brave New World*: Correspondences with Current Trends in Cosmetics”

Valery Rabinovitch: “Utopian and Anti-Utopian Thought in Aldous Huxley’s Letters”

16:30–17:00 *Break* (coffee and snacks at Patio de Los Naranjos)

Symposium Programme

17:00–18:00

Roderick B. Overaa: “‘The Flower of the Present’: Buddhism and the Savage Reservation in *Brave New World*”

Jesús Isaías Gómez López: “Almería, Malpais and Mojave: Three Luminous Stations in Huxley’s Idea of ‘boundlessness and emptiness’”

Lawrence Davidson: “Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*: Predictions in Light of Present-Day Reality”

20:00 Guided Stroll through Old Almería, with tasting of tapas in several popular taverns (expenses not covered by the conference fee)

FRIDAY, 21 APRIL 2017

08:30–9:30 *Registration and Distribution of Certificates* at Facultad de Humanidades, Edificio Central C

9:30–10:30

Chair: Bernfried Nugel

Sabbar S. Sultan: “Creative Writers and Their Invocation of Divine Inspiration, with Particular Reference to Aldous Huxley”

Piero Ferrucci: “Clash of Cultures: A Huxley Family Story”

10:30–12:15 *Panel for Young Huxley Scholars*

Chair: Gerhard Wagner

Tom Serpieters (University of Leuven): “The Essayist and His Activities as a Public Intellectual: The Case of Aldous Huxley and Paul Valéry”

Hisashi Ozawa (University of Tokyo): “Aldous Huxley and Japan: The Missing Link in Huxley’s ‘Best-of-Both-Worlds’ Project”

Symposium Programme

Leandro Gaitán (University of Navarra): “The Adaptive Function of the Brain and Non-local Consciousness: Convergences Between Bergson and Huxley”

Heike Sieger (University of Münster): “Only a Matter of Taste?: The Two Layers of Music in *Ape and Essence*”

Reanne Crane (Durham University): “Going Easy on Names and Notions’: Psychedelic Semantics from Huxley’s Later Essays to *Island*”

12:15–12:45 *Drinks* at Patio de los Naranjos

12:45–13:30 *Keynote Lecture* at Auditorio (University of Almería)
Chair: Bernfried Nügel

Jerome Meckier: “Thanatopsis / Thanatology in *Brave New World* and *Island*”

13:30–15:00 *Lunch Break*

15:00–17:30 *Varia*
Chair: David Dunaway

Luis Enrique Echarte Alonso: “Literature as an Ultimate Tool for Teaching and Researching Sciences: Aldous Huxley’s Perspective”

José-Carlos Redondo-Olmedilla: “Pacifism, Vedanta and *A Single Man* Relationship: Approaching Isherwood and Huxley”

Tamar Shanidze: “Expanding Fame – Aldous Huxley’s Works in Georgia”

16:00–16:30 *Break* (coffee and snacks at Patio de Los Naranjos)

Symposium Programme

16:30–17:30

Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz: “Did Aldous Huxley’s ‘Thinker’s’ Plays Miss the Essence of Theatre? A Comparison with Vaclav Havel’s Plays and Thoughts on Theatre”

Anant Mutalik-Desai: “Aldous Huxley’s Exploration / Discovery of the West via the East: The Formation of a Paradigm?”

Joan Wines: “Distancing the Homeland: Huxley’s 1961 Summer Diary”

20:00 Farewell Dinner at PEÑA FLAMENCA EL TARANTO

SATURDAY, 22 APRIL 2017

9:00–14:00 *Coach tour* through Cabo de Gata, including visits to a typical wine distillery and to an oil mill

NOTES ON THE SPEAKERS AND ABSTRACTS OF THEIR PAPERS

Janko Andrijašević

(b. 1971) graduated from the English Department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić in 1995. He got his M.A. degree at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade in 2000. In 2005, he defended his doctoral dissertation about religious elements in Aldous Huxley's prose at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Novi Sad. His academic interests vary across the areas of psychology and religion in literature, as well as the medical humanities. He has published two short novels, *My Cathedral* (2006) and *The Wire Pyramid* (2012). Since 1995 he has been employed as a lecturer at the Faculty of Philosophy in Nikšić, Montenegro. (E-mail: <jankoand@yahoo.com>)



“Spiritual Potentialities Gone Awry: Aldous Huxley’s Father Joseph”

This presentation analyses the historical character of Father Joseph, the protagonist of Aldous Huxley's novel *Grey Eminence* (1941), from a psychological and religious perspective. In this work Huxley attempts to explain the inhuman behaviour of this high-ranking, unofficial French dignitary of the 16th and 17th centuries, who was also an ascetic French Capuchin friar and had mystical experiences from an early age. Besides retracing Huxley's analysis of this character in terms of religion and politics, this presentation tries to supplement it with the tools of the modern theory of personality disorders and unearth the psychological roots of the problem of Father Joseph's case. In a first step, Father Joseph's psycho-religious characteristics will be discussed based on the criterion of general psychological and religious maturity. Contemporary diagnostic tools will be applied to evaluate Father Joseph's personality structure. Evidence will be given that he meets multiple criteria of what in psychiatry are called personality disorders, particularly of the

Notes and Abstracts

masochistic kind. In a second step, the presentation focuses on Father Joseph's concrete psychological and spiritual idiosyncrasy, and on the relationship between the inner (the psychological and the noetic) existential levels of his personality. Based on the analysis, Father Joseph might be taken as an example of the "Luciferian" principle *corruptio optimi pessima est*. The narrative of Father Joseph shows the dangerous, anti-spiritual, and inhuman nature of mystical potential gone awry.

Reanne Crane

graduated from Newcastle University in 2014 with a Master's degree in Modern and Contemporary Literature, after completing his BA in English Literature and Chinese. Her MA thesis focused on Aldous Huxley and the limitations of Western science. Following this, she spent two years working as a teacher in Spain. She is currently working on her doctoral thesis: '*Going Easy on Names and Notions*': *Psychedelics, Psychiatry and Philosophy in the Work of Aldous Huxley*.

(E-mail: <reannecrane84@hotmail.com>)



“Going Easy on Names and Notions’: Psychedelic Semantics from Huxley’s Later Essays to *Island*”

After half a century of remission, psychedelic research has been revived by organisations such as MAPS (Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies) and the Beckley Institute. The more optimistic researchers are calling this “The Psychedelic Renaissance.” Yet, lamentably, discussion remains inhibited by sensationalist cultural symbols and false dichotomies between science and religion. This demands an updated examination of the ‘psychedelic’ literature that *preceded* the social movement, in which the substances became conflated with anti-establishment ideologies, New Age religion and CIA experiments. Although Huxley himself held rather conservative views on how these drugs should be used,

Notes and Abstracts

he remains a revered countercultural figure. As such, it is often forgotten that his application of psychedelics was always intended to be prosocial; neither rejecting Western culture outright, nor advocating escapism.

Rather than focus on the thematic continuities between the essays and *Island*, I will discuss their discontinuities and examine how his linguistic treatment of psychedelic consciousness evolved throughout the period. I will also look at the power implications of these disparate narrative forms, arguing that Huxley's initial conformity to scientific discourse and methodologies contributed to the assimilation of psychedelics into a framework that could not prove their efficacy. I argue that *Island* attempts to compensate for many of the epistemological shortcomings of the earlier essays.

With the possibility of reintegrating psychedelic therapy in the future, these works are of paramount importance. Huxley offers a variety of discourses through which to frame these 'drugs' or 'medicines,' and close analysis could help current researchers to navigate the semantic minefield that surrounds psychedelics.

Jean-Louis Cupers

is a musicologist and literary critic, who has devoted a number of publications to the field of melopoetics: *Aldous Huxley et la musique: A la manière de Jean-Sébastien* (1985), *Euterpe et Harpocrate ou le défi littéraire de la musique* (1988), *Musico-Poetics in Perspective: Calvin S. Brown in Memoriam* (co-ed. with Ulrich Weisstein) [2000]. He holds a PhD in Comparative Germanic Philology and a BPh, Lic. Mus. He has succeeded José Lambert, Jean Weisgerber, Paul Hadermann etc. as Vice-President and President of the Belgian Comparative Literature Association. His latest publications include "Music and Literature: A Chinese Puzzle?" (*Revue belge de musicologie*, 58 [2004]), *Synesthésie et rencontre des arts* (2011) and *Ouvertures mélodiques: Initiation aux études musico-littéraires* (forthcoming, Aix/Marseille, Presses Universitaires de Provence). He has also written a



Notes and Abstracts

Grammaire fondamentale de l'anglais (Bruxelles, Ed. De Boeck, 11th ed., 2012), which exists in several formats, as well as two books of poems: *Terres végétales* and *Le Jardin sauvage* (unpublished).
(E-mail: <jeanlouis.cupers@gmail.com>)

“‘Farcical History of Richard Greenow’ Revisited”

It is extremely rewarding to examine closely the numerous passages which, directly or indirectly, involve music in Huxley’s fiction and compare their relevance to one another. A recent article by Hisashi Ozawa, “The Uncanny Self: The Great War, Psychoanalysis and Aldous Huxley’s ‘Farcical History of Richard Greenow’” (*AHA*, 15 [2015], 191-214), has forcibly and convincingly demonstrated the underlying autobiographical tinge of Huxley’s first essay in fiction, the novella “Farcical History of Richard Greenow” from the collection *Limbo* (1920). It can be argued that the possibly most formidable passage on music contained in it (in a fiction that abounds in such feats!), being both singularly accurate in the technical point of view and imaginative in its symbolical quality and relation to the story as a whole, subtly underlines the strength of the argument of the aforesaid article, in particular the way in which the psychological and/or psychoanalytical point of view adopted manages to describe the compelling quality of the story. As such it happily inaugurates the great musical decade of the twenties in Huxley. From a limited point of view the passage concerned could be compared to an analogous passage from Huxley’s early novel *Those Barren Leaves*. The two passages show a writer perfectly at home with the two dimensions of the art of music, the vertical and the horizontal. From a wider point of view the passage is to be both placed in the therapeutic perspective that was the young boy’s in Marburg studying music and German and the global perspective of the development of the whole of Huxley’s oeuvre.

Lawrence Davidson

is Professor Emeritus of History at West Chester University in West Chester, Pennsylvania, USA. He holds a Ph.D. in European Intellectual History from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. His dissertation was written on the subject of *Aldous Huxley on Drugs, Mysticism and the Humanization of Man*. Subsequently, he made a career in the history of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. (E-mail: <ldavidson1945@msn.com>)



“Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* : Predictions in Light of Present-Day Reality”

On March 20, 1962, during a speech delivered at the University of California at Berkeley, Aldous Huxley stated that, “there will be, in the next generation or so, a pharmacological method of making people love their servitude so that people will in fact have their liberties taken away from them, but will rather enjoy it, because they will be distracted from any desire to rebel by propaganda or brainwashing and this seems to be the final revolution” (<https://publicintelligence.net/aldous-huxley-1962-u-c-berkeley-speech-on-the-ultimate-revolution/>).

He elaborated on these ideas in the earlier novel *Brave New World* (1932) and a non-fictional exploration, *Brave New World Revisited* (1958). In both, the premise was that the majority of people do not want political or intellectual freedom, but rather trouble-free contentment: both material and psychological. At some point in the near future science would supply the tools (pharmacological, psychological, genetic, etc.) to grant that level of contentment. And so, it follows that the government which uses those tools most effectively will be the government that prevails, perhaps forever.

It is now almost two generations since Huxley made these predictions. On the surface, it would appear that they have not been realized, at least to the extent of having restructured our socio-political lives. Or, is it possible that Huxley misjudged the timeline, and that we are indeed still on the road to something like his *Brave*

Notes and Abstracts

New World dystopia?

Using the present social and political conditions in Europe and the United States, plus an assessment of the state of the relevant science, this paper will examine to what extent these predictions are still viable and, if they are, what has delayed their realization.

Richard Samuel Deese

grew up in Claremont, California. After studying History at the University of California at Berkeley, he traveled to China, where he taught English Composition at Nanjing University. He currently teaches History at Boston University and is the author of *We Are Amphibians: Julian and Aldous Huxley on the Future of Our Species* (University of California Press, 2014) and *Surf Music* (Pelekinesis Press, 2017). His work has been published in *AGNI*, *Aldous Huxley Annual*, *Berkeley Poetry Review*, *Endeavour*, *The Journal of Religion*, and *The Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*. (E-mail: <rsdeese@gmail.com>)



“Beyond *Brave New World*: The Post-Huxleyan Feminism of Elisabeth Mann Borgese”

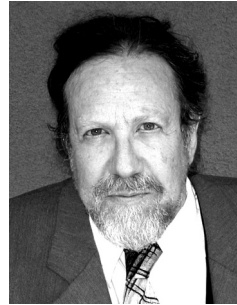
In her 1963 feminist treatise, *Ascent of Woman*, the author and activist Elisabeth Mann Borgese argued that the steady shift toward collective modes of production and mass culture in the twentieth century had established the foundations of a new social structure that would radically elevate the status of women. In her analysis of *Brave New World*, she argued that the World State that Aldous Huxley had sketched roughly three decades earlier would be more plausible if it were governed by women, given its thoroughly collectivist structure. In the epilogue of *Ascent of Woman*, entitled “My Own Utopia,” Elisabeth Mann Borgese outlined another possible future, employing those elements from *Brave New World* which she saw as desirable, such as ectogenesis and a World State, while adding

Notes and Abstracts

elements that have no precedent in Huxley's work, such as a highly evolved population that shifts *en masse* from one sexual identity to another to correspond with changing phases in life and social position. While a number of contemporary critics regarded her imagined utopia as absurd, Elisabeth Mann Borgese raised questions about the changing nature of human reproduction and the mutability of sexual identity that have only become more salient in the twenty-first century.

David King Dunaway

is Professor of English at the University of New Mexico and author and editor of ten books, among them *Huxley in Hollywood* (New York, 1989) and *Aldous Huxley Recollected* (New York, 1995). He wrote the last *Dictionary of National Biography* listing on Huxley and has contributed articles on Huxley to *Anglistik* and *Aldous Huxley Annual*, as well as producing a national public radio series on Huxley, "Aldous Huxley's Brave New Words." His speciality is the presentation of literature and history via broadcasting.
(E-mail: <dunaway@unm.edu>)



"Aldous Huxley and Spectacles"

This review of Aldous Huxley's visual problems and proposed solutions is the story of 'The Man Without Glasses.' Visual metaphors have always predominated Huxley's oeuvre, such as *The World of Light* or *Eyeless in Gaza*.

Starting from details of his biography, the essay then considers his travel piece "Spectacles" (*Along the Road* [1925]), which begins: "I never move without a plentiful supply of optical glass." The distance between that statement and Huxley's eventual rejection of visual aids may be as revealing of character as that of the evolution of his last (anti-)hero in *Island*, Will Farnaby. Thus, Huxley's American years might be said to be framed by his own evolution, from eyeless to eyeland.

Luis Enrique Echarte Alonso

is Assistant Professor of Philosophy of Medicine at the University of Navarra, School of Medicine. Since 2009, he has also led a project on Neuroethics for the Culture and Society Institute. His main research interests concern moral psychology and cognitive enhancement. He has published more than thirty papers and a book on emotional authenticity, self-deception and the relation between will, habits and technology.

(E-mail: lecharte@unav.es)



“Literature as an Ultimate Tool for Teaching and Researching the Sciences: Aldous Huxley’s Perspective”

Thinking back on my 15 years of experience as a teacher of Philosophy in a School of Medicine, I have become aware that students at this level have increasing difficulty in understanding non-applied knowledge. This problem concerns the teaching not only of Humanities subjects but also of basic sciences, such as Biochemistry or Anatomy. Some observational studies support my statement. The inability to value knowledge in itself—and ultimately, present reality—is, in my view, one of the main causes of this difficulty. In turn, this loss of sensibility has to do, as Aldous Huxley warned us three quarters of a century ago, with a new cultural climate that fosters *technified attitudes*—towards the body, science, the arts, beliefs etc. According to Huxley, studying means will very soon be more important than studying ends. More serious still, and because ends are not only a matter of reflection but also of apprehension, i.e., intuition, this current social trend is sending the acquisition of sensitivity skills into oblivion. This is an issue that transcends towards the field of research and, of course, towards professional practice. Concerning the former, excessive preoccupation with short-term results (sometimes hidden behind strategic plans of *innovation*) and unemotional, detached researchers are, in my opinion, clear signs of this projection. Furthermore, fewer scientific advances than expected and the increasing number of burnout cases

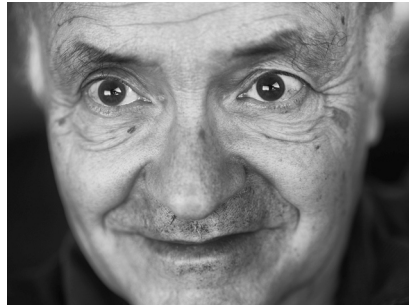
Notes and Abstracts

among researchers are identified by some authors as two specific long-term consequences of such *technified attitudes*.

In this presentation, I will, firstly, examine Aldous Huxley's advice about facing up to these problems through the revaluation and introduction of subjectivity in education and research programs. Secondly, I will analyse his main ideas about the role of art—the *third culture*—to recover the lost unity between the sciences and the humanities.

Piero Ferrucci

was born in Turin, Italy, in 1946. He graduated in philosophy at the Università di Torino, then did didactic training with Roberto Assagioli, the founder of psychosynthesis. He is a registered psychotherapist, and a trainer at the Società di Psicopsintesi Terapeutica in Florence. He has written several books,



translated into various languages, among which are *Inevitable Grace, Beauty and the Soul* (1990) and *Your Inner Will* (2014), and has edited *The Human Situation*, lectures by Aldous Huxley at Santa Barbara, 1959 (1977). He lives and works in Florence, Italy.
(E-mail: <xpieroferrucci@gmail.com>)

“Clash of Cultures: A Huxley Family History”

In 1956 Aldous Huxley married my aunt Laura Archera, who lived in Hollywood. Laura was my mother's younger sister, so Aldous became connected with my family—a very traditional Italian family in the fifties, with a strong Catholic component (especially on my father's side). Aldous and Laura visited us several times, both in Torino and at our seaside residence in Torre del Mare. During that period I was between 10 and 16 years old. The relationship between Aldous and us took unexpected turns, and it touched on several themes—religion, and also education, what books to read, music,

Notes and Abstracts

philosophy, art, psychedelics, dealing with handicaps, and what to do when I grew up. Above all it dealt with dogma versus free-thinking.

Although this relationship never became openly conflictual, the differences in outlook were evident. It was a confrontation of *Weltanschauungen*, and I was in the middle. Pathos was added by Aldous' illness and impending death (during his last visit in Italy, August 1963).

Three letters of Aldous, never before published for reasons of privacy (two to my aunt Millina, and one to me), as well as my own memories and reflections, will be the subject of this presentation.

Leandro Martín Gaitán

is a professor at the School of Education and Psychology at the University of Navarra, Spain. He taught in Argentina for almost eleven years before moving to Spain to obtain the degrees of MSc and PhD in Philosophy. The topic of his dissertation was *The Object, Structure and Purpose of Neurotheology: Studies in Aldous Huxley*. He has also been a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Centre of Theology and Philosophy at the University of Nottingham (UK). His research interests concern the metaphysical, ethical and cultural implications of neuroscience, and his current research focusses on the relationship between neuroscientific naturalism and modern gnosticism as well as nihilism.

(E-mail: <lgaitan@unav.es>)

“The Adaptive Function of the Brain and Non-Local Consciousness: Convergences Between Bergson and Huxley”

For many years it has been assumed that the hardest problem concerning the mind-matter/mind-brain relationship is to explain how an aggregate of millions of neurons individually non-sentient can generate subjective consciousness. Many scientists argue that science will find an answer to the problem in the perhaps not too distant future. They are convinced that solving the problem is only a matter of time, a matter of developing a technological arsenal that

Notes and Abstracts

allows for a more thorough exploration of the brain. Up to now, however, they can only speculate on scientific progress in this field.

Moreover, the question is whether we are seeking consciousness in the right place. Perhaps we should redirect our focus instead of going on searching consciousness in our biological nature like one who seeks the value of money in the chemical composition of bills. Bergson went in this direction and Huxley followed him. The former's proposal consists, basically, in attributing to the brain the function of transmitting consciousness, not of producing it. That is to say, we have to think of the brain as a kind of antenna or central telephone office that communicates or transmits consciousness: we would thus regard the latter as a fundamental property of the universe. Starting from this premiss, my presentation is structured as follows: a) it describes the adaptive conception of the brain postulated by Henri Bergson and the theory of consciousness derived from it; b) it underlines the points of convergence with Aldous Huxley's thinking and the reasons why Huxley considers the Bergsonian theory to be relevant; and c) it mentions the most important investigations that have been carried out in the wake of those authors in the last years.

Emilio García-Sánchez

is a biologist who obtained a Master's degree in Bioethics with a thesis on *The Return of Virtue Bioethics to the Crisis of Nature* (University of Navarra, 2010). Currently he is Professor of Bioethics at the Faculties of Medicine and Nursing of CEU Cardinal Herrera University (Valencia, Spain). He is the main researcher of the Bioethics research group at his university. His main line of research concerns the ethical and sociological analysis of human vulnerability in today's culture: health and its bioethical implications. He has published two articles on the recognition of the nature and dignity of the terminally ill, the latest being "The Rescue of the Human in the Patient Who Dies" (*Journal of Bioethics*, 2012), and was also the



Notes and Abstracts

editor of issue no. 77 (vol. 23: *Eugenics in Today's Society*) of the same journal (May 2012). He is currently working on bioethical issues raised by aesthetic medicine, has published an article on this subject ("The Tyranny of Perfection: Bioethical Implications" [2013]), and is one of the editors and authors of the book *Human Dignity of the Vulnerable in the Age of Rights: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (2016). In this volume the title of his contribution is "Cosmetic Vulnerability: The New Face of Human Fragility." He was a visiting scholar at the Institute of Ethics at Dublin City University (July–September 2014) and at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University, Washington DC (August–November 2015). He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Bioethics and Medical Ethics of Spain, of the Valencian Society of Bioethics and of the Spanish Association of Personalism.
(E-mail: <emilio.garcia@uchceu.es>)

"The Crisis of Beauty in *Brave New World* : Correspondences with Current Trends in Cosmetics"

In *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley describes a splendid, polished, white world, an impressive world in which, paradoxically, beauty is in crisis. The correspondences with cosmetics in today's society are evident. Similar to other areas, Huxley prophesies a world where the image of the body acquires an excessively large value and shows its negative consequences. Perfect men and women are at the highest social level: as Alphas and Betas they are aesthetically attractive and their stereotypes coincide with those of current celebrities. The novel depicts humans that are successful with regard to their physical and mental qualities as well as their aesthetic features. But for them beauty is extremely limited to the body surface. This obsession is so excessive that it rejects and denies all forms of internal beauty. Like today, in Fordmania there is a crisis of beauty in so far as it is made glossy, becoming the object of likes and dislikes, something arbitrary and pleasant, measured by its immediacy and its value with regard to use and consumption. The necessary contemplative distance is prevented so as not to capture the authenticity of human beauty that should never be automatically decipherable. Beauty is experienced without depth and meaning in a mere emotional

Notes and Abstracts

response. Everything is covered by makeup so that vulnerability is hidden and aging is artificially coated to distract from the looming reality of death. *Brave New World* is full of pleasing sensations, spaces and techniques that touch the senses, a world of exhaustive positivity in which there is no pain, injury, wrinkle, guilt or ugliness—a world visually aestheticized in which the true experience of beauty itself, which goes beyond mere aesthetic pleasure, is unknown. Clearly, Huxley describes a world of aesthetic delight, where men are misleadingly conditioned to aspire to happiness and superficial beauty *ad nauseam*. Can one not already encounter this prophetic Huxleyan scenario today in our beauty-oriented society?

Marketa Goetz-Stankiewicz

is Professor Emerita in the Department of Central, Eastern and Northern European Studies at the University of British Columbia. Apart from essays in Comparative Literature, she is author of *The Silenced Theatre: Playwrights Without a Stage* (1979), and editor of *The Vanek Plays: Four Authors, One Character* (1987), *Good-Bye Samizdat: Twenty Years of Czech and Slovak Underground Writing* (1992) as well as co-editor of *Critical Essays on World Literature: Vaclav Havel* (1999). In 2009 she was Benjamin Meakins Visiting Professor at the University of Bristol. In May 2016 she received the Jiri Theiner Award in Prague. She contributed the essay “Huxley is Indeed Our Contemporary: *Brave New World* Seen Through Czech Eyes” to *AHA*, 12/13 (2012/2013), 291-302.
(E-Mail: <marketa@interchange.ubc.ca>)



“Did Aldous Huxley’s ‘Thinker’s’ Plays Miss the Essence of Theatre? A Comparison with Vaclav Havel’s Plays and Thoughts on Theatre”

My remarks will attempt to develop a precarious bridge between two writers’ attitudes to theatre: Aldous Huxley, well known throughout the English-speaking world and beyond, and Vaclav Havel, a Czech playwright who ran the whole gamut from being prisoner to becoming president of his country. I will ask the question why Huxley’s plays earned little or no success on the stage and never achieved the breakthrough so intently craved by their author.

Although Huxley stated that plays require attention, he mostly seemed interested in whether they were “producible” and, despite having rewritten several of his prose texts as plays, never explored the basic nature of the theatre, its ancient ‘mystery’ (despite his essay “The Mystery of the Theatre” [1925]) that was the constant playground of Havel’s ideas, which the latter pursued passionately despite being ‘banned’ (even imprisoned) and, until 1989, never performed in his home country.

But there are connections between the two writers: both used the weapon, or tool, of language to try to reveal what was to be criticized in their societies. But whereas Huxley dwelt on the vacuous materialism of English society by illuminating the habits and psychology of his characters, the language of Havel’s plays is lifted off concrete social problems. We cannot get any closer to Havel by using psychology to understand his characters. And, the dictum frequently used for Huxley, that he wrote “thinker’s” plays, would be misleading if applied to Havel.

A thorny question arises: does the fact that Huxley did not seem to grasp the essence and ‘mystery’ of theatre provide some answer to the failure of his plays when performed, as well as to his life-long striving to conquer the stage, which Havel did without the intellectual equipment provided by wide travel, knowledge of languages, as well as the context of writing in a world language? This is a vast and, possibly, an unfair question but it does not diminish Huxley’s genius as a writer of prose.

Irina Golovacheva

is a professor at the Philological Faculty at St. Petersburg State University (St. Petersburg, Russia). She is a Fulbright Foundation and Fletcher Jones Foundation (The Huntington Library) fellow, and a member of the International Aldous Huxley Society, the European Association for American Studies, and the Utopian Society (Europe). Professor Golovacheva is the author of two books in Russian—



Science and Literature: The Archaeology of Aldous Huxley's Scientific Knowledge (St. Petersburg, 2008) and *Fantastika and the Fantastic* (St. Petersburg, 2013), which contains a chapter on *Brave New World*. She has published numerous papers on Aldous Huxley, Henry James, Edgar Allan Poe, Christopher Isherwood, mass culture, and mathematical methods in literary criticism. (E-Mail: <igolovacheva@rambler.ru>)

“Aldous Huxley at the Cradle of Bioethics”

The paper discusses Aldous Huxley's socio-biological concerns. Special emphasis is laid on his dubious role in shaping the eugenic paradigm of the 1920–60s. In his numerous writings on population issues, Huxley addresses such aspects of the eugenic doctrine as sterilization and segregation of “the unfit” (negative eugenics) and special breeding programs for “the fit” (positive eugenics). Being a corrective rather than an egalitarian or abstractly humanistic utopia, eugenics attracted quite a few writers whose concerns centered on science and the progress of humanity. Among the artists who supported even the most radical eugenic ideas that only much later would be seen as inhuman were Robert Chambers (*The King in Yellow*, 1895), H. G. Wells (*The Island of Dr. Moreau*, 1896, and *A Modern Utopia*, 1905), Edward Bellamy (*Looking Backward*, 1898) and G. B. Shaw (*Man and Superman*, 1903).

A reading of Aldous Huxley's pertinent non-fiction—from “The Importance of Being Nordic” (1925), “The Future in the Past” (1927), and “What Is Happening to Our Population?” (1934) to “Human Potentialities” (1962)—highlights the fundamental ambiguity under-

Notes and Abstracts

lying many of his fictional writings, *Brave New World* (1932) in particular. His strategy of the ‘utopization’ of eugenics entails the contradiction of “ends and means” which the writer strived to avoid.

One of the puzzling episodes of Huxley’s activity is his participation in the Dartmouth Convocation on Great Issues of Conscience in Modern Medicine (September, 1960). After the conference, he assessed it as “rather disappointing.” Why did the Convocation, which institutionalized bioethics as a new sphere of professional and public polemics, fail to become an important event for the writer? To answer this question, one has to explore, besides Aldous Huxley’s personal motives, the changing eugenic discourse and the specific role of Julian Huxley, the writer’s elder brother, who never ceased to advocate radical eugenic improvement as a shortcut to a better humanitarian world.

Jesús Isaías Gómez López

is Associate Professor of English literature and Translation at the Department of Philology at the University of Almería (Spain). He graduated from the University of Granada with a Ph.D. in Philology (1998). A special role in his academic upbringing was played by the renowned Joycean scholar and founder of the Spanish James Joyce Society, Professor Francisco García Tortosa (University of Seville). Professor Gómez López has published



monographs, editions and articles mainly on James Joyce and Aldous Huxley, among other twentieth-century English and American writers. His most recent monographs include: *Mono y esencia* (annotated translation with introduction of Huxley’s *Ape and Essence* [Cátedra, 2017]); *‘Ulises,’ la odisea universal de James Joyce* (JPM, 2017); *George Orwell, Poesía completa* (2017); *Aldous Huxley, poeta de paraísos perdidos* (Síntesis, 2016); *F. Scott Fitzgerald, Poemas de la era del Jazz* (2016); *Un mundo feliz* (annotated translation of Huxley’s *Brave New World*, with introduction [Cátedra, 2013]); *Ray Bradbury, Poesía completa* (Cátedra, 2013); *Aldous Huxley, Poesía completa* (annotated

Notes and Abstracts

translation of Huxley's complete poetry, with introduction [Cátedra, 2011]). He is Director of the Research Group: "Lenguaje y Pensamiento: Relaciones de Significación entre el Léxico y Obras Literarias" ('Language and Thought: Meaning Interrelations between Lexicon and Literary Works'). Altogether, he is involved in nearly ten funded individual or collective research projects.
(E-mail: <jigomez@ual.es>)

"Almería, Malpais and Mojave: Three Luminous Stations in Huxley's Idea of 'Boundlessness and Emptiness'"

Accompanied by his wife Maria, Aldous Huxley visited Almería in October 1929. This autumnal journey made a deep impression on him. The "naked sun" and "celestial fire" of his poem "Almeria" seem to express Huxley's idea of pure intellect and pure spirituality that is at the core of his ensuing book of poems, *The Cicadas and Other Poems* (1931). In the following year, 1932, Huxley published *Brave New World*, where the savage reservation of Malpais represents the Inner Light of the Primitive Mind. And seventeen years later, in 1948, Huxley brought out *Ape and Essence*, his last and most alarming dystopian novel, where the "emptiness" of the Mojave desert symbolises that Light that "kindles the Universe" in a postnuclear and apocalyptic scenario. Against this backdrop, the deserts of Almería, Malpais and Mojave, with their silence, light and emptiness seem to be the "most expressive symbols" of mystical enlightenment.

Robin Hull

was born in Switzerland in 1961 and brought up on Aldous Huxley by his father, James Hull, who spent a lifetime immersed in the works of the great English writer. Robin Hull took a degree in English and German at Zürich University. Throughout the 1990s he assisted his father in his efforts to write a comprehensive study of Huxley's mysticism as reflected in his complete works. After the death of his father Robin Hull became a Curator of the Inter-



Notes and Abstracts

national Aldous Huxley Society, involving himself actively in the society and the posthumous publication of his father's *magnum opus*. In the year 2004 he founded Switzerland's first English Sixth Form College in Zürich where he currently works as a Headmaster. (E-mail: <r.hull@hullschool.ch>)

“‘Knowledge’ and ‘Understanding’ in *The Perennial Philosophy*”

I hope to take a closer look at the notions of ‘knowledge’ and ‘understanding’ in *The Perennial Philosophy* and to relate the terms to Huxley's views on psychology, education, religion, society and our possible inner evolution.

Knowledge and understanding in terms of the Perennial Philosophy mark the ends of a continuum within which our lives evolve. When we are governed by our knowledge, we are mostly asleep to our higher potentialities. When we wake up to this and face the unpleasantness of our inner absence, we have moved up slightly towards understanding. In *The Perennial Philosophy* Huxley refers to this as being between two stools. A moment of more complete awakening may bring a flash of what Huxley calls real ‘understanding.’ This marks the other end of the continuum—consciousness and presence.

Knowledge and understanding are of fundamental significance in the Perennial Philosophy. The difficulties begin when a student of the Perennial Philosophy attempts to graduate from knowledge to understanding. Is knowledge a prerequisite or can we aim straight for permanent understanding? How can these terms be applied meaningfully to religion; is religion at the level of knowledge useless? Can there be religion without permanent understanding?

What does the notion of understanding in the Perennial Philosophy mean in education? In this connection it seems worthwhile to consider both *Brave New World* and *Island*.

As understanding in the Perennial Philosophy is wordless and mysterious, even a master of words like Huxley struggles to capture it verbally. Fortunately *The Perennial Philosophy* affords many indirect insights into the nature of understanding, which are of invaluable help to anyone taking a more practical interest.

Christopher Langmuir

studied Classics at the University of Cambridge; he has an MSc in Applied Linguistics from the University of Edinburgh and PhD from the University of Seville, where he teaches the history of English and historical sociolinguistics.

(E-mail: <celangmuir@ono.com>)



“Arabie the Unblest’: Sources of *Arabia Infelix*”

It is ironic that a poem that has been described as one of Aldous Huxley’s “most successful” (George Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour* [Montréal et al., 2007; 1972], 140), should have been published just at a time when the author’s confidence in his own poetic vocation was faltering and his novels were receiving growing recognition. The title poem of what was effectively Huxley’s penultimate collection, *Arabia Infelix and Other Poems* (London, 1929) alludes to one of the three regions into which the Romans divided the Arabian peninsula: Arabia Deserta, Arabia Petraea and Arabia Felix. As a geographical term, Latin *felix* meant “fecund, fruitful,” it also acquired meanings of “auspicious, favourable, prosperous,” but it is the figurative sense of “happy, fortunate” that predominates in Roman poetry and prose and in the Romance languages in which the word survives. Huxley exploits that dual scope of the adjective, to regions and individuals, in his felicitous inversion ‘infelix,’ evoking geographically Arabia Deserta and personally his own inner crisis in which the writer’s creative sterility is reflected in an utterly desiccated landscape. The poem has been compared and contrasted with Walter de la Mare’s “Arabia.” This paper explores two possible further sources of inspiration, one English, the other Portuguese.

Alessandro Maurini

works at the University of Turin, Italy. He holds a PhD in Political Studies, History and Theory, and his main fields of research are the role of Aldous Huxley's political thinking, especially with regard to *Brave New World*, in contemporary political thought, and, more generally, modern and contemporary political thought. He is the author of *Aldous Huxley: The Political Thought of a Man of Letters* (Lanham: Lexington Books, Rowman, 2016) and the editor of the new Italian edition of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World / Brave New World Revisited* (Milano: Mondadori, 2015ff.), for which he has translated the author's foreword and written an afterword. He is the author of several articles on the role of dystopia in contemporary political thought and on Aldous Huxley's political thinking. (E-mail: <alemaurini@yahoo.it>)



“Aldous Huxley in the Current European Liberal-Democratic Debate”

The influence of Aldous Huxley, and of *Brave New World* in particular, on the political thinking of Isaiah Berlin and Francis Fukuyama not only confirms the passage of anti-utopia into the arms of twentieth-century political philosophy, but it also highlights the extraordinary impact of Huxley's views on contemporary political thought—also way beyond *Brave New World*. Thus, to weigh up the importance of the influence of his ideas and their reception effectively means to confirm the outstanding modernity of his thinking.

Both of the great twentieth-century ideologies, liberalism and socialism, refer to Huxley's criticism of progress, but in particular liberalism makes it its own, due to the pivotal position of individual liberty around which it traditionally revolves. Thus, Huxley's political thinking is consigned in Berlin's reception to the concept of liberty, divided into positive and negative, empirical and rational liberty; and it is consigned in Fukuyama's reception to the definition of the individual's biological freedom, grasping perfectly the most

Notes and Abstracts

characteristic feature of *Brave New World* as compared with other dystopias.

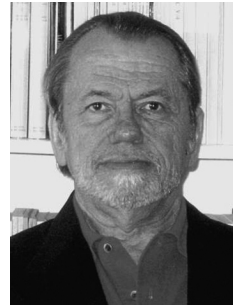
These two receptions, therefore, place Huxley's ideas over against some of the unresolved issues of contemporary liberalism and the challenges facing it. And, thanks to the typical anti-utopian exaggeration principle, *Brave New World* is destined to represent an unsurpassed and insuperable paradigm of the risks of totalitarian degeneration inherent in the two receptions, that is, at least as long as the said challenges remain unsurpassed and insuperable.

In short, this paradigm cannot be ignored for the future of liberalism: it is to this paradigm that every development of liberalism will unmistakably and constantly continue to return, as Huxley and *Brave New World* do not only represent the paradigm, but also maintain a disconcerting ability to attract attention to it.

Jerome Meckier

is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Kentucky. He has published seven books and dozens of essays on nineteenth- and twentieth-century English and American literature. Besides three book-length studies of Dickens, he has written four books on Aldous Huxley—*Aldous Huxley: Satire and Structure* (1969); *Critical Essays on Aldous Huxley* (1996); *Aldous Huxley: Modern Satirical Novelist of Ideas* (2006); *Aldous Huxley, from Poet to Mystic* (2011). He is a Curator of the International Aldous Huxley Society and co-edits *Aldous Huxley Annual*.

(E-mail: <jmeckier@outlook.com>)



“Thanatopsis/Thanatology in *Brave New World* and *Island*”

Nothing supports or damages a community's claim to perfection more than its manner of handling death, both the idea of it and the event itself. *Brave New World* and *Island* seem equally preoccupied with mortality. So much so that one can compare John the Savage's

Notes and Abstracts

disastrous stint in the brave new world with Will Farnaby's redemptive sojourn in Pala by concentrating on what each learns about death and dying. Pala has formulated a commendable thanatopsis, i.e., view of death, whereas the World State's outlook, which features death-conditioning, is a despicable mix of concealment and denial. The counterpoint involving John's and Will's responses to death extends to the respective societies in which they find themselves. By proxy when Lakshmi dies, Will passes his exam in Thanatology, the "ultimate science" all must be examined in according to Dr. Mac Phail. Discombobulated by Linda's passing, the Savage perishes ignobly. Unlike Linda, whose grotesque death Huxley rewrites in *Island*, Lakshmi dies a perfect death in his idea of the perfect society. Pala's emphasis on thanatopsis, that is, on being mindful of death, and the development of a thanatology or art of dying in support of it distinguish Huxley's island from the brave new world and from utopias generally.

Grzegorz Moroz

teaches English Literature and related courses at the University of Białystok. His research interests concentrate on issues connected with the history and theory of travel writing in Anglophone and Polish literary traditions and on the works and life of Aldous Huxley. His recent publications include *Travellers, Novelists and Gentlemen: Constructing Male Narrative Personae in British Travel Books, from the Beginnings to the Second World War* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang Verlag, 2013) and *On the Road from Facts to Fiction: Evelyn Waugh's Travel Books* (Prymat, 2016).

(E-mail: grzes.furbia@wp.pl)

"Aldous Huxley and the Literary Tradition of the Grand Tour"

Between 1923 and 1937 Aldous Huxley lived first in Italy and then in France, the two key destinations of the Grand Tour. Although the tradition of the classic (European) Grand Tour and its representations in literature had already been mostly spent by 1923, the year in which the Huxleys moved to Florence, it still seems worthwhile

Notes and Abstracts

to confront Huxley's fictional and non-fictional writings on Europe with the modes of writing deployed by travelling (and resident) British writers, from Richard Lassals, through William Beckford, Lord Byron, the Shelleys to Charles Dickens and E. M. Forster. Huxley's texts to be considered in this context include *Along the Road*, *Those Barren Leaves* and *Eyeless in Gaza*.

A. A. Mutalik-Desai

is a former Smith-Mindt and Fulbright fellow who wrote his doctoral dissertation on Norman Mailer's novels. He has retired as a Professor of English from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. Earlier, he taught at Sir Parashurambhau College, Poona, and at various campuses of Indiana University and Fairfield University (USA). His research essays on modern English and American literature have been published in India and overseas. His



book *Aldous Huxley: Novelist and Thinker* (Nagpur, 2010) is mainly a collection of his own critical studies. As President of the Indian Association for American Studies he has edited and published five volumes of their annual conferences (1993-2001). In 1993 he was awarded the Olive I. Reddick Senior Prize for Literature. More recently he has been elected President of the Association for English Studies (2015). He has translated from Kannada, a South Indian language, with two full-length works already published. (E-mail: <aamddwd@yahoo.com>)

“Aldous Huxley’s Exploration of the West via the East in 1926: The Formation of a Lifelong Paradigm?”

From the beginning Aldous Huxley was an explorer of his own self and faced the challenge of being heir to the Huxley-Arnold legacy. As the new century began its course, life in Western Europe was under darkened skies with the forebodings of European military conflicts. Wars are the apotheosis of human aberration on the one hand and of

Notes and Abstracts

radical, destructive change on the other. Paradigmatic changes were to be a constant in Huxley's career.

In *Antic Hay* (1923), the protagonist had encountered poverty which had reduced humans to live "worse than dogs." It was a real eye opener. Soon, the author was to experience frequent eye openers when he and his wife Maria undertook a sojourn to India. Before coming to India, as narrated in his travelogue, *Jesting Pilate* (1926), Huxley knew little about British colonialism or of the hundreds of millions of Asians who lived in the far-flung empire. At the time the Huxleys undertook this journey, India was in a political turmoil with a crusade for "Swaraj" (self-rule) dominating the subcontinent. Huxley did not align himself with the ruling class as he saw the unfairness of the colonial stance; he sided with India's demand for self-rule.

While still in the East he began his reflections on the West. When he arrived in California, the land and the people were as though waiting for someone sharper and more committed than Sinclair Lewis. Huxley's observant and satirical gaze fell on Hollywood and its obsession with "having a Good Time." Also to draw this English visitor's ire was the unabashed Babbitry of the business community.

But as the Huxleys visited Chicago, it was the same. New words such as 'mortician' and 'casket' (instead of 'undertaker' and 'coffin') had become common. That was all.

While this 1925-1926 journey began in India it concluded in the West, Huxley having learnt or discovered about his own backyard: this was a virtual re-education, a paradigm shift. As Thomas Kuhn has noted, such a shift engulfs events, people, the environment and life itself with positive as well as negative effects. Huxley's progression from his early novels, via *Point Counter Point* and *Brave New World* to those in the latter phase such as *Ape and Essence* and *Island* illustrates his metaphysical, near revolutionary 'journey' from East to West.

Bernfried Nugel

is Professor Emeritus of English Philology at the University of Münster, Germany, and has published books and articles on neoclassical literature and literary theory as well as on specific aspects of Modernism. He is the Chairman of the International Aldous Huxley Society and Director of the Centre for Aldous Huxley Studies at the Department of English, University of Münster (www.anglistik.uni-muenster.de/Huxley). With Prof Jerome



Meckier he co-edits *Aldous Huxley Annual* and, with Prof Lothar Fietz, the Huxley-centred monograph series “Human Potentialities.” (E-mail: nugel@uni-muenster.de)

“The Silliest Line in Goethe’: Aldous Huxley’s Emendation of ‘Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis’”

How well did Huxley know and understand Goethe? In his own view, apparently, well enough to feel in a position in his late career to heavily criticize the famous line from the Chorus Mysticus at the end of *Faust*, Part II: “Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis” (in A.S. Kline’s translation: “All of the transient, / Is parable, only”). Whereas in *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936) he still has his protagonist Anthony Beavis accept the line as at least a half-truth, the narrator in his short story “Consider the Lilies” (1954) explicitly rejects it as entirely untrue. In his novella *The Genius and the Goddess* (1955) the protagonist Rivers corrects the text into “‘Alles vergängliche is NOT a Gleichnis,’” and in his last great essay *Literature and Science* (1963) Huxley even went so far as to ironically emend it into “Alles Vergaengliche ist NICHT ein Gleichnis” (‘All of the transient is not parable’).

These interpretations and deliberate alterations of Goethe’s line clearly signal a pronounced change in Huxley’s world-view that took place in the 1940s and beginning 1950s. In my talk I will analyse his reasons for calling the quotation “the silliest line in Goethe” but will also show that he may have underrated or even ignored the inherent ambivalence underlying the ending of *Faust*.

Roderick B. Overaa

is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Tampa. Born in Seattle, he spent three years teaching English as a foreign language in Ishinomaki, Japan, before earning a M.F.A. in Creative Writing and a Ph.D. in English Language and Literature at the University of Washington. His research interests include the Euro-American modernist engagement with Eastern religion and philosophy, postmodern Japanese literature, and Asian Diasporic/Global Anglophone literatures. His academic, journalistic, and creative work has appeared in many publications, including *South Atlantic Review*, *Asiatic*, *Cross-Cultural Studies*, *Aldous Huxley Annual*, *Kyoto Journal*, *Silk Road*, *Zahir*, and *Hiragana Times*. (E-mail: <ROVERAA@ut.edu>)



“The Flower of the Present’: Buddhism and the Savage Reservation in *Brave New World*”

It has been axiomatic in Aldous Huxley scholarship that the novelist’s sustained interest in Indic philosophy (particularly Hinduism and Buddhism) began in earnest sometime after the publication of *Brave New World* (1932) and before that of the Buddhist-inflected *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936). Although Huxley had toyed briefly with Indic philosophical concepts such as *māyā* (mundane realm of appearances) and *śūnyatā* (emptiness, voidness) in early novels like *Those Barren Leaves* (1925), most scholars still argue for a distinct schism in the author’s attitude toward India and its principal religio-philosophical systems of thought in the mid-1930s—a critical stance based on little more than a couple of sneering sketches of an Indian holy man and an elderly fuel gatherer in his book of travel essays, *Jesting Pilate* (1926), and his associations with the Vedantists Gerald Heard and Christopher Isherwood, which began in the 1930s. This paper demonstrates that by the time he was drafting his dystopian novel *Brave New World* Huxley had already begun developing a keen understanding of Buddhism, and that he transfigured elements of the Buddha’s mythic life story into the plot of his novel. More specific-

Notes and Abstracts

ally, I show that Huxley's depiction of Bernard Marx's and Lenina Crowne's visit to the savage reservation of Malpais is actually a highly ironic, Melvillean travesty of the awakening of the Gautama Buddha's spiritual yearnings as described in quasi-biographical accounts of the Buddha's life in scriptures such as the *Lalitavistara Sūtra* (Detailed Narrative of the Sports [of the Buddha]) and the *Buddhacarita* (The Life of the Buddha). By thus exposing the illusory nature of the genetically engineered, programmed lives into which the citizens of the dystopian World State are born and indoctrinated, Huxley invites his readers to question the constructed nature of their own social, political, economic, religious, and epistemological 'realities.' This analysis enables me to argue not only for the centrality of Indic thought to Huxley's oeuvre, but for the centrality of exoteric, Asian discourses and art forms to Euro-American modernism more generally. This study is important because the modernist phenomenon that I term the "exoteric impulse" allows us to reappraise and reclaim the work of many modernist writers and artists who have historically been denied canonical status as modernists—a project that is of particular moment in today's New Modernist Studies.

Hisashi Ozawa

is a part-time lecturer of English language and literature at the University of Tokyo. His major fields of research are English-language literature in the twentieth century and Utopian writing in the modern and present-day eras. In 2014, his article on *Brave New World* was awarded the Peter Edgerly Firchow Memorial Essay Prize. In 2016, He received a Ph.D. from King's College, London, with his dissertation, *Identity Paradoxes: The Self and Others in the Literature of Aldous Huxley*.

(E-mail: <hozawa@phiz.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp>)

“Aldous Huxley and Japan: The Missing Link in the ‘Best-of-Both-Worlds’ Project”

Although the general theme of the conference is “Aldous Huxley in Europe,” it would be meaningful to investigate his relationship with the East in order to deeply understand his relationship with the West. The impact of Asian cultures on Huxley’s later career has been widely acknowledged with repeated emphases on his considerable interest in Indian and Chinese philosophy, but strangely enough the role of Japanese culture in this encyclopaedic author’s work has received little attention.

Certainly, his travel book, *Jesting Pilate* (1926), never tells that Huxley enjoyed his stay in Japan, but he also left some hints, albeit in fragments, about his interest in Japanese culture and people. As early as the 1920s, Huxley appreciated *Three Years in Tibet*, written by a Japanese Buddhist monk, Ekai Kawaguchi (his surname appears in *Brave New World*), and in his later years, Huxley displayed curiosity about the image of nature in Japanese arts, such as haiku by Bashō. The fact cannot be forgotten that Huxley was familiar with D. T. Suzuki’s writing on Zen Buddhism and met with him in the 1950s.

Putting these pieces of information together, my paper highlights how Japanese culture influenced Huxley’s work, including his idea of making “the best of both worlds”—i.e., the East and the West. My paper addresses Huxley’s view of Japan, including his possible misunderstandings, and explores possibilities and limitations of his view of the East. By briefly introducing the reception of Huxley’s work in Japan—where 11 of his 12 novels have been translated and his writing has influenced important novelists, such as Atsushi Nakajima—I would like to encourage Huxleyans to think more about the significance of Japanese culture in Huxley’s life and writing.

Adam Parkes

is Professor of English at the University of Georgia in the U.S. and the author of *Modernism and the Theater of Censorship* (1996) and *A Sense of Shock: The Impact of Impressionism on Modern British and Irish Writing* (2011), both published by Oxford University Press. He has also written a brief study of Kazuo Ishiguro (Continuum, 2001) and various essays on modern fiction and poetry. His current work on Huxley, stupidity, and intelligence is part of a book-length project on representations of aristocracy in modernist literature. (E-Mail: <aparkes@uga.edu>)



“A Small Caste of Experts’: Huxley’s Fictions of the Twenties and Thirties”

This paper will explore the interplay of ideas of aristocracy, intelligence, and stupidity in Huxley’s fictional and non-fictional responses to the social and political climate of the interwar years. Examined in this context, Huxley emerges as a profoundly ambivalent figure. Unlike intellectuals who have celebrated stupidity as a refusal of bourgeois Enlightenment values (Bakhtin, Deleuze, Ronell), Huxley deplored stupidity. He wanted the intelligent to run society, but he didn’t want there to be too many intelligent people—that would lead to a disaster like the Cyprus experiment in *Brave New World* (1932). Yet when Huxley, in an essay of 1932, imagines a society ordered according to the consumerist principles of an “economist-ruler,” he adopts a critical attitude toward the stratification and dumbing-down that such a society would entail. The economist-ruler, Huxley claims, would want to produce a “small caste of experts” to create a scientific civilization, but otherwise would aim for a “deliberate lowering of the average mental standard,” because “a society composed in the main of stupid people is more likely to be stable than one with a high proportion of intelligent people.”

Dramatized in *Brave New World*, as David Bradshaw has shown, these ideas coursed through all of Huxley’s novels of the twenties

Notes and Abstracts

and thirties. Collectively, the novels generate a fictitious intellectual aristocracy whose voices resemble those heard in Huxley's essays—an aristocracy including Scogan in *Crome Yellow* (1921), Francis Chelifer in *Those Barren Leaves* (1925), and Anthony Beavis in *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936). But where Bradshaw reads such resemblances as signs of Huxley's sympathy for Scogan *et al.*, I will argue that Huxley's novels serve as laboratories for testing the ideas proposed in the essays—and for turning the ideas into problems. In the dramatic contexts supplied by the fiction, I will suggest, Huxley's intellectual aristocracy seems deeply compromised. Instead of creating a simple opposition between stupidity and intelligence, Huxley's fiction suggests that intelligence itself may be a catastrophic form of stupidity. The expert, he implies, may be a new kind of idiot—an idiot for advanced technological times. Thus Huxley the novelist complicates and even subverts the prescriptions for intellectual aristocracy outlined in his essays.

Julian Piras

graduated with a combined M.A. degree in Philosophy, Religious Studies and Languages from the University of Saarbrücken, Germany, and spent a full academic year as an exchange student at the *Scuola Normale Superiore* in Pisa, Italy. His work as a translator has particularly focused on Buddhism and his research on Aldous Huxley's concern with suffering and the liberation from suffering.

(E-Mail: <j_piras@hotmail.com>)



“The ‘Unitive Knowledge’: A Desirable Human Potentiality in Aldous Huxley’s Later Works”

In Huxley's later works, the term “unitive knowledge” designates what he also calls “the full-blown mystical experience”: an awareness of non-duality beyond “pre-mystical” visions and auditions. As he states in numerous passages that it is “man's final end,” this experience and the transformation that it brings about arguably

Notes and Abstracts

represent the highest desirable human potentiality and the fullest form of self-realization for Huxley. Huxley has sought to describe what this experience consists in in different terms. For him, the value of the unitive knowledge is intrinsic (as the experience of beauty, only more so); it also overcomes suffering, evil, and is the best basis for social interaction and change.

How can the unitive knowledge be actualized? In later discussions, Huxley focuses on two aspects he deems particularly important for the realization of desirable human potentialities: taking into account “human variability” (mainly based on the works of Dr William Sheldon) and the practice of perceptual awareness or attention.

Valery Rabinovitch

was born in Sverdlovsk (now Ekaterinburg) in the Urals in 1965 and graduated from Urals State University. He is a Doctor of Philology and Professor at the Chair of Foreign Literature of the Philological Department of Urals Federal University. His research interests mainly concern the creative activities of Aldous Huxley; thus, he is the author of the monograph *Aldous Huxley: The Evolution of Creative Activities* (2 editions) and of many articles devoted to Huxley, some of them published in *Aldous Huxley Annual*. He has also written many educational textbooks and a book of essays, devoted to the modern meanings of classical literary texts. (E-mail: <mari_semionkina@yahoo.com>)



“Utopian and Anti-Utopian Thought in Aldous Huxley’s Letters”

Interestingly, Aldous Huxley—brilliant anti-utopist himself—did not pay much attention to the genre of the anti-utopia in his letters: classic examples such as *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and *We* by Evgeni Zamyatin (which is sometimes compared with *Brave New World*) are not mentioned in the letters at all. One of the rare

Notes and Abstracts

exceptions is George Orwell's *1984*, which is often compared with *Brave New World* and which was actually commented upon by Huxley.

However, even *1984* is referred to in only two of Huxley's letters, one of them addressed to Orwell himself. The reference in the letter of 30 November 1954, addressed to Ian Parsons, is rather brief; commenting on the Soviet *Pravda*'s condemnation of *The Doors of Perception*, Huxley writes: "Did you see the review of the *Doors of Perception* in *Pravda*? [...] It is like a parody of Dialectical-Materialist denunciation written, not by Orwell, but by someone a good deal less clever, less capable of giving the devil his due" (*Letters of Aldous Huxley*, ed. Grover Smith [London, 1969], 715; hereafter, *Letters*). The last quoted words—about Orwell's capability of "giving the devil his due"—obviously show Huxley's high appreciation of Orwell as an 'unmasker,' clever and analytical even in his clear dismissal, even concerning "the devil."

Huxley's published letter to Orwell himself, of 21 October 1949, reveals his great admiration of Orwell's anti-utopian novel. As a matter of fact, Orwell was not a friend of Huxley's, but the content of *1984* deeply interested Huxley. That is why, as one can conclude from the letter, he personally asked Orwell to send him a copy of his novel in advance. In this letter Huxley thanks Orwell—"It was very kind of you to tell your publishers to send me a copy of your book" (*Letters*, 604)—, expresses his high opinion of *1984*—"I need not tell you, yet once more, how fine and how profoundly important the book is" (*Letters*, 604)—and goes on to examine different aspects of Orwell's anti-utopia, placing it in the historical and cultural context of its time and stressing the profound psychological implications that make it the blueprint for an eerie future.

Uwe Rasch

holds an M.A. in English Literature, Communication Sciences, and Education, and currently teaches English and German for Foreign Students at the University of Münster and at Münster's Academy of Fine Arts. As a research assistant to Prof Nugel at the Centre for Aldous Huxley Studies at the University of Münster he copy-edits and formats *Aldous Huxley Annual* and volumes of "Human Potentialities," the Aldous Huxley Society's series of monographs. He is also co-editor of *Aldous Huxley, Man of Letters: Thinker, Critic and Artist: Proceedings of the Third International Aldous Huxley Symposium Riga 2004* ("Human Potentialities," vol. 9) and co-author of the first monograph on the American film director Steven Soderbergh (*Steven Soderbergh und seine Filme*, Marburg, 2003). His latest contribution to *Aldous Huxley Annual* (vol. 15) is a detailed and lavishly illustrated appreciation of Aldous Huxley's 1912 Marburg Sketchbook.



A member of the English Drama Group Münster since 1990, he directed the world premiere of Aldous Huxley's *Now More Than Ever* on the occasion of the First International Aldous Huxley Symposium in Münster in 1994. Apart from these diverse occupations, he also works as a translator (e.g., Christian Grethlein, *An Introduction to Practical Theology* [Waco, TX: Baylor, 2016]), journalist and graphic designer.

(E-mail: <uwe.rasch@uni-muenster.de>)

"‘Magic in the Moonlight’: Belief as an Obstacle to Human Development”

This brief exploration takes its cue from two sources. The first was provided by Dana Sawyer's "Aldous Huxley: Environmental Prophet" (AHA, 8), in which Sawyer discusses to what extent our capacities to deal with complex phenomena are seriously compromised by belief paradigms. The second cue comes from Aldous Huxley's *Island*, in which Huxley's mouthpiece, the Old Raja, insists: "Give us this day our daily Faith, but deliver us, dear God, from Belief." And

Notes and Abstracts

Huxley here also provides a working definition of the phenomenon at stake: “Belief is the systematic taking of unanalysed words much too seriously” (*Island*, p. 40).

In my talk I propose a first attempt at analysing what belief is, or rather, which form of belief—the one Huxley is talking about—causes so much distress. In accord with this forum’s focus, I am only interested in the form of belief that impairs the actualisation of human potentialities and poses a major obstacle to the development of human consciousness. In its most extreme forms this kind of belief produces the fanaticisms, fundamentalisms, the oppositions to science we are all familiar with. At a personal level, it is also the cause for distress, confusion, and all forms of mental and psychological handicaps and disabilities. In brief, it is the major inhibitor of comprehensive intelligence, of processes that might enable better understanding of the realities confronting the individual consciousness. At its most fundamental, detrimental belief is the result of a semantic fallacy, or in Huxley’s words, of “taking words too seriously”: of taking our explanatory symbols and images, our conditioned culture-specific ways of making sense of the world, for the phenomena themselves (“Truth”). If we want to be fit for the path evolution has led us on this planet so far, we need to understand that truth also is only an approximation within a relative framework.

Finally, and again in line with this forum’s focus on practical/educational approaches to actualising more human potentialities, there will be a practical outlook toward methods that keep belief in check or generate different forms of consciousness resistant to the trappings of belief, such as Huxley’s own practical/pragmatic scepticism, Zhuangzi’s Daoism, Buddhist/Hinduist forms of (dhyana) yoga, Jonathan Meese’s total dictatorship of art, or, simply, play.

José-Carlos Redondo-Olmedilla

is senior tenured lecturer at the Department of Philology (English Studies) in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Almería (Spain). He holds a Ph.D. in English Studies and a Ph.D. in Arts and Humanities—Spanish and Latin American literature. His research interests and publications focus on comparative and cultural issues.

Notes and Abstracts

He has previously done research on English literature of the interwar period, particularly the 1930s: writers like Christopher Isherwood, W. H. Auden or Stephen Spender. He is currently working on new literatures in English and Spanish—Canadian and Australian—as well as issues involving globalization, the environment and cultural flows.

(E-mail: <jcredond@ual.es>)

“Pacifism, Vedanta, and *A Single Man* Relationship: Approaching Isherwood and Huxley”

This paper will try to shed more light on the thought of two transplanted English intellectuals—Christopher Isherwood and Aldous Huxley—who did so much to popularize Vedanta in America during the mid-20th century under the guidance of Swami Prabhavananda. Theirs was certainly a new path off the beaten track of the academic world which was to be very influential on the arts (e.g. the literature of the Beat Generation), culture, and science (especially the science of consciousness) in the second half of the 20th century.

Their ideas largely share a common ground. For both Huxley and Isherwood, what is individual is entirely amiss or illusory and inconsistent with religion as individuality, is a kind of psycho-physical idiosyncrasy, and can be considered the very root of evil. The philosophy embraced by these two authors, which regards spiritual liberation as man's final end and sexual liberation as an important means, became a catalyst for the women's liberation movement as well as the modern black liberation movement. It is this 'Hindu connection,' probably retraceable way back to Ralph Waldo Emerson, which brought fresh ideas to these two men of letters and which this paper tries to highlight.

Gerd Rohmann

studied English and French for teaching at grammar schools at the University of Marburg, at the Sorbonne, and at Downing College, Cambridge. In 1968, he finished his dissertation on *Aldous Huxley und die französische Literatur* ('Aldous Huxley and French Literature'). In

Notes and Abstracts

1974 he became Professor of English at the Gesamthochschule Kassel (now University of Kassel), where he taught until his retirement in 2006. He has had numerous guest professorships in Britain, France, the U.S.A., Canada and Greece. Since its foundation in 1998, he has been a Curator of the International Aldous Huxley Society and has been at all its important conferences since. Huxley's works were a constant subject in his seminars, and numerous publications (the most recent on Huxley and Montaigne) have resulted from his scholarly activities.

(E-mail: <gerdrohmann@t-online.de>)

Claudia Rosenhan

Dr Claudia Rosenhan is currently director of a large MSc programme at the University of Edinburgh. Her research interests are concerned with the liminal phenomenologies of text and contexts, such as race and gender, and this interest has been joined recently by themes within the environmental humanities. She has published previously on Aldous Huxley, and also on other key literary figures of the early twentieth century, such as D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce.

(E-mail: <ccrosenhan@gmail.com>)



“A Green Thought in a Green Shade’: Cosmic Consciousness and Human Potentialities in *Island*”

Readings of Aldous Huxley's last published novel *Island* (1962) frequently highlight his ideal of a spiritual unity between human and cosmic consciousness, yet they nevertheless sideline the inter-connectedness of the human/nonhuman in terms of the natural environment. *Island* is, arguably, the novel in which such readings seem the most flagrant, since the environment is so extraordinarily, vibrantly depicted that it takes on the individualities of a literary character. Its role in the plot is, ostensibly, to expedite Will Farnaby's human potentialities of awareness, enjoyment and love

Notes and Abstracts

through the transpersonal spiritual domain. This instrumental use of the environment, arguably, assisted by Huxley's own positioning, creates a problematic binary that runs counter to Huxley's interest in holistic pedagogy. Hence it is important to investigate how environmental agency extends beyond anthropocentric utility, even if this utility is couched in terms of its value for humanity's being 'at one' with nature. Instead, the benefit for humanity, and the fulfilment of its potential, should not be to 're-discover' or 're-connect to' the therapeutic and spiritual qualities of nature, but to acknowledge its 'being-of' nature in terms of the intensities and flows that are entangled with it to the point of assemblage. Huxley believed that humanity is part of the ongoing reconfiguring of the world; we are not outside of it, but part of its active becoming. Using a post-structuralist frame, this paper interrogates if this intention is in conflict with the narrative of being *of* the world rather than *in* the world as a more direct route to human potentialities. Whilst eco-critical readings of *Island* may problematize issues of ecological sustainability, this topic is here relegated for a critical reading of what the environment 'does.'

Christopher Rudge

is a postdoctoral sessional academic at the University of Sydney, where he works at the intersection of literary studies, psychiatry, and legal studies. Chris's current research is in the field of "neurolaw," which examines the way in which expert neuroscientific evidence is introduced and assessed in courtrooms. He is currently editor of the postgraduate journal *Philament*, and his writing has recently appeared in *The World of Philip K. Dick* (Melbourne: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). Chris is currently writing his first book, a 'psychobiography' of Aldous Huxley.

(E-mail: <chris@rudge.tv>)



“Aldous Huxley, Neuropsychiatry, and the Evolutionary Potential of the Human Brain”

Aldous Huxley's lifelong interest in science—an inheritance from his grandfather, Thomas Henry—probably reaches its apotheosis in the 1950s, when the then-America-based intellectual begins to take a more explicit interest in the psychiatry and neuropharmacology of his day (he would have been familiar with such terms as ‘neuropharmacology’ and the neurosciences—and presumably their meanings too—given that much of his reading in the 1950s included scientific papers published in conference transactions by such names; see, for instance, R.W. Gerard, *Neuropharmacology: Transactions of the Second Conference* [New York: Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation, 1956], in which Humphry Osmond published a report that Huxley had read). However, Huxley was also interested in transcending his biological and genetic potential, a preoccupation expressed in myriad essays and writings, *belles lettres* in which Huxley postulates or alludes to his views about evolutionary psychiatry and neuroscience, and particularly to the promise he sees in novel scientific techniques, which may ‘transport’ humans beyond their apparent material limits. Placing Huxley's ideas in their contemporaneous context, the paper will indicate some of the ways in which Huxley foreglimpsed, through scientists and scientific work he encountered from the 1950s and onwards, some of the neuroscientific research of the present day. Indeed, one of the notions writ large in Huxley's companion essays *Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell* is the idea that a chemical or psychopharmacological treatment or even cure for chronic schizophrenia might be discoverable—an idea that, even in the 1950s, was rather controversial. Taking up some other of Huxley's scientific speculations, the paper will then reevaluate Huxley's philosophy of psychiatry in the context of our present-day understanding of neuroscience and evolution, specifically in relation to novel work in epigenetics, the notion of “soft inheritance,” and the appearance of a new Lamarckism.

Dana Sawyer

is a full professor of religion and philosophy at the Maine College of Art in Portland, Maine, and an adjunct professor of Asian Religions at the Bangor Theological Seminary. He is a member of the American Academy of Religion, the Society of Asian and Comparative Philosophy, and the International Aldous Huxley Society. Early in his career he published work on the views and practices of the Dandi Sadhus, a sect of Hindu swamis descended



from the 9th-century philosopher of Vedanta, Adi Shankara. This work carried him to India thirteen times, where he often lived in monasteries, but also led to an interest in famous Western authors who have appropriated Vedanta into their viewpoints. In this regard, he has mainly focused his research on Aldous Huxley, and Huxley's use of Vedanta in the construction of the "perennial philosophy." Sawyer is the author of a well-reviewed biography of Huxley (2002), describing the development of Huxley's philosophy in the context of his life, and the authorized biography of Huston Smith (*Huston Smith: Wisdomkeeper* [Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2014]), the well-known scholar of World Religion, who was strongly influenced by both Vedanta and Huxley.

(E-mail: <dsawyer@meca.edu>)

"An Appraisal of Aldous Huxley's Psychedelic Insights"

After offering a brief outline of Huxley's views on Human Potentialities and the importance of our panel discussions on the same, Prof Sawyer will give a short appraisal of Huxley's views on the possible value of psychedelic experience.

After experiments with psychedelics beginning in May of 1953, Huxley launched several theories regarding their physiological, psychological and spiritual effects, including that they: a) "open the doors of perception" allowing "Mind at Large" to inform the psyche; b) give support to C. D. Broad's view that the function of the brain and nervous system is mainly "eliminative"; c) can trigger genuine mystical experiences (both "visionary" and of the "unitive" variety);

Notes and Abstracts

d) do not constitute the pinnacle of spiritual insight because [or if?] they do not inspire compassionate action; and e) give a glimpse of what spiritual practices such as meditation can make permanent.

Historically speaking, the embrace of Huxley's theories by Alan Watts, Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert, Allen Ginsberg, Ralph Metzner, Huston Smith, the Beatles and several others led directly to the psychedelic revolution of the 1960s, which in turn resulted in a crackdown on the substances—including that their use was made illegal even for scientific research. Initial scientific research, including the famous “Good Friday Experiment” at Marsh Chapel in 1962 by Dr. Walter Pahnke, had supported Huxley's theory that certain psychedelic experiences are indistinguishable from those reported by mystics in the traditional literature of the world's religions (using W. T. Stace's and William James' typologies of mystical experience as a basis for comparison); however, public and governmental sentiment against the substances caused them to be listed as “schedule A” drugs with no value to society, resulting in a total ban. This ban was kept in place in the U.S. for nearly twenty years between 1972 and 1990; however, Dr. Rick Strassman, a research professor at the University of New Mexico, then secured governmental permission for a project involving DMT and since that time several other studies have been conducted, including, most notably, a replication of the “Good Friday Experiment” at Johns Hopkins University in 2006.

Now that the ban on scientific research with psychedelic drugs has been partially lifted (in both the U.S. and the E.U.), what evidence has been uncovered either supporting or contradicting Huxley's various theories? In short, how accurate or inaccurate were Huxley judgements about the psychedelics and what yardsticks—including neurophysiological evidence based on cutting-edge technologies like fMRIs—have been created to measure these results? This constitutes the content of this short overview.

Tom R. Serpieters

was born in Belgium in 1990. In 2013 he obtained an MA in Western Literature at the University of Leuven. He now works on his PhD, studying how science interacts with literature and how this interaction occurs in a literary genre that is often considered ‘close’ to science: the essay. In addition to Huxley’s essays, Tom’s work focusses on two other writers who—like Huxley—had a vivid interest in science and were also prolific essay writers: Paul Valéry and José Ortega y Gasset. When Tom doesn’t indulge in his daily routine of PhD writing, he likes to cycle or to play drums.

(E-mail: <Tom.Serpieters@kuleuven.be>)



“The Essayist and His Activities as a Public Intellectual: The Case of Aldous Huxley and Paul Valéry”

In the “Preface” to his *Collected Essays* (1959) Aldous Huxley claims that “[t]he constantly abstract, constantly impersonal essayist is apt to give us not oracles but algebra” (Aldous Huxley, *Complete Essays*, ed. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, VI: 1956-1963 [Chicago, 2002], 330-331). With this criticism Huxley particularly targets Paul Valéry, who, in his view, illustrates what essayists should precisely *not* do: talk in abstractions. While Huxley’s conception of the essay genre differs from Valéry’s, a comparative look at their essay collections reveals that they have surprisingly much in common. In this talk my first aim is to foreground these similarities, more precisely by studying the authors’ essayistic practices from a communicative perspective (see, e.g., Dominique Maingueneau, “Genres de discours et modes de généricité,” *Le français aujourd’hui*, 159 [2007], 29-35). First, I will indicate the great diversity in communicative and social background underlying Valéry’s and Huxley’s essays. Often they stem from lectures, speeches, prefaces or newspaper articles, which the authors eventually assemble into essay compilations. The second objective of my talk is to show that the activities which gave birth to their essays have something particular in common: in fact, one could

Notes and Abstracts

speak of activities typical of ‘public intellectuals’ (see, e.g., Stefan Collini, *Absent Minds: Intellectuals in Britain* [Oxford, 2006]). I will, consequently, defend the hypothesis that Huxley’s and Valéry’s essayistic endeavours cannot be disconnected from their concrete activities as public intellectuals.

James Sexton

Now retired from his college teaching position in Victoria, James Sexton continues his research under the aegis of the English Department, University of British Columbia, where he is a non-teaching visiting lecturer. He indulges his love of classroom teaching by giving a regular spring course to students in the Liberal Arts 55+ Continuing Studies Program at Simon Fraser University’s Harbour Center campus in downtown Vancouver. Currently he is co-editing the correspondence of Aldous Huxley and Dr Humphry Osmond and teaching an online writing course as a contractor for another Canadian university.

(E-mail: <Sexton@camosun.bc.ca>)



“Aldous Huxley and Architecture”

My keynote lecture will begin with reference to Julian Huxley’s unpublished remarks on his brother’s involvement with architecture. I will then give an overview of Huxley’s architectural evolution from someone at first steeped in his family’s veneration of neo-Gothic and Ruskin, to one who later attacked Ruskin in favor of Palladian classicism; from one who, in his youth, could scarcely abide the sight of St Paul’s dome, to one who wrote a prose panegyric on Sir Christopher Wren.

As his elder brother noted, his appreciation of architecture was intense. “He managed to achieve a rare fusion of pure visual appreciation and enjoyment with intellectual understanding of the principles of architecture. He helped me—and thousands of his readers—to appreciate the glory of Brunelleschi’s dome at Florence

Notes and Abstracts

and the triumphs of Palladian and Baroque architecture, to mistrust the too-facile appeal of the Taj Mahal, and to understand the full gravity of the late 19th-century degeneration of architectural taste, style and good sense in the Western World" (Fondren Library, Rice University; unused notes for *Aldous Huxley 1894–1963: A Memorial Volume*, ed. Julian Huxley [London, 1965]).

Concentrating on the major topics mentioned above by his brother, I will draw heavily upon as yet undiscussed letters and articles by others, as well as little-known journalism by Huxley to demonstrate the extent of his knowledge of and involvement in architecture and architectural principles as they inform his early essays, short fiction and novels from the 1920s to the end of the 1930s. I will conclude with a discussion of two hitherto unnoticed writings on the art of mosaic and the place of this art form in architecture. The first appeared in the Early May 1923 number of *British Vogue*. "Mosaic in the Modern House: An Artist Works Out a New Convention for a Long-Neglected Decorative Medium" is unsigned, but I will try briefly to establish that it was, in fact, written by Aldous Huxley. The artist in question was Boris Anrep (1883–1969), now best known for his monumental mosaics on the floor of the National Gallery, but who, as Huxley's rival for the affections of Maria Nys when he was wooing his future wife at Garsington, has a claim to being (with Mark Gertler) the original of Gombauld in *Crome Yellow*. Lastly, I will give the context for Huxley's role as script writer/translator of the twenty-minute documentary film, *Daphni: the Virgin of the Golden Laurels* (1951), directed by celebrated fashion photographer, and color consultant to Huxley's director-friend George Cukor—George Hoyningen-Huene (1900–1968). This film discusses the 11th-century Monastery of Daphni near Athens, and in particular, the superb mosaics in the church's interior, reflecting the Classical idealism of Middle Byzantine art.

Maxim Shadurski

is Associate Professor of English Literature at the Faculty of Humanities at Siedlce University (Poland). He earned his PhD from the University of Edinburgh. His publications include *Literary Utopias from More to Huxley: The Issues of Genre Poetics and Semiosphere*; *Finding an Island* (Moscow, 2007, 2011) and over 40 academic articles and essays about utopian thought, nationalism, and landscape. Dr Shadurski is editor of *The Wellsian: The Journal of the H. G. Wells Society*. Most recently he has served as academic advisor for the volumes on H. G. Wells, Samuel Butler, and Aldous Huxley for the Gale publishing group. He is presently working on two monographs: about nationalism in utopia, and about utopia as a world model. (E-mail: <m.shadurski@gmail.com>)

“Aldous Huxley’s England in *Brave New World*”

In *Brave New World*, Huxley heralds the end of England in the throes of a technocratic, consumerist and caste-ridden World State. His novel communicates an ulterior anxiety that the World State will render England defunct because England is directly complicit with the powers of global influence. This paper pays minute attention to the novel’s profound concern with England as territory. The latter tendency surfaces in the way Huxley’s imaginary geography stays pedantically within the English borders, venturing out only to St. Andrews of all British locations (excepting, of course, a section set in the North American reservation, and singular references to Cyprus, Ireland, and Iceland). *Brave New World* heavily relies on the residual topographies of Cumbria, Surrey, Hampshire, Sussex, and London as sites fully co-opted to the spoils of mechanization, commodity value, and ideological constraints. A detailed analysis of the failed ways in which three dissenting characters, Bernard, John and Helmholtz, seek their own peculiar connection with a landscape allows me to conclude that the novel projects the land of England as essentially exploitative and therefore irredeemable. England’s complicity with the World State dates back to the very history of land enclosure, a contingency that only Helmholtz may potentially transcend in his exile.

Tamar Shanidze

Born in Tbilisi, Georgia, Tamar Shanidze is a Tbilisi Medical School graduate. She had 15 years of clinical experience in neurology; for several years she has been working in international public health projects and as a public relations manager for a big transnational company. Her first attempt at literary translation was a rendering of Somerset Maugham's short stories into Georgian. The book was never published. Tamar has worked as a trans-



lator for the Georgian edition of *National Geographic Magazine*, and she has translated Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* into Georgian. The book was published in 2013 and presented at the Tbilisi Book Fair in the same year. In 2014 Tamar appeared on the literary radio program "Books" to be interviewed about *Brave New World* by a nationally acknowledged anchor theorist of literature. She has also published articles about Huxley's works, including translation criticism, in Georgian literary magazines. Currently she is working on a translation of *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell*. Her hobbies are making art jewelry from polymer clay, restoring old furniture and painting. Tamar has one daughter and two grandchildren.

(E-mail: <tatoshanidze@yahoo.com>)

"Expanding Fame: Aldous Huxley's Works in Georgia"

This paper presents recent developments in the translation of world literature in Georgia and highlights the special significance that translations of Aldous Huxley's works into Georgian have gained in this country—Georgian being a language spoken by just a small number of people, and, as such, unique, with an ancient writing system and the earliest surviving manuscript dating back to the fifth century AD.

In the late 1990s a translation of Huxley's collection of short stories, *Brief Candles* (1930), which contains "Chawdron," "The Rest Cure," "The Claxtons" and "After the Fireworks," appeared. Of special importance has since been the Georgian translator and philologist Tako Chiladze, who has studied Huxley since she was an

Notes and Abstracts

undergraduate student and has translated and published a number of his essays (among them “Tragedy and the Whole Truth” and “The Rest Is Silence”) as well as some of his fiction (e.g. *Ape and Essence*). In 2013, Tamar Shanidze’s translation of Huxley’s most famous novel, *Brave New World* (1932), was published to great acclaim and consolidated Huxley’s reputation in Georgia. It boosted a remarkable amount of media coverage on the radio, in literary magazines such as *Fantast* and *Arili*, and on the Internet, where parts of the translation could be read.

Brave New World is taught at university level and also in some of the high schools in Georgia, testifying to the wide appreciation the author enjoys in this country. Still, further translations of Huxley’s various works seek to add to his fame here, most notably Tako Chiladze’s recently finished translation of Huxley’s novel *Time Must Have a Stop* (scheduled for publication in November 2016) and Tamar Shanidze’s work-in-progress on the translation of Huxley’s essays *The Doors of Perception* and *Heaven and Hell*.

Heike Sieger

graduated from Münster University with a M.A. in English, German and Russian Literature in 2006. Her thesis, in which Aldous Huxley played a central role, dealt with “Literary Representations of Drug Experiences in America’s 1950s–1970s.” Afterwards, she worked as a journalist for a German wedding magazine for eight years before returning to literary studies in 2014. Now, Heike is working on her dissertation entitled *Literature, Music and the Arts in Aldous Huxley’s Utopian Works*. Apart from her studies she is still attached to the wedding business, blogging for a German wedding online-shop; also, she works as a tutor, teaching English and German literature in her home town of Unna.
(E-mail: <Heike.Sieger@gmx.de>)



“Only a Matter of Taste?: The Two Layers of *Music in Ape and Essence*”

Huxley's second utopian novel is rich in musical allusions and can therefore be regarded as his most musical future fantasy. By taking a detailed look at the choice of music in *Ape and Essence*, two layers of music can be revealed: the soundtrack of Huxley's fictitious film script on the one hand and actual musical performances appearing in the movie on the other. *Ape and Essence* has hitherto predominantly been analysed from dystopian, technological and social aspects, and Huxley's favour of music has rather been discussed with regard to his essays than with a focus on musical representations in his novels. Viewing this special novel, outstanding in form and structure, in the context of Huxley's musical preferences, one can discern a striking difference between the soundtrack and the actually performed music both in terms of structural quality (complex opera versus simple plainchant) and of content (the deeper meanings of librettos versus the lyrics of the detumescence song). This paper will provide an insight into the musical dimensions hidden behind the pure naming of compositions and famous composers, and it will also attempt to answer some other pertaining questions: does the large quantity of music already foreshadow Huxley's ambition to turn his utopian fantasies into musical comedies? Are there similarities to other works of his as far as the use of musical allusions is concerned? Why does Huxley preferably allude to music he has frankly considered second-rate all his life?

Kirpal Singh

is currently the director of the presidential Wee Kim Wee Centre at Singapore Management University, which hosted the signal BRAVE NEW WORLDS Symposium in 2000. He did his Ph.D. on Aldous Huxley and went on to publish numerous essays and articles on his subject. From the very start Prof Singh was struck by the courage of Huxley's thinking—even when proven wrong Huxley displayed



Notes and Abstracts

tremendous verve in arguing his position/s and was always thorough—qualities which attracted Singh to focus on Huxley's philosophy and political outlook.

Prof Singh is internationally renowned and eagerly sought by top universities around the world to share his learning. In recent years he has become increasingly known as a Futurist as well as a Creativity guru—and MNCs, governments from around the globe invite him to discuss the future in its manifold manifestations as he envisions them. His 2004 book, *Thinking Hats and Coloured Turbans: Creativity Across Cultures*, paved the way for a dramatic new look at creativity from the viewpoint of language and launched Dr Singh's pathway into the arena of Creativity/Innovation. He is now working on a kind of memoir, tentatively titled *Memorialisations: Does Truth Really Set Us Free?*

(E-mail: <kirpals@smu.edu.sg>)

“Huxley in Europe and Beyond: Reflections on Cultural Landscapes”

In this keynote lecture I explore, by way of contrasts and comparisons, Huxley's unusual responses to three important continents: Asia, America and Europe. While the first part of his life appears to have been fundamentally influenced by Europe (obviously the UK, England, France, Italy) it would appear that his sentiments and attitude were a mixture of what he also gleaned in Asia and America. Huxley was briefly here in Singapore—where I am—and he wrote some interesting letters and diary notes while here: these display an uncanny insight into some of the anticipated travails of small nations like Singapore while at the same time also holding hope for world peace. I feel that a good look at Huxley's reflections on some of the places he visited in Asia, America and Europe will invariably shed light on his later transformations as well as serve to remind us just how complex our author was throughout.

James W. Spisak

has been the Executive Director of the Aldous and Laura Huxley Literary Trust since 2011. He earned a doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh in 1977, and subsequently he published two books on Thomas Malory during his early career as a medievalist. Jim then spent 26 years with the Internal Revenue Service, from which he retired in 2013. Besides his work with Huxley, Jim also serves as Treasurer and Board Member of the Dvorak American Heritage Association.

(E-mail: <James.W.Spisak@irs.gov>)



“The Huxley-Osmond Correspondence”

In March, 1953, Aldous Huxley sent an “appreciative note” to the psychiatrist Humphry Osmond about an article that Osmond and Dr J. R. Smythies had just published on their experiments with mescaline. He included a copy of *The Devils of Loudon* with his note. Osmond responded to this note promptly and thus initiated a friendship that grew quickly and lasted over ten years until Huxley’s death in 1963. Fortunately, a complete set of the correspondence between these two brilliant minds has been preserved.

Osmond was a psychiatrist, primarily known for his work on schizophrenia and for devising the word “psychedelics”—which, unbeknownst to most, he did through corresponding with Huxley. He introduced Huxley to mescaline in 1953, shortly after they met. This experience is detailed in *The Doors of Perception*, and this event initiated a major change in Huxley that continued throughout life and even into his death.

The Huxley-Osmond correspondence chronicles an exchange between two brilliant minds, about such subjects as psychedelics, the visionary experience, the nature of mind, human potentialities, schizophrenia, death and dying. There are passing references to mutual friends and colleagues, as well as other assorted details of interest. Huxley and Osmond quickly became fast friends, and as a

Notes and Abstracts

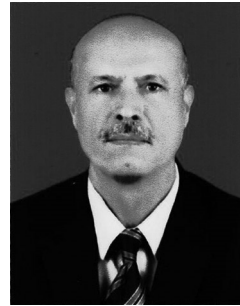
result there is a candor in these letters that we don't see in all of Huxley's other correspondence.

The entire corpus is substantial, and most of it will be new, since Osmond's letters are more frequent and considerably longer than Huxley's. Overall, the correspondence has a *gravitas* that will garner attention in both literary and scientific fields. When we read these letters, we are party to an ongoing conversation between two of the most influential figures in the early history of psychedelics.

Sabbar Saadoon Sultan

received his Ph.D. in American Literature in 1998. Since then he has taught at different Arab universities. At the moment he occupies the post of Professor of English Studies and Translation at the Department of Languages and Translation at Dhofar University, Salalah, in the Sultanate of Oman. He has published many articles in peer-reviewed literary and cultural journals in Europe, American and Asia. Also, he has translated five critical and educational books into Arabic, supervised a number of M.A. theses on various aspects of English and American literature and participated in different academic symposia and events, most recently at Stockholm University, Sweden, in 2015.

(E-mail: <s_rashid83@yahoo.com>)



“Creative Writers and Their Invocation of Divine Inspiration, with Particular Reference to Aldous Huxley”

The process of creative writing is a fertile field for endless debates concerning the conscious or subconscious motives that drive the writer to indulge in this often profitless enterprise. Above all, it is a matter of discussion what actually takes place in his mind at that crucial moment of literary production. Critics, scholars, scientists, philosophers and psychologists have tackled this issue from different angles. Their effort is not confined only to the analysis of the literary construct, its components and complex world of characters, events

Notes and Abstracts

and sentiments. Rather it seeks to perceive the psychological state of the writer as he grapples with the text.

The present paper centers on revisiting the genesis of the literary work: how it comes into being and what aid or support is invoked to reach the desired outcome. A passing look at correspondences, diaries, prefaces, creative texts, autobiographies of creative writers and the interviews held with them betrays an almost unanimous consent among them that they capitalize on a religious sense in the wider meaning of the term to crystallize their visions. Also, they resort to other devices to fulfill their tasks such as retreats, self-imposed isolation, embracing nature or even taking drugs. However, the religious sense engages the forefront in their priorities. Writers from different ages, cultures, races and creeds did appeal in different ways to God, gods or the Muses as was the case in ancient Greece and Rome. Their firm belief is that this religious sense empowers them to pursue their strenuous enterprise. Apart from devoting a detailed discussion of Aldous Huxley's contribution to this topic, the paper illuminates the experiments of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Ruth Stone, Elizabeth Gilbert, John Gardner and other practitioners.

Gerhard Wagner

received his Ph.D. in English Philology from the University of Münster in 2000 (doctoral thesis on literary theory in Huxley's essays). Since 2002 he has been a secondary-school teacher for English, German and History at Arnsberg. He has participated in most of the International Aldous Huxley Symposia held so far, contributed widely to *Aldous Huxley Annual* and the "Human Potentialities" series and supported the work of the Centre for Aldous Huxley Studies from its inception.
(E-mail: <gewagnerhome@t-online.de>)

Joan Wines

co-organized the 2008 Huntington/CLU International Aldous Huxley Symposium and has been a Curator of Münster University's International Aldous Huxley Society since 2009. She holds B.A. and M.A. degrees in Middle English literature from the University of Detroit and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in English Literature from the University of Southern California. She has written extensively on technology in education and was the



first in both the Cal Lutheran and University of Southern California English departments to integrate computers into writing instruction. During her years at CLU, Wines served double terms as English Department chair, co-founded a multimedia program, directed the university's Center for Teaching and Learning, and shaped and directed a thriving Writing Center. She continues to teach, advise and edit the university's award-winning literary publication, and work closely with senior English majors and international students. While teaching her first college courses at the University of Detroit, Wines provided job training and placement services for incarcerated young adults through a Ford Foundation grant and served as a substitute teacher in inner-city elementary schools. She brought her interest in helping disadvantaged youths to USC's Neighborhood Initiative program and to Cal Lutheran, where she helped start the still successful Math Science Upward Bound program in 1992.

(E-mail: <wines@callutheran.edu>)

“Distancing the Homeland: Aldous Huxley’s 1961 Summer Diary”

Certain caustic comments in this diary may tempt us to imagine Huxley as a decisive expatriate who (even at 66/67) sustains a distaste for his native Britain. His very first entry describes the London-based flight crew’s “intonations and accents” as “curiously phony” and the whole crew seems to him to be “self-consciously acting parts in the endless English drama of class & snobbery.” Other more retrospective diary entries, though, reveal an under-

Notes and Abstracts

current of deep-seated attachment—a feeling Huxley characterizes as neurotic. “One [could] wallow in the feeling & that would be literature,” he writes, adding that he has “no inclination to bring literature into life.” Well—he had already woven his life into literature, exposing the roots and complexities of its history in his fiction. Although new geographical locations and their influences surely helped distance Huxley from memories of his homeland, it was the writing of his novels, the chronological paralleling of the progress of his hard won psychological stability, that secured Huxley’s detachment from the Britain of his childhood and early youth. *Eyeless in Gaza*, published in 1936, offers one of the most detailed descriptions of how this pursuit of detachment emerges. His 1961 summer diary offers another Huxley: the consummate world citizen, a refreshingly objective and comprehensive visionary who, neither trapped in his past nor burdened by psychological demons, can comfortably appropriate wide-ranging data to question and calculate a variety of global options and futures.

Peter Wood

received a MFA in Cinema Studies from Columbia University in New York. He worked for Pathé, France, on a documentary about Modern American Art. His crowning achievement was the discovery of three French-speaking Armenians living in New Jersey who personally knew the painter Arshile Gorky. He worked in the production and human rights side of the apparel industry for over 25 years, and he has lived in most of the developing countries where clothing is manufactured for the world market. Presently, he is an inner city middle school English teacher with expertise in special education. (E-mail: <pwwood@nj.rr.com>)



Notes and Abstracts

“Aldous Huxley’s Unknown 1934 Letter to René Schickele: A Mirror of the Writer’s Community at Sanary”

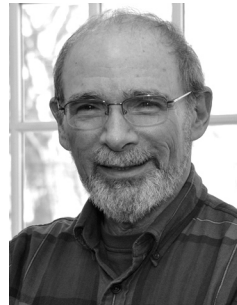
In Sanary-Sur-Mer Aldous Huxley found himself living among émigré writers fleeing Nazi Germany. One such writer with whom Huxley had an affinity, for both were pacifists, was the German/French writer René Schickele. Largely forgotten today and hardly recognized in his own time in the English-speaking world, Schickele attempted to bridge the political and social differences between Germany and France throughout his life.

A recently discovered letter from Huxley to Schickele, written in French from Sanary in 1934, sheds light on these difficult times. Huxley writes of his depressing stay in Italy due to fascist activity as well as his defense of D. H. Lawrence. The letter is not without humor, however, as it ends with a note on the decadent state of Lion Feuchtwanger’s residence in Sanary.

This talk will introduce Schickele not only as a writer of poetry, novels and essays but also as a committed activist in the quest for world peace.

Ronald Lee Zigler

is an Associate Professor of Educational Psychology at Penn State Abington in Abington, Pennsylvania, in the U.S.A. where he has taught since 1996. Zigler earned a doctorate in Educational Foundations and Educational Psychology from the University of Cincinnati in 1977. His primary field of interest is the interdisciplinary study of moral development and moral education. His scholarly contributions have largely focused on clarifying a philosophy of moral education appropriate for addressing the challenge of teaching moral and spiritual values in the public schools of a secular, diverse, democratic society. To this end he has, throughout his career, been a student of the relevant findings from psychology and neuroscience that have illuminated this challenge. He is the author of over 30 professional publications and



Notes and Abstracts

has made presentations at both national and international conferences. He is the author of *The Educational Prophecies of Aldous Huxley: The Visionary Legacy of 'Brave New World,' 'Ape and Essence' and 'Island,'* which was published by Routledge in 2015. In addition to his 30 years in higher education he taught social studies for 6 years in the public schools of Prince George's County, Maryland.
(E-mail: <rlz2@psu.edu>)

“Aldous Huxley, Neuroscience and the Nonverbal Humanities: How Do They Humanize?”

This presentation will examine contemporary research and ideas emerging from neuroscience and neurotheology with specific regard to the study of meditation and how it functions as a nonverbal humanity as Huxley envisioned it. Such research has begun to provide us a better understanding of precisely how a nonverbal experience, such as meditation and possibly other techniques like Tai Chi and the Alexander Technique, may nonetheless impact our capacity for compassion and a social conscience. Furthermore, in doing so, this research illuminates how we can mollify the social problems inherent in the human condition insofar as we are, as Huxley reminds, us “products of evolution closely related to the apes.” This development would have been more than welcomed by Huxley. Not only does it well exemplify the integration of important contributions from Eastern and Western Culture that Huxley advocated, but it also illuminates the manner in which we can more effectively compel human intelligence to work in concert with a mature social conscience. It should not be forgotten, as Huxley once observed, that intelligence without a social conscience is likely to be inhumane. Conversely, a social conscience without intelligence is likely to be ineffectual. Without the cultivation of both, there is little hope for human improvement on either an individual or a societal level. Hence the central role of the nonverbal humanities in Huxley's philosophy.