

“I experience past and future all at once”: storicità ed etica degli universi alternativi

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Abstract

SF explores History in terms of alternative realities and future societies. The present is just a time zone suspended between an uncertain past and an imaginary future. Human beings, clones, androids, aliens belong to the same narrative spectrum as it happens in XXI century British novels (Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*, Ian McEwen *Machines Like Me*). The subjective experience of an active narrator, resembling H.G. Wells' Time Traveller, becomes a crucial device leading the readers towards a problematic unknown. Such a voice reclaims the urgency to tell its personal story. *Telling* is the relevant word in Ursula K. Le Gui's novel *The Telling*. Yet, the manifold facets of the future cannot obliterate a political and ethical awareness of the past. In P.K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* and in Philip Roth's *Plot Against America* – and before in Asimov's prophetic short story *Nightfall* – the memory of the genocide of the Jews is a powerful reminder that an evolutionary or alternative idea of history has no ethical, ultimately literary substance if its narration does not face the dark shadows of our shared past.