

ANDREW DOUGLAS

INTERSTICES 23

To love after life: On the memorialisation of the immemorial in *Last and First Men* (1930 and 2021)

*We find ourselves filled, in spite of
everything, with a triumphant love of
our fate.*

—**Tilda Swinton**, *Last and First Men*, 2021

*Entering into past minds, we become
perfectly acquainted with them, and
cannot but love them; and so we
desire to help them.*

—**Olaf Stapledon**, *Last and First Men*, 1930

Introduction—towards an “ontoethics”

Love of life is an ambiguous notion spanning, in one direction, a possessive impetus—a love of *my* life—and in the other, an impersonal love of life as a generalised condition absorbing humanity, and additionally perhaps, all that exceeds humanity. To love *after* life, as I title this work, tilts this spanning towards loss, though a state no doubt carrying personal and collective taints still. What follows tracks such a tilt as it finds expression in a quasi-architectural context. Put directly, it tracks the take-up of certain Balkan monuments as science fictional, an incorporation that nevertheless instructively proffers a tilt of love of life as cosmically resonate, yet immediately ethically significant too.

The joining of ethics with questions of human and extra-human life can be thought of as an exercise in “ontoethics”—to borrow Elizabeth Grosz’s term—a necessarily politicised enquiry into the nature of what is and will come to be.¹ The gambit trialled here is that an ontoethics of this sort has something to say about love, and following Grosz further, something more to say about materiality, a domain routinely assigned to the ‘working out’ of architecture in concrete terms.

Given, as Grosz argues, the material or the corporeal itself is not sufficient to articulate its own subsistence within and across time, that an “extramaterialism” understood in principle as incorporeal is needed to articulate an ontoethics,² in broad terms I consider how modalities implicit with ‘love’ both alloy with the concretely manifest, while exceeding all and any object-closure.

Reworking a range of philosophical orientations, my consideration of love draws particularly from a trope offered by Gilles Deleuze in relation to modern political cinema: “the people no longer exist, or not yet [...] *the people are missing*.”³ Life in anticipation of, or after, particular groups of people, as I aim to show, calls on a deepening of love beyond the immediately corporeal and personal. Henri Bergson’s meditation on morality and religion, and the centrality he gives to “open love,” will guide the commentary that follows. Importantly, such love offers a view onto a whole of life not reached or built up incrementally. Like Zeno’s arrow, says Bergson, a “love of humanity” is reached through the crossing of “the intervening space [as if...] a simple act,” one “indifferent to the various points, infinite in number which we will have to pass one by one.”⁴ In turn, as David Lapoujade summarises Bergson, open love eludes both “the society of men (the whole of obligation) [and...] a society of ‘phantasmic beings’ (the whole of religion),” while conditioning them both.⁵ It is “a product of life itself” just as life attaches us to its irrevocable “creative principle.”⁶ The capacity of ‘architecture’ to be drawn into this creative power is what I explore below.

***Last and First Men* (2021 and 1930)**

How, then, might this creative principle marry with the routine fixities of architecture, particularly in the context of love after life? In answer, the ‘arrow’ considered here is a chimera, an amalgamation of monuments, science fiction, cinema, and electroacoustic-orchestral music—a specific coalescence found in the experimental film *Last and First Men* (2021). Directed by Icelandic composer Jóhann Jóhannsson in collaboration with cinematographer Sturla Brandth Grøvlen and fellow composer Yair Elazar Glotman, this relatively short experimental film (70 minutes in duration) rests on two distinct concerns. Firstly, as the title affirms, there is a cinematic focus on literary science fiction, in this case a foundational contribution to the genre by Olaf Stapledon offered in his 1930 novel of the same name—a work considered science romance then. Jóhannsson, no stranger to musical scores for science fiction cinema,⁷ had a second preoccupation, Jan Kempnaers’ *Spomenik* (2010),⁸ a photographic compilation of post-Yugoslavian monuments constructed from the 1960s to the 1980s. While the purpose of these works was to memorialise significant instances of anti-fascist resistance to the earlier occupation of the Balkan Peninsula by Axis powers—with the word *spomenik* meaning ‘monument’ in Serbo-Croat/Slovenian—they also sought to unite the historically divergent territorial and cultural domains making up the then newly formed nation of Yugoslavia. A complex intersection, then, of what Aloïs Riegl, in *The Modern Cult of the Monument: Its Character and Origin* (1903), termed an “intentional monument” (a perennial means of commemorating and memorialising people or events)—itself indicative of a will to overcome time and loss—and “use value” (a renewing ‘newness’) integral to the ‘art’ of mass involvement.⁹

I found my way to Stapledon and the *spomenik* initially through the film itself, a strangely hypnotic work which runs slow-moving sequences of mostly up-close

images of the monuments with an ambient/orchestral score by Jóhannsson and Glotman. This is further overlaid by Tilda Swinton's reading of sections of Stapledon's *Last and First Men*. Knowing neither the novel nor the *spomenik*, the initial quandary for me as a viewer was to place the astonishingly strange 'architectures' backgrounding the story of humanity's future demise, faced as it is in the novel with the sun's inordinate expansion in its late 'blue' phase, an event calling time on an evolving run of humans, which, in Stapledon's account, had transitioned through eighteen distinct species to arrive at the last 'men' two billion years in the future. Swinton herself gives representative voice to these dying entities as they reach back telepathically to tell the contemporary reader of their fate in a form of future history for which the *spomenik* themselves suggest a last architecture. She announces:

Listen patiently. We who are the last men earnestly desire to communicate with you. I am speaking to you now from a period about two thousand million terrestrial years in your future. Astronomers have made a startling discovery which assigns a speedy end to humankind. We can help you; and we need your help.¹⁰

Backgrounding this telepathic plea is the first of 20 musical scores. Titled "Prelude", it is a work for *ondes martenot*, viola, harmonium, and voice. Despite its relative shortness (2m, 35s), the track is, as musicologist Phil Ford has described, a complexly constructed work marrying counterpoint male and female voices, voice and instruments, and a series of cords in what amounts to a "gathering of primeval elements" resonant with Pythagoras's music of the spheres—in essence, an acoustic rendering of the "great non-human background of life."¹¹ Not coincidentally does Stapledon conclude darkly in the final page of *Last and First Men*: "The music of the spheres passes over him, passes through him, and is not heard. Yet it has used him. And now it uses his destruction. Great and terrible, and very beautiful is the Whole; and for man the best is that the Whole should use him."¹²

Providing counterpoint, a backwardly tracking camera glides beneath a hovering concrete form poised before a distant landscape of mountains until, eventually, only the underside of the form and the sky are visible (Fig. 1). In such a slow tracking sequence can be found evidence of the influence of Douglas Trumbull's *Silent Running* and Andrei Tarkovsky's *Solaris*, but particularly Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, where a camera similarly slides beneath the Jovian Monolith, a black, obelisk-like form giving surrogate image to the unimaginable or unrepresentable.¹³ In the case of Jóhannsson's work, motorised zoom lens on a 16mm camera attached to a dolly facilitate a slow moving encounter with concrete surfaces rendered immense, alien, and melancholic.¹⁴ In this, Jóhannsson acknowledges the influence of the dolly crawl shots undertaken by Fred Kelemen in Béla Tarr and Ágnes Hranitzky's *The Man from London* and *The Turin Horse*.¹⁵ If the mobilised camera closely and empathetically parallels the movement of human drama in such films, in *Last and First Men*, immobile monuments are similarly rendered pathically rich via an up-close, mobile point of view that is closer to caressing than objectifying. Remarkably, the film features no human accompaniment or action; it is all, by and large, unrecognisable ground, sky, and concrete.

Erwin Straus, from the perspective of phenomenological psychology, offers a way of grasping this tactile framing. In his well-known distinction between *pathic*



Fig. 1: Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina, from *Last and First Men* (2021), with transcript of the Tilda Swinton monologue as heard between m, 50s–3m, 26s [Screenshot image montage: Author, 2024]⁹⁷

Fig. 2: Dušan Džamonja and Vladimir Veličković (1967). Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina, Croatia [Photograph, Nikola Joksimovic (2015); Source, Wikimedia Commons]



and *gnostic* modes of experiencing, the former equates to a primordial mode of sensing that is “immediately present [and...] sensually vivid,” a mode more directly linked to touch than sight, and in which optical distinction, and therefore distancing orientation are absent.¹⁶ Distinguishing the *gnostic* is its perceptual development of the “*what* of the given in its object character,” a process centred by vision, recognition, and distance.¹⁷ While these two modes are invariably mixed in acts of perception, Jóhannsson, in his visual intersecting of camera and monument, plainly works to draw out a pathic sensibility, one that confounds recognition and broader geographic, historical, and architectural reference. This image *pathicity* is further intensified by the acoustic accompaniment, for in Straus’ understanding, “[a]ll hearing is presentic” and testifies to unavoidable

envelopment.¹⁸ Irrespective of the fit between image and the heard, “[s]pace filled with sound is enough to establish connection between viewer and the picture.”¹⁹ Yet, given the foreclosure of what Straus would call “optically structured space of purposive action,” in *Last and First Men*—with Stapledon’s narrative, the images of *spomenik*, and the sound track, all held in disjunctive relation to each other—what the film stages is a pathic spatial dynamic defined by “presentic [camera] movement”; to borrow Straus’ words, “it knows only waxing and waning, ebbing and flooding.”²⁰ Musically, the notion of counterpoint is one way of grasping the relative independence of rhythmic structures, that when held together, seek to achieve, despite the discordance, a higher order harmony. So does the three ‘voice’ counterpoint of Jóhannsson’s *Last and First Men* proceed.

Concrete alienness

Providing a more gnostic orientation, the concrete surfaces contributing one voice to the opening harmonics of *Last and First Men* (2021) belong, most likely, to the five “wings of victory” composing the “Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina” (*Spomenik Revolucije Naroda Moslavine*) by sculptor Dušan Džamonja and architect/artist Vladimir Veličković (Fig. 2). Completed in 1967 in Podgarić, Croatia, the monument celebrates a rebellion by the Moslavina populace against the Ustaše military force, who, having been imposed on the region by Axis forces in 1941, and who had sought a “racially pure polity” called the Independent State of Croatia.²¹ In all, the film crafts up-close, drifting shots of fourteen *spomenik* from locations across the former Yugoslavian Republics.

Curiously enough, for Jóhannsson the “wings of victory,” like the other *spomenik* deployed in the film, were not called on to illustrate Stapledon’s novel; rather, the monuments came first, with the novel drawn in afterwards as a means of triangulating or bridging between the *spomenik* and the evolving musical score.²² Nevertheless, the strangeness of the monuments at the level of their formal dynamics and their absence of recognisable precedents, had already acquired an off-world association merely amplified by the novel. Certainly, the *Guardian* newspaper, well before the film’s production, was referring to the monuments in 2013 as “alien art,”²³ and the reductive notion of a “UFO aesthetic” took hold via photographic reproduction and the increasing digital circulation of the *spomenik* internationally.²⁴ Moreover, the monuments spurred at least two science fiction films prior to Jóhannsson’s *Last and First Men: Sankofa* (2014), directed by Kaleb Wentzel-Fisher; and *A Second World* (2016), co-directed by Oscar Hudson and Ruben Woodin-Dechamps.

The science fictional recontextualisation of the *spomenik* no doubt carries the representational tendencies of the genre, particularly given their grounding in the Balkans. As Raino Isto notes by way of science fiction critic John Rieder, various tropes in such fiction articulate a “colonial glaze” in so far as journeying, lost civilisations, and apocalyptic scenarios mirror historical colonial quests, or at least the phantasmic domain paralleling them. Such a science fictional gaze all too readily resonates with the deeply complex colonial-historical background of the Balkans themselves, which have long been held, prejudicially, as a region operating in ways antithetical to European ‘reason,’²⁵ and European territorial consistency.²⁶ Yet in Jóhannsson’s case, the unnamed *spomenik* of *Last and First Men* (2021) signal, if indirectly, a last architecture by humanity at its culminating

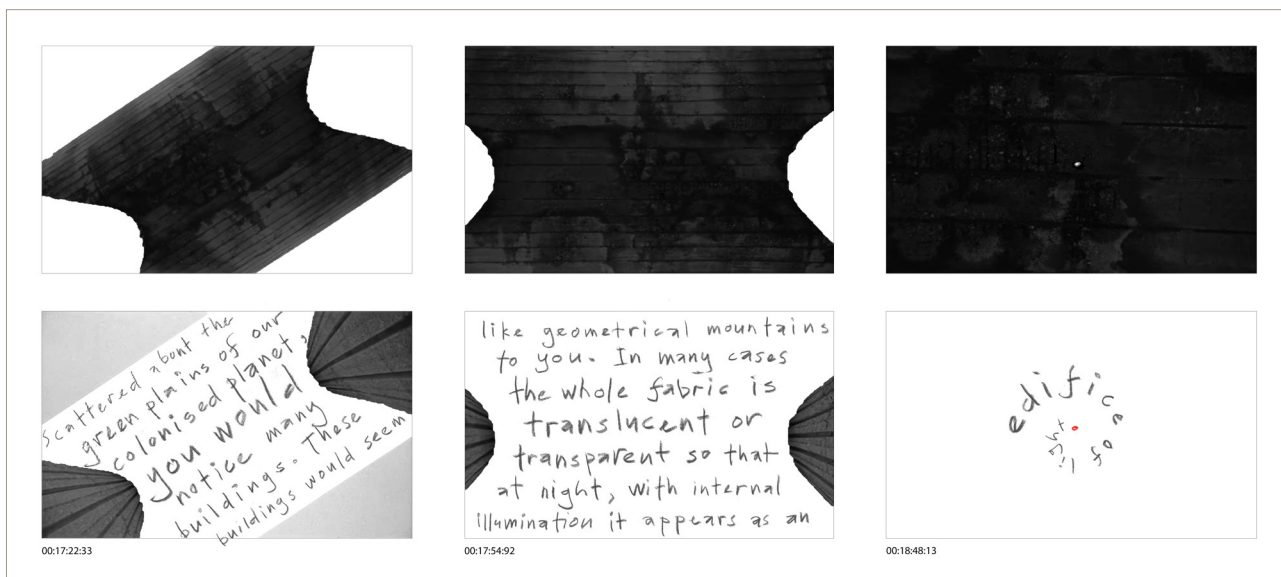


Fig. 3: “Monument to Fallen Miners”, from *Last and First Men* (2021), with transcript of the Tilda Swinton monologue as heard between 17m, 22s–18m, 2s [Screenshot image montage: Author, 2024]

Fig. 4: Bogdan Bogdanović (1973). “Monument to Fallen Miners”, Kosovo [Photograph, BokicaK (2011); Source, Wikimedia Commons]



peak, rather than indicating diminution. On the other hand, if architecture in science fiction is routinely linked with utopianism (by way of speculative or visionary forms),²⁷ the actual *spomenik*, as commemorative objects and environments, while no doubt visionary, sit somewhere between, as Isto notes, “architecture and sculpture.”²⁸

This speaks to the complex correspondence between the *spomenik* and a last architecture in Stapledon’s sense. Swinton gives voice to this in a passage extracted from the closing chapter of *Last and First Men* (see text insert Figs 3 and 5).²⁹ Her voice coincides with upward spiralling camera shots of two monuments both designed by Bogdan Bogdanović: the first, from 1973 and located



Fig 5: “Flower Monument”, from *Last and First Men* (2021), with transcript of the Tilda Swinton monologue as heard between 18m, 50s–21m, 2s [Screenshot image montage: Author, 2024]

Fig. 6: Bogdan Bogdanović (1966). “Flower Monument”, Croatia [Photograph, BokicaK (2011); Source, Wikimedia Commons]



in Mitrovica, Kosovo, is of the Споменик рударима, referred to in English as the “Shrine to the Revolution” or “Monument to Fallen Miners” (Figs 3 and 4); the second, from 1966 and located in Jasenovac, Croatia, is the *Cvjetni spomenik* or *Kameni Cvijet*, in English, the “Flower Monument” or “Stone Flower” (Figs 5 and 6). Consistent with the disjunctive orientation of the film, no obvious parity between image and voice exists here. Nevertheless, the aim is a pathically articulated resonance, where in the case of Bogdanović’s 1973 work, the camera spirals upward in a motion culminating in a close-up of an expanse of dark concrete staining that eventually blackens the whole frame as if the viewer is peering into a star-speckled night sky not inconsistent with an elevated astronomical vantage Swinton describes. With no broader cue for visual scale or reference, the vocal

description imparts a diffuse monumentalism to the *spomenik* irrespective of their actual scale. This is reinforced by two accompanying acoustic tracks titled “Architecture” (5m) and “Supreme Monuments” (1m, 48s), with droning mechanically programmed percussion layered over a surging and fading double bass. Like the spiralling upward of the camera, the soundscape builds in intensity before finally dissolving into mournful vocal harmonies.

Post-secular utopianism

The three-part harmonics composing Jóhannsson’s *Last and First Men*, pathetically articulated (in Straus’ sense) as they are, can be linked to Deleuze and Guattari’s articulation of “close vision-haptic space,”³⁰ a notion they elaborate via Henri Maldiney, who himself built on Riegl and Straus’ thinking. The haptic, in contrast with optical space in its distancing, objectifying capacity is deployed by Deleuze and Guattari to account for divergent ways of grasping and distributing space itself: on one side, “the striated” accords with a certain fixing and measuring of the world common to the urban particularly; on the other, “the smooth” demands a traversal or occupancy of space without measure, a mode of persisting linked to nomadic forms of life where the distinction between ‘up-close’ and ‘at a distance’ can never be precisely settled.³¹

Jay Hetrick has usefully tracked the role of Riegl in Deleuze and Guattari’s formation of haptic space and nomad sensing, a trajectory he passes through Walter Benjamin’s own deployment of the haptic as “a language of nearness” routine in cinema and which contributed an aesthetic of shock arising with the loss of a distancing, contemplative aura due to the decontextualization and mass experiencing of artworks.³² As Hetrick cites Benjamin, in such a context, “the artwork [is turned into...] a missile,” delivering a shock to the senses.³³ Aligning the vectorial metaphor here closer to the one I commenced with—the synergising grasp of an arrow’s flight adopted by Bergson—the ‘motion’ induced by such artwork is of a nomadic character; Hetrick emphasises how Deleuze and Guattari amplify in the visual itself a tactile modality by way of vision becoming not so much up-close as “kinematic,” with the eye, bereft of stabilising reference, thrown into an incessant scanning motion akin to touch.³⁴ A corresponding space of indeterminate appearing is what Jóhannsson assembles with the *spomenik*, offering the viewer neither distancing orientation nor a parade and appraisal of object-monuments. Instead, a criss-crossed and mixed up showing of the *spomenik* confounds their geographic *nomos* (or habitually found location) in favour of a “nomadic *nomos*”³⁵ (whose intermingling I have nevertheless sought to catalogue—see the Appendix following).

If for Riegl the notion of *kunstwollen* (or the historically prevailing sensibilities in perception of particular cultures) offered a way of grasping the particular significance of monuments and art works, and in turn for Benjamin led to his characterisation of modernity in terms of shock-routines, the nomadic *nomos* of *Last and First Men*, both film and novel, speak, in different ways, to what Deleuze and Guattari term a “post-signifying regime of signs”—a societal ordering structured by flight rather than centrally stabilised structures of belonging and authority. For the latter, comprising a “signifying regime” as they say, societal disorder is mitigated via scapegoating, a burdening of selected persons with the signs of a community’s ills and their exiling to better consolidate social good.

Yet a “counter-signifying regime” is also conceivable when the scapegoat itself becomes a departing people, propelled, not by expulsion, but by a passion of its own, one that peels away from a dominant signifying structure. As Deleuze and Guattari depict the origin of a Judo-Christian peopling, it all starts with the “flight into the dessert” of a populace eluding, by way of a tangent or wandering line, the circular signification of the “Egyptian imperial network”:

It is we who must [now] follow the most deterritorialized line, the line of the scapegoat, but we will change its signs, we will turn it into the positive line of our subjectivity, our Passion, our proceeding or grievance.³⁶

So does a counter-signifying orientation pre-empt the mixed semiotic that will afford capitalism and market life its future consolidation: instituting a will both to wander and to “bring wandering to a halt” through the re-instituting of contingent or ‘operational’ imperialisms.³⁷ Everywhere sequential lines are compromisingly bent back into circles, and circles betrayed through their monomaniacal unfurling as lines of flight.³⁸ A socius on the run then, a profit run so to speak, compelled to affirm such flight even as it recoups and pulls these flights back into familiarly governed and paying circuits. Historically, this accords with the demise in centralised State control and its increasing partnership with market forces. Deleuze and Guattari name this complex a “passional regime,” a subjectification inducing a subjectivity defined by two axis: “[c]onsciousness as passion,” or a subject of enunciation; and that passion’s recoiling into an enduring or repeatable (and therefore socially manageable) “subject of the statement.”³⁹

Further, a diffuse, if sullied, utopianism is recognisable in a passional regime of this order—either affirmed through an appeal to a ‘people to come’ and their collective enunciative potential, or sounded through pathos—“the people are missing.” It is this doubly toned utopianism that passes through *Last and First Men* (book and film) via a nomadic distribution of *spomenik*, in the case of the latter, and in the demise of humanity in the former. In both it is a question of peopling: those to come; those who are or will be lost; and those capable of being imagined.

I will start with Stapledon’s utopianism—despite a disavowal of utopian intent in his “romance of the far future.”⁴⁰ As Vincent Geoghegan suggests, building on Ernst Bloch’s depiction of an utopian “principle of hope” as the domain of the “‘not yet,’” “[t]here is a deep vein of melancholy in the utopian [and this...] is Stapledon’s territory.”⁴¹ This generalised melancholy Geoghegan locates in the Exodus narrative in which “Moses [is] cheated of seeing the promised land.”⁴² In Stapledon’s counter-signifying fiction, “[t]ime is his great theme,” as Geoghegan puts it, but this is a temporal relation far from benign; antithetical to “Enlightenment optimism,” it is a “feral time rather, harsh, and uncompromising.”⁴³ So does the “slaughter-bench” of history drive the pulse of humanity’s quests for better societies transplanted from one planetary home to another until the ‘last men,’ entirely sequestered on Neptune, find time finally called on human life *tout court*.⁴⁴ Yet the point of *Last and First Men* is that it doesn’t conceive hope of the utopian type to be specifically human; as Geoghegan expresses it, Stapledon, as an “astral poet and philosopher of the immensities of space and time,” describes the “universe as numinous and awesome, with processes, and possibility purposes far beyond the theoretical and moral understanding of mere

humanity.⁴⁵ It is this that leads Geoghegan to see in Stapledon a “post-secular utopianism,” post-secular in the sense of superseding both enlightenment rationalism and its eschewing of religiosity.⁴⁶ In Stapledon’s writing, considered beyond the doctrinal formwork ordinarily defining religiosity, there is a split two ways: one sustaining a “moral attitude, an uncompromising loyalty to good against evil, or to the spirit”; the other, an acceptance of the universe’s indifference to good, evil, spirit. In short, as Stapledon says, “[t]he one is worship of the spirit; the other is worship of the ultimate mystery.”⁴⁷ The outcome of a moral predisposition toward the good is its certain demise; this is its ontological grounding for Geoghegan—the “transitory utopia merely reflects a transitory universe.”⁴⁸

In returning to Jóhannsson’s *Last and First Men*, the centrality of the *spomenik* in this union with Stapledon plainly evokes the hope and loss transmitted with their own historical trajectory. As Isto puts it, these monuments carried a variant of the utopian impulse, “they represented not so much (or not only) a dynamic and ideal future, as a mystifying recent past that opened up possible futures without concretely attempting to enact them spatially.”⁴⁹ Through sheer sculptural audacity, they sought to fend off the societal fissuring potentiated in the multi-ethnic, multi-religious foundations of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (so named from 1963). Erected principally under Josip Broz Tito’s rule, the *spomenik*, numbering in the thousands, sought to represent and enact a key ideal of that federation—“fraternity and unity”—yet they were stood up in the densely variegated terrain of pre-federal values, symbolism, and mythic histories.⁵⁰ Found across all five member republics, the *spomenik* themselves made up a network of sites to be visited by the citizenry at large—their location being mostly in non-urban sites where violent atrocities, uprisings, or battles had occurred. While erected to memorialise loss, their greater aim was to consolidate and project social cohesion and engagement through journeying. Accompanying the monuments were hotels, parks, sports fields, museums, and amphitheatres for gathering, entertainment, and education.⁵¹ The sheer profusion of these monuments, and their concreted mass, stood, as Sandina Begić and Boriša Mraović argue, in contradistinction to the fragile sense of Yugoslavian nationhood itself.⁵²

In a broader context, the Yugoslav *spomenik* contributed to an extensive post-war Eastern Bloc monument-building enterprise. The aim was to contribute to the “national roads to communism,” a carefully managed transition involving “vast symbolic work [and...] story building efforts” overseen by the Soviet Union particularly.⁵³ While monument-building in the Eastern Bloc countries was required to channel revolutionary narratives—a Soviet vocabulary of working class, heroic fighters⁵⁴—Tito’s falling out in 1948 with Joseph Stalin, over the fate of Albania and Greece, saw Yugoslavia’s expulsion from the international communist movement and, in turn, a certain symbolic vacancy at the level of memorials. In this regard, the *spomenik* themselves enact a search for an expressive language adequate to the circumstances and ambitions of the fledgling nation, one in which the positing of unity and enduring substance often ran ahead of actual societal consensus. Jóhannsson’s marriage of fiction (Stapledon’s) and documentary (of post-Yugoslavian monuments), is played out precisely in the context of this lapse in utopian social consensus. Both bearers of post-signifying passion and the transitory rhythms constituting it, a further motivation is recognisable. Despite the alien tonality of monument and science romance, Jóhannsson sought in the

musical output accompanying it, sounds originating from earth-bound instruments and human voices thereby giving alienness a terrestrial grounding.⁵⁵ Of the resulting compilation, Jóhannsson pondered:

Maybe it's a big ask for people to sit for 70 minutes and look at concrete and hear about the end of humanity, but hopefully we've taken all these elements and made something that is beautiful and poignant. Something like a requiem.⁵⁶

Loss and love

So, a requiem, but for what or whom? No doubt, the film's particular poignancy rests on expiration, but crucially too, on the recovering and enduring potential of love in the face of loss. Deepening the former is a threefold coincidence of cessation in the film: firstly, the *spomenik* speak of the loss of lives and loves visited upon a people by fascism and their marking out via a national programme of monument building, a resisting persistence, though one, through historical coincidence, whose fraternal federalist aspirations themselves descended into fratricide in the ethno-nationalist wars of the 1990s in Yugoslavia; secondly, Stapledon's novel speaks to the expiration of humanity in total (though no doubt carries echoes of World War 1 and the rising fascism of the 1930s), but in Jóhannsson's version now, can't help but resonate with the immediate legacy of a predicted sixth mass extinction;⁵⁷ and thirdly, Jóhannsson's cinematic endeavour itself was sadly punctuated by his own untimely passing, with the film standing as testament to the labours of those remaining with the project, particularly Glotman, who was called on to anticipate how Jóhannsson might have envisaged a range of incomplete elements.⁵⁸

Backgrounded as it is by death, *Last and First Men* speaks of and to love most obviously when Stapledon and Swinton affirm directly a "triumphant love of fate" in the face of humanity's imminent demise.⁵⁹ More subtly, love registers in the traumatic ghosts of nationalism the film calls up (both Yugoslavian and as ventriloquised through science romance). For Benedict Anderson, the nation-entity is an object underpinned by a diffuse, "disinterested love," one whose potency rests on seemingly natural ties (kinship or homelands), but which are ultimately constructions of the imagination.⁶⁰ Despite various pathological variants of the nationalist impulse, "nations inspire love, often profoundly self-sacrificing love [...] and show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles."⁶¹ Plainly for Stapledon writing in the nationalistically charged context of 1920s and 30s Europe, an imagined commonality across two billion years of human evolution is nevertheless what a 'call backward' intends—"We can help you; and we need your help." In this case a "deep, horizontal comradeship"⁶² routine in a nationalist framing of life is given enormous cosmic, temporal scale. If the idea of sacrifice, fate, and death (in the sense of something larger worth dying for) are similarly integral to nation, as Anderson holds, the reworking of "chance into destiny"⁶³—that is, the contingent nature of association turned into fraternal belonging and affection eternal—also resonates with Stapledon's "love of fate," even when that fate is extinction.

Amorous escalation and its other

Yet how does a love of nation, indeed a love of humanity at large, and the civic virtues it presupposes arise? Bergson in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* describes a commonplace account in which civic virtue flows, firstly from a love schooled in the family, later imparted to “our country dear”, and finally bestowed on humanity at large.⁶⁴ Yet does a centrifugation of familial love really deliver societal affection in its broadest senses? While Bergson can entertain the probability that attachment and the moral duty that travels with it flow “naturally and directly” from “our parents [to...] our fellow countrymen,” the consequence of affirming them also entails an identification pitched against “all other men” not joined in fellowship.⁶⁵ Problematically, love shaped according to societal objects like families and nations risks “incentives to strife [that...] do not exclude hatred.”⁶⁶ Conversely, in the case of a love of humankind at large, it cannot be said to have an object to aim at or possess as such; it is achieved in Bergson’s account via an entirely different and more difficult route, one which arrives at humanity all at once without an escalating build-up, much as Zeno’s arrow exceeds an incrementalism that might account for its flight. It is a love that is fundamentally open, because it “has shot beyond and reached humanity only by passing through humanity.”⁶⁷ This decisive demarcation in *types* of love sets up, for Bergson, a whole series of parallel demarcations: closed and open societies; closed and open morality; static and dynamic religions; mechanism and mysticism.

Significantly, this division of love across closed and open registers can be seen to resonate with Stapledon’s post-secular utopianism and its oscillation between a morality of spirit, on one side, and acquiesce to the mysteries of the universe, on the other. In the context of the post-Yugoslavian *spomenik* deployed in Jóhannsson’s *Last and First Men*, what becomes imaginable, as Alexander Lefebvre has characterised Bergson’s schema, is a contest in which types of love are opposed; in other words, unalloyed affection is played against a love alloyed to exclusive objects (in the case of the film, fraternal nationalist entities), and with it subsequently, a tempering by, and temptation toward, hate.⁶⁸ Following Lefebvre further, if Bergson’s target in *The Two Sources* is the disablement of the prevailing “picture of morality”—a picture that is built on familial “object attachment,” parallel objects capable of being similarly attached to a qualitative expansion of love and a progressive moral development following such expansion—in *Last and First Men* what is pictured is a “political affect” indexed to an alternative ethics,⁶⁹ an ethics tied to the indeterminate becoming of beings, or what Grosz considers an ontoethics.

In pitching ethics against morality, I note Lefebvre’s linking of Bergson’s exploration of duty, obligation, and public affection to human rights. If these rights are indexed to societal and even global arenas at the level of definitive obligations, they also run all the way down to subjects— themselves bearers of a “judicial conception of the subject of the right” as he says—yet building on Michel Foucault’s consideration of care of the self, coexistent with these subjects is a parallel ethical relation, the relation of “self to self.”⁷⁰ Hence, with Bergson, as Lefebvre puts it, “the question of ethics boils down to the quality of one’s love: will it be alloyed with hatred and exclusion, or will it be pure and [without] object?”⁷¹

Considered against Deleuze and Guattari’s post-signifying semiotic and its

fostering of a subjective consciousness motivated, but also curtailed, by passion, a key channel for grounding desire and its flights of attraction is, as they say, “*love as passion*, love-passion, another type of double, of doubling and recoiling.”⁷² Hence the qualities love can assume, like regimes of signs, varies across time and societal arrangement. Bergson, for his part, in seeking an alternative picture of morality, potentially finds in unalloyed love and the “open tendency of life,”⁷³ the impelling axis of the passion regime—its impetus to flight. The alloying of love to determinant object attachments in this view corresponds to the recoiling of the affectional vectors of becoming into stabilising territories and objects. In Deleuze and Guattari’s account, love is doubly articulated: in one direction, as they argue in *Anti-Oedipus*, it is Oedipalised by the family crucible, reproducing and curtailing desire at home, while on the other, also providing a template for projecting passions onto the social body at large. Hence, this doubly articulated, amorous closure is also pious cover for the monopolistic channelling of all social alliances and filiations through monetarist strictures, a centrifugation dubiously miming the picture of morality.⁷⁴ While the familial microcosm and its Oedipally curtailed hold on love is a sentimentalist compensation rendering the whole apparatus sufferable and saleable, it also carries a love tainted by possessiveness, a cartage running all the way to up civic virtue, but with it also, the spectre of a warring spill over.

Transverse time or pan-consciousness

What precise route does unalloyed love follow in *Last and First Men*? A hint rests with that other prerequisite of imagined national solidarity Stapledon puts in play—the shared measure of temporal continuity and its narration of a future shared history. Yet any assertion that “homogeneous empty time”—as Anderson borrows from Benjamin to describe the *shared* space/time of a “horizontal-secular” polity⁷⁵—is straightforwardly applied in Stapledon’s novel misses the temporal complex it mobilises. Commencing *Last and First Men*:

This book has two authors, one contemporary with its readers, the other an inhabitant of an age which they would call the distant future [and having...] seized the docile but scarcely adequate brain of your contemporary [...] is trying to direct its familiar processes for an alien purpose.⁷⁶

That purpose, in fact, is the imagining of the immensity of time, something requiring analogies—the image of a distant mountain range, its heights shrouded further in mist.⁷⁷ Yet underpinning the ‘last men’s’ implantation of these analogies at all is the capacity for consciousness to exceed single minds—in short, telepathic transference arrived at through an evolution of species and its capacity to be folded backwardly in time.

Bergson offers a parallel sense of consciousness as an omnipresent, vitalist force coursing through evolutionary time, an *élan vital* seeking, where opportune, vantage points for erupting out from instinct into intelligence and, in turn, intuition.⁷⁸ Rejecting a parallelism between single brains and individual consciousness, he sees in a ratcheting up of brain complexity a freeing of consciousness and greater choice of action for organisms to the point that “consciousness [itself] outrun[s] its physical concomitant” in the case of humanity.⁷⁹ While this outrunning might fall short of the telepathic union Stapledon envisages, Bergson himself underwent forays into psychical research and validated

aspects of it including telepathy.⁸⁰ Pointedly, if “it is space which creates sharp divisions’ between minds,” as Bergson puts it,⁸¹ it is also the medium that renders time empty and homogeneous at the expense of senses of duration⁸²—a spatialisation erroneously placing consciousness within individual brains but also missing the incommensurability between mind and brain or “mental life” and “cerebral life.”⁸³ Holding consciousness “vise-like” in the organism, as Bergson puts it, are motor-actions whose principal aim is to channel immediate needs; in turn, the brain’s limited grasp of consciousness renders it an organ directing a constraining “attention to life.”⁸⁴ Yet, for Bergson, in circumstances where life’s end is approached, such forward-facing attention is slackened, and by “recoil is made backward-looking” with the mind surveying “its whole history [in a...] panoramic vision of the past.”⁸⁵ It is a slackening of this sort that can be imagined to drive Stapledon’s ‘last men,’ turning as they do to the past’s vast panorama and their last chance at a cosmic channelling of love.

Yet *Last and First Men*, the novel, depicts a two-way temporal traffic, not just reaching backward, but telling how the ‘last men’ have instituted a project to pollinate the cosmos with an “artificial human seed” carried onward by the solar wind.⁸⁶ In both directions, what Stapledon champions is “loyalty to the forces of life embattled against the forces of death.”⁸⁷ As such, he proffers, beyond an attentiveness to life, a radical sympathy for it—all and any life—and to the extent, as David Lapoujade puts it in his commentary on Bergson, while this sympathy operates at the human level as a “psychological endosmosis [or] reciprocal penetration of minds,” at a more fundamental level it goes “beyond the variety of living forms,” reaching instead an *élan* or vital whole itself “grasp[able] as mind or consciousness in the first place.”⁸⁸ Further, Bergsonian sympathy is the very basis of an overarching “attachment to life,” or the open love he foregrounds in *The Two Sources*, and, as I suggest, an unalloyed love made imaginable in *Last and First Men* (1930).

Loving with the immemorial

Last and First Men (2021), an arrow drawing Stapledon’s love after life further in its course, gathers its cast of *spomenik* less as an erasure of their original memorialisation than as an unmooring of memorialisation as such. What Jóhannsson engineers is their shift from intentional to unintentional memorial markers intensely tainted by “age value” (to borrow Riegl’s notion). Linked to the last architecture envisaged by Stapledon, the *spomenik*’s prior newness and perennial renewing of the (socialist) social body, is recast as monumentally old (in their construction) and at the end of (human) time. On the other hand, as monuments of and to Yugoslavia, the *spomenik* have, at least in part, timed out in terms of the worlds of meaning and symbolic regimes they bolstered. Age surfaces them, selectively, with dereliction and ruin. Where durable surfaces once intended permanence and the arrest of time, now their eroded matter signals fragility and lost attachments. Tending towards ruination rather than resilience, they partake of that other temporality Dylan Trigg has associated with structures in decay: the memory carried by ruins “no longer belongs to anyone”; it eludes any fixed temporality, instead offering both “a limitless potential of temporal points [and] a union of different timescales.”⁸⁹ Building on Trigg’s perspective, Sandina Begić and Boriša Mraović suggest that memorial indifference may be the *spomenik*’s best hope after the travails of hyper-nationalism.⁹⁰ An emerging constituency

within the Balkan territories of the “nationally indifferent,” as they say, can be productively paired with (now) “nationally ambivalent monuments.”⁹¹ So may a de-alloying of nationalist attachment potentiate something closer to Bergsonian sympathy and its joining with the movement of life, a ‘musicality’ deeper than nationally or individually lived life.⁹²

The disjunctive temporality of the ruin, approaches what Deleuze, in another context, describes as “a life of pure immanence” revealed at that moment when the defining individuality normally encapsulating life drops away.⁹³ What shows itself is an “indefinite life,” itself backgrounded by “the immensity of an empty time” without settled ‘before-and-afters’⁹⁴—what I shorthand here as the immemorial. Jóhannsson’s *Last and First Men*, poised as it is, by design, between the ruin and the immanence of indefinite life, gives the viewer a monument of a different order—that of art works themselves. For Deleuze and Guattari, “every work of art is a monument” because it preserves, not the past, but “a bloc of present sensations” stood up indefinitely and indifferently to both the artist and the perceiver.⁹⁵ It is a monument that works by fabulation and not memory. More so than most, the fabulation and preservation stood up by *Last and First Men* (2021) suggest one way of giving the immemorial a chance body for actualising love.⁹⁶

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APPENDIX

**Last and First Men (2021):
Spomenik in order of
appearance**

Recognition of *spomenik* featured in the film is derived from the *Spomenik Database* (<https://www.spomenikdatabase.org>).

Footage is often fleeting and so this schedule offers a 'best guess' in some cases.

Time markers indicate hours: minutes: seconds

0:00:31–0:02:21 *Spomenik Revolucije Naroda Moslavine* ("Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina"). By sculptor Dušan Džamonja and architect/artist Vladimir Veličković, 1967, Podgarić, Croatia.

0:02:25–0:03:26 *Popina Monument Park* ("Mausoleum to the Fallen Insurgents" or "The Sniper"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1981, Štulac, Serbia.

0:03:53–0:06:00 *Cvjetni spomenik or Kameni Cvijet* ("Flower Monument" or "Stone Flower"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1966, Jasenovac, Croatia.

0:06:05–0:07:20 *Spomen Groblje Šušnjar* ("Šušnjar Memorial Complex"). By Petar Krstić, 1970, Sanski Most, FBiH, Bosnia and Herzegovina,

0:07:30–0:09:00 *Spomenik hrabrima* ("Monument to Courage"). By Miodrag Živković & Svetislav Ličina, Ostra, Serbia,

0:09:05–0:11:20 *Spomen-područje Garavice* ("Garavice Memorial Park of the Victims of Fascist Terror") By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1966, Bihać, FBiH, Bosnia & Herzegovina.

0:11:45–0:16:26 *Nekropola žrtvama fašizma* ("Necropolis for the Victims of Fascism", or "*Spomenik na Smrika*", "Monument on Smrike"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1975, Čamića Brdo, north east of Novi Travnik.

0:16:27–0:17:00 interior of *Spomenik ustanku naroda Banije i Korduna* ("Monument to the Uprising of the People of Kordun and Banija"). By architect Berislav Šerbetić and sculpture Vojin Bakić, 1981, Petrova Gora National Park, Vojnić, Croatia.

0:17:00–0:18:50 *Споменик рударима* ("Shrine to the Revolution" or "Monument to Fallen Miners"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1973, Partisan Hill in Mitrovica, Kosovo.

0:18:50–0:23:00 *Cvjetni spomenik or Kameni Cvijet* ("Flower Monument" or "Stone Flower"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1966, Jasenovac, Croatia.

0:23:00–0:25:20 *Partizansko Groblje u Mostaru aka: Partiza* ("Partisan Memorial Cemetery in Mostar"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1965, Mostar, Bosnia & Herzegovina.

0:25:20–0:29:30 *Spomenik Tjentište* ("The Battle of Sutjeska Memorial Monument Complex in the Valley of Heroes"). By Miodrag Živković & Ranko Radović, 1971, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia & Herzegovina.

0:29:30–0:30:00 *Spomen-područje Garavice* ("Garavice Memorial Park of the victims of Fascist Terror"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1981, Bihać, Bosnia & Herzegovina.

0:30:00–0:33:05 *Spomenik hrabrima* ("Monument to Courage"). By Miodrag Živković & Svetislav Ličina, 1962, Ostra, Serbia

0:33:45–0:37:34:00 exterior of *Spomenik ustanku naroda Banije i Korduna* ("Monument to the Uprising of the People of Kordun and Banija"). By Vojin Bakić & Berislav Šerbetić, 1981, Petrova Gora National Park, Vojnić, Croatia.

0:40:42–0:43:14 "Kadinjača Memorial Complex." By Miodrag Živković and Aleksandar Đokić, 1979, Užice, Serbia.

0:43:14–0:44:05 *Partizansko Groblje u Mostaru* ("Partisan Memorial Cemetery in Mostar"). By Bogdan Bogdanović and Aleksandar Đokić, 1965, Mostar, FBiH, Bosnia & Herzegovina.

0:44:10–0:44:55 *Spomenik Revolucije Naroda Moslavine* ("Monument to the Revolution

of the People of Moslavina"). By sculptor Dušan Džamonja and architect/artist Vladimir Veličković, 1967, Podgarić, Croatia.

0:45:10–0:46:00 *Popina Monument Park* ("Mausoleum to the Fallen Insurgents" or "The Sniper"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1981, Štulac, Serbia.

0:46:00–0:47:56 *Spomenik Revolucije Naroda Moslavine* ("Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina"). By sculptor Dušan Džamonja and architect/artist Vladimir Veličković, 1967, Podgarić, Croatia.

0:47:57–0:48:52 *Popina Monument Park* ("Mausoleum to the Fallen Insurgents" or "The Sniper"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1981, Štulac, Serbia.

0:49:40–0:49:55 *Cvjetni spomenik or Kameni Cvijet* ("Flower Monument" or "Stone Flower"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1966, Jasenovac, Croatia.

0:50:00–0:50:05 *Spomen-područje Garavice* ("Garavice Memorial Park of the victims of Fascist Terror"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1981, Bihać, FBiH, Bosnia & Herzegovina.

0:50:05–0:50:10 *Spomenik hrabrima* ("Monument to Courage"). By Miodrag Živković & Svetislav Ličina, 1962, Ostra, Serbia.

0:50:11–0:50:17 *Spomenik Revolucije Naroda Moslavine* ("Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina"). By sculptor Dušan Džamonja and architect/artist Vladimir Veličković, 1967, Podgarić, Croatia.

0:50:18–0:52:56 *Bubanj Memorial Park* ("The Three Fists"). By Ivan Sabolić, 1963, Niš, Serbia.

0:53:06–0:53:40 *Spomen Groblje Šušnjar* ("Šušnjar Memorial Complex"). By Petar Krstić, 1970, Sanski Most, FBiH, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

0:55:00–0:55:20 undiscernible

0:55:20–0:57:00 *Spomenik ustanku naroda Banije i Korduna* ("Monument to the Uprising of the People of Kordun and Banija"). By architect Berislav Šerbetić and sculpture Vojin Bakić, 1981, Petrova Gora National Park, Vojnić, Croatia.

0:55:55–0:57:00 *Spomenik Palim Borcima U Drugom Svjetskom* ("Monument to Fallen Fighters of WWII"). By Ljubo Vojvodić, 1987, Nikšić, Montenegro.

0:57:00–0:57:35 *Spomen-područje Garavice* ("Garavice Memorial Park of the victims of Fascist Terror"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1981, Bihać, FBiH, Bosnia & Herzegovina.

0:57:35–0:58:00 *Nekropola žrtvama fašizma* ("Necropolis for the Victims of Fascism", or "*Spomenik na Smrika*", "Monument on Smrike"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1975, Čamića Brdo, north east of Novi Travnik.

0:58:00–0:58:40 *Popina Monument Park* ("Mausoleum to the Fallen Insurgents" or "The Sniper"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1981, Štulac, Serbia.

0:58:40–1:00:00 *Spomenik Revolucije Naroda Moslavine* ("Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina"). By sculptor Dušan Džamonja and architect/artist Vladimir Veličković, 1967, Podgarić, Croatia.

1:00:00–1:01:54 *Cvjetni spomenik or Kameni Cvijet* ("Flower Monument" or "Stone Flower"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1966, Jasenovac, Croatia.

1:01:54–1:03:00 *Споменик рударима* ("Shrine to the Revolution" or "Monument to Fallen Miners"). By Bogdan Bogdanović, 1973, Partisan Hill in Mitrovica, Kosovo.

1:04:14–1:05:25 *Spomenik Revolucije Naroda Moslavine* ("Monument to the Revolution of the People of Moslavina"). By sculptor Dušan Džamonja and architect/artist Vladimir Veličković, 1967, Podgarić, Croatia.

1:05:41–1:05:51 undiscernible

NOTES

1. Elizabeth Grosz, *The Incorporeal: Ontology, Ethics, and the Limits of Materialism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2017), 1.
2. Grosz, *The Incorporeal*, 5.
3. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 216 (italics in the original).
4. Henri Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, trans. R. Ashley Audra, Cloudesley Brereton and W. Horsfall Carter (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 36-37.
5. David Lapoujade, *Powers of Time: Versions of Bergson*, trans. Andrew Goffey (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), 78.
6. Lapoujade, *Powers of Time*, 78.
7. These films include *Arrival* (2016), based on a short story by Ted Chiang and directed by Denis Villeneuve, and, in the early stages, *Blade Runner 2049* (2017), the latter being part of a series originally based on a novel by Phillip K. Dick. Jóhannsson also contributed musical scores for *Prisoners* (2013), and *Sicario* (2015), both directed by Villeneuve.
8. Andrew Male and Jóhann Jóhannsson, "Jóhann Jóhannsson: *Last and First Men*," Barbican Digital Programmes/ Interview. ND. Online at - <https://www.barbican.org.uk/digital-programmes/johann-johannsson-last-and-first-men>.
9. Aloïs Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and its Origin," trans. Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirardo, in *Oppositions*, no. 25 (Fall 1982): 21-51.
10. See: 1m 5s-3m 26s
11. Phil Ford and J. F. Martel, "The Music of the Spheres: Jóhann Jóhannsson's 'Last and First Men'" (audio recording) at *Weird Studies*. Online at <https://www.weirdstudies.com/142>.
12. Olaf Stapledon, *Last and First Men* (London, UK: Orion Press, 1999), 304.
13. See Male and Jóhannsson, "Jóhann Jóhannsson." See also, Robert Leonard, "Stanley Kubrick: 2001." Online at <https://robertleonard.org/baby-steps/>
14. Male and Jóhannsson, "Jóhann Jóhannsson."
15. Male and Jóhannsson, "Jóhann Jóhannsson."
16. Erwin W. Straus, *Phenomenological Psychology: The Selected Papers of Erwin W. Straus*, trans. Erling Eng (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1966), 12.
17. Straus, *Phenomenological Psychology*, 12 (emphasis in the original).
18. Straus, *Phenomenological Psychology*, 16.
19. Straus, *Phenomenological Psychology*, 20.
20. Straus, *Phenomenological Psychology*, 30-31.
21. See Donald Niebyl, *Spomenik Database*. Online at <https://www.spomenikdatabase.org/podgarica>.
22. Male and Jóhannsson, "Jóhann Jóhannsson."
23. Joshua Surtees, "Spomeniks: The Second World War Memorials that Look Like Alien Art," 18 June 2013. Online at - <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/photography-blog/2013/jun/18/spomeniks-war-monuments-former-yugoslavia-photography>.
24. Sandina Begić and Boriša Mraović, "Forsaken Monuments and Social Change: The Function of Socialist Monuments in the Post-Yugoslav Space," in *Symbols That Bind, Symbols That Divide: The Semiotics of Peace and Conflict*, edited by Scott Moeschberger and Rebekah Phillips DeZalia (New York, NY: Springer, 2014), 13-37. See 20. See also, Owen Hatherley, "Concrete Clickbait: Next Time You Share a Spomenik Photo, Think About What it Means," *New East Digital Archive*, 29 November 2016. Online at - <https://www.new-east-archive.org/articles/show/7269/spomenik-yugoslav-monument-owen-hatherley>. Rainto Isto also references photo galleries circulated on the internet from around 2011, including "Old Yugoslavian Monuments Look Like TIE Fighters and SciFi Fortresses" and "25 Abandoned Yugoslavia Monuments that Look Like They're From the Future." See "I Will Speak in Their Own Language: Yugoslav Socialist Monuments and Science Fiction," *Extrapolation* 60, no. 3 (2019): 299-324. See 303, 320.
25. Isto, "I Will Speak in Their Own Language," 302.
26. As Vladimir Kulić puts it, "Indeed, the history of fluctuating geopolitical divisions that cut through the region [the Balkans] stretched back to antiquity: between the Eastern and Western Roman Empires, between Eastern and Western Christianity, between the Ottomans and Habsburgs, and between Christianity and Islam." In "Building Brotherhood and Unity: Architecture and Federalism in Socialist Yugoslavia," Martino Stierli and Vladimir Kulić, *Towards a Concrete Utopia: Architecture in Yugoslavia, 1948-1980* (New York, NY: The Museum of Modern Art, 2018), 26.
27. See Nic Clear, "Architecture," in *The Oxford Handbook of Science Fiction*, edited by Rob Latham (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014).
28. Isto, "I Will Speak in Their Own Language," 304.
29. *Last and First Men* (2021), 17m, 22s-21m, 2s.
30. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Volume 2*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 493 (italics in the original).
31. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 493.
32. Jay Hetrick, "What is Nomad Art?," *Deleuze Studies* 6, no. 1 (2012): 27-41. See 31.
33. Hetrick, "What is Nomad Art?," 32.
34. Hetrick, "What is Nomad Art?," 36.
35. The term is Hetrick's; see "What is Nomad Art?," 37.
36. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 122.
37. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 123.
38. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 127.
39. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 130-131.
40. Stapledon, *Last and First Men*, xiii. On Utopia he writes: "I shall not describe any such paradise. Instead, I shall record huge fluctuations of joy and woe, the results of change not only in man's environment but in his fluid nature," xviii.
41. Vincent Geoghegan, "Olaf Stapledon: Utopia and Worship" in *Utopian Studies* 16, no. 3 (2005): 347.
42. Geoghegan, "Olaf Stapledon," 347.
43. Geoghegan, "Olaf Stapledon," 347.
44. Geoghegan, "Olaf Stapledon," 347.
45. Geoghegan, "Olaf Stapledon," 347.
46. Geoghegan, "Olaf Stapledon," 348.
47. Olaf Stapledon cited in Iren Boyarkina, "James Joyce and the Scientific Romances of H.G. Wells and Olaf Stapledon," *Foundation* 50, no. 138 (2021): 5-13. See 7.
48. Geoghegan, "Olaf Stapledon," 351.
49. Isto, "I Will Speak in Their Own Language," 304.
50. Donald Niebyl, *Spomenik Monument Database* (London: FUEL Publishing, 2018), 5.
51. Niebyl, *Spomenik Monument Database*, 6.
52. Begić and Mraović, "Forsaken

- Monuments and Social Change," 21.
53. Begić and Mraović, "Forsaken Monuments and Social Change," 17.
54. Niebyl, *Spomenik Monument Database*, p. 5.
55. See Chris O'Flat, "Jóhann Jóhannsson's Fight to be Visionary, From his Film Scores to his Directorial Debut—Interview," *Indi Wire*, 12 February 2018. Online at <https://www.indiewire.com/features/craft/film-composer-johann-johannsson-interview-experimental-score-music-1201927641/>. While this is noted in relation to the film *Arrival* particularly, it is applicable to *Last and First Men* too.
56. Male and Jóhannsson, "Jóhann Jóhannsson."
57. World Wildlife Fund, "What is the Sixth Mass Extinction and What Can We Do About It" (2024). Online at <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/what-is-the-sixth-mass-extinction-and-what-can-we-do-about-it>.
58. For instance, Glotman, in completing Jóhannsson's score, ensured that it was played on the "composer's treasured harmonium." As Glotman put it, "It's been with his family for three generations and was about to be sent back to Iceland [so...] my first priority was to make sure we recorded on it before it returned home. That was incredibly emotional. It's now an integral part of the sound of *Last and First Men*." See Jamie-leigh Hargreaves, "Jóhann Jóhannsson's Last And First Men" (25 February 2020). Online at <https://factoryinternational.org/about/press/news/johann-johannssons-last-and-first-men/>.
59. See Tilda Swinton's announcing in *Last and First Men*, 2021 "We find ourselves filled, in spite of everything, with a triumphant love of our fate." See also Stapledon's assertion in *Last and First Men* (1930), "Entering into past minds, we become perfectly acquainted with them, and cannot but love them; and so we desire to help them," 297. And: "First, we are engaged upon the great enterprise of becoming lovingly acquainted with the past, the human past, in every detail. This is, so to speak, our supreme act of filial piety. When one being comes to know another and love another, a new and beautiful thing is created, namely the love. The cosmos is thus far and at that date enhanced. We seek then to know and love every past mind that we enter. In most cases we can know them with far more understanding than they can know themselves. Not the least of them, not the worst of them, shall be left out of this great work of understanding and admiration," 297–298.
60. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, UK and New York, NY: Verso, 2006), 141, 143, 144.
61. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 141.
62. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.
63. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 12.
64. Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, 32.
65. Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, 32–33.
66. Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, 39.
67. Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, 39.
68. Alexandre Lefebvre, *Human Rights as a Way of Life: On Bergson's Political Philosophy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013), 96.
69. Lefebvre, *Human Rights as a Way of Life*, 3–5.
70. Lefebvre, *Human Rights as a Way of Life*, 135.
71. Lefebvre, *Human Rights as a Way of Life*, 135.
72. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 131 (emphasis added).
73. Lefebvre, *Human Rights as a Way of Life*, 140.
74. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 264.
75. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 37.
76. Stapledon, *Last and First Men*, xvii.
77. As Stapledon puts it, "A panorama of mountains appears to naïve vision almost as a flat picture, and the starry void is a roof ricked with light [...] so time's remote immensities are foreshortened into flatness," xviii. Further, "You underestimate even the foothills that stand in front of you, and never suspect that far above them, hidden by cloud, rise precipices and snow-fields. The mental and spiritual advances which, in your day, mind in the solar system has still to attempt, are overwhelmingly more complex, more precarious and dangerous than those already been achieved," xix. This analogy in fact mirrors that deployed by Samuel Butler in *Erewhon* (1872), where the foothills of Aotearoa New Zealand's Southern Alps invite the idea of a crossing over, which precisely because uncrossable then, opens to the imagination a beyond where a contrary, unknown civilization is held to exist. See, Andrew Douglas, "On Territorial Images: Erewhon, or, Chiastic Desire," *Interstices: Journal of Architecture and Related Arts*, 18 (2017): 25–38.
78. Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (Mineola, NY: Cover Publications, 1998), 179.
79. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 180.
80. Henri Bergson, *Mind-Energy: Lectures and Essays*, trans. H. Wildon Carr (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), 79. See also, Ties van Gemert, "Bergson and the Fringes of the Psyche: Between Spiritualism and Spiritism" in *Parrhesia*, 36 (2022), 158–179. See 159.
81. Bergson, *Mind-Energy*, 96.
82. Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, trans. F. L. Pogson (London, UK and New York, NY: George Allen and Company, 1913), 98.
83. Bergson, *Mind-Energy*, 91.
84. Bergson, *Mind-Energy*, 93.
85. Bergson, *Mind-Energy*, 95.
86. Stapledon, *Last and First Men*, 298–299.
87. Stapledon, *Last and First Men*, 298.
88. Lapoujade, *Powers of Time*, 41–42.
89. Dylan Trigg, "Architecture and Nostalgia in the Age of Ruin" (presentation to the University of Bath, Architecture Department, January 15, 2010), 7. Online at https://www.academia.edu/208447/Architecture_and_Nostalgia_in_the_Age_of_Ruin. Begić and Mraović's reference a nearly identical citation from an earlier publication by Trigg: *The Aesthetics of Decay: Nothingness, Nostalgia, and the Absence of Reason* (New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, 2009). See "Forsaken Monuments and Social Change," 29.
90. Begić and Mraović, "Forsaken Monuments and Social Change," 34.
91. Begić and Mraović, "Forsaken Monuments and Social Change," 35.
92. Lapoujade, *Powers of Time*, 56.
93. Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essay on A Life*, trans. Anne Boyman (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2001), 28. Deleuze's reference here is to the dying character described by Charles Dickens in his last novel, *Our Mutual Friend* (1865).
94. Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, 29.
95. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1994), 167–168.
96. Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 177.
97. Note on the screenshot image montages: the montages excise the monument elements from their original screen image, transposing them above and out of the shot. In the vacancy arrived at, handwritten text as heard in Tilda Swinton's reading of sections of Stapledon's *Last and First Men* is inserted. Spanning image, voice, and hand, the montages intend something approaching the disjunctive synthesis of the film's image-work.