

The Fantastic in Literature : On the limit between  
the real and the fantastic

メタデータ	言語: eng 出版者: 公開日: 2008-01-25 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): 作成者: Hanagata, Kazuyuki メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	<a href="https://doi.org/10.14945/00000491">https://doi.org/10.14945/00000491</a>

# The Fantastic in Literature: On the limit between the real and the fantastic

Kazuyuki HANAGATA

In Japan ghost stories and fantastic tales have been very popular since the Middle Ages. Nevertheless the number of studies on this subject is very limited; and most existing studies lack a sufficiently effective definition of the genre. In this thesis, I intend to construct a model for considering relations between the real and its adjoining area -- the so-called supernatural -- using as its basis Tzvetan Todorov's famous definition of the fantastic, as outlined in his 1970 study *Introduction à la littérature fantastique*. Todorov's model is one of the most highly evaluated in this field; but still it has some grave flaws to be corrected. After the necessary modifications, my model will be quite different from his. Moreover, at the end of this paper, I will point out some limitations of this kind of approach to the fantastic literature. Even if it is not effective for analyzing all works of so-called fantastic literature, however, I still believe that it can be of use for a particular group of them.

First, Todorov defines the fantastic as "the hesitation felt by one who recognizes only natural laws when faced with an event that seems supernatural. (Le fantastique, c'est l'hésitation éprouvée par un être qui ne connaît que les lois naturelles, face à un événement en apparence surnaturel)" (29)<sup>1)</sup>. According to this model, three conditions must be satisfied to leave a fantastic impression on the reader.

1. The setting of the story must be realistic enough to make the reader hesitate between realistic and supernatural explanations of what happens in it.

2. One of the characters shares the reader's hesitation and presents

it in the text in order to induce his/her empathy. This condition is not indispensable, but is satisfied in many cases.

3. The reader must reject a poetic or allegorical explication of the text. He/she must consider the text representative.<sup>2)</sup>

In other words, the text must not be perceived as thoroughly unreal/fictional nor as a poetic or allegoric transformation of the real. It must be regarded as a representation of the real to a degree sufficient to make the reader hesitate between a realistic explanation and a supernatural one concerning the events represented (37-8).

However, the hesitation does not last long. The reader decides whether the events concerned follow natural or supernatural law, based on the text or on his/her common sense -- sometimes deciding against the text. This decision eliminates the fantasy/hesitation. If the reader can find materials to make this decision in the text, then the fantasy exists only in one part of the story. On the other hand, if the reader finds no such clues in the text, he/she can decide as he/she likes. Fantastic literature is situated between two neighboring genres, "the Strange" (which treats real but abnormal events) and "the Marvellous" (which treats a world obeying unreal or supernatural laws that intrudes into the real or exists in parallel with it), and thus the reader is always forced to hesitate in categorizing it.

Todorov diagrammatizes the relations between "Strange," "Fantastic" and "Marvellous" as follows:

(Table 1) (49)

pure strange	fantastic-strange	fantastic-marvellous	pure marvellous
--------------	-------------------	----------------------	-----------------

According to this model, "pure fantastic" is highly unstable genre, straddling the line between "fantastic-strange" and "fantastic-marvellous".

Todorov defines each genre as follows:

### 1. Pure Strange

We can explain all of what happens in the text according to natural laws. The events themselves are so abnormal, horrible and uncanny, however, that the reader refuses or hesitates to accept them as real. Modern horror works describing bizarre crimes are classified in this genre.

### 2. Fantastic-Strange

At the end of the story, that which has seemed to be supernatural turns out to be real and capable of rational explanation, including such factors as mere coincidence, the influence of drugs, tricks, distraction and the products of dreams or madness. Todorov considers this genre to be an intermediate one, between fantastic literature and the detective story.

### 3. Fantastic-Marvellous

What has seemed to be fantastic -- open to both a "realist" and a "supernatural" interpretation -- turns out to be genuinely supernatural at the end of the story. Todorov's example is Théophile Gautier's *La morte amoureuse*. In this novel, the protagonist, Romuald, and the reader both are kept undecided whether Clarimonde is a vampire or whether everything is just Romuald's dream. The novel ends by accepting the existence of the vampire as an undeniable fact and thus turns out to be marvellous.

### 4. Pure marvellous

The story is obviously supernatural and leaves no room for the reader's hesitation. This genre includes fairy tales, *A Thousand and One Nights*, and mythic texts.

This classification seems clear and undeniable. However, Todorov excepts certain types of stories, "in which the supernatural still receives certain justification (où le surnaturel reçoit encore une certaine justification)" (60). There are four such types, as follows:

#### A. Hyperbolic Marvellous

Things which seem to be supernatural just because of their gigantic size. According to Todorov, "this kind of supernatural does not violate

the reason so much. (ce surnaturel-là ne fait pas trop violence à la raison)" (60).

#### B. Exotic Marvellous

What happens is supernatural, but it is not presented as such in the text. The reader may accept it as realistic if he/she does not know the region where the story takes place.

#### C. Instrumental marvellous

Tools and objects used in the story may have seemed marvellous at the time it was written, but now have become completely realizable due to the progress of technology.

#### D. Scientific Marvellous

In Todorov's own words, "Here, the supernatural is explained in a rational way, but according to laws that contemporary science does not recognize. (Ici, le surnaturel est expliqué d'une manière rationnelle mais à partir de lois que la science contemporaine ne reconnaît pas.)" Or, again, "These are stories in which, though starting from some irrational premise, events succeed one by one in a perfectly logical way. (Ce sont des récits où, à partir de prémisses irrationnelles, les faits s'enchaînent d'une manière parfaitement logique)" (62).

Why are these four types excepted from the pure marvellous? And where do they belong in Table 1?

Todorov describes them, en bloc, as "an 'excused', carefully justified, imperfect variety of the marvellous (ces variétés de merveilleux «excusé», justifié, imparfait)" (62). He does not make clear, however, when and by whom they are "excused." This defect turns out to be grave indeed when we scrutinize the difference between the "excuses" attributed to Type B and C.

Todorov's example of Type B is the roc, the giant bird that appears in *A Thousands and One Nights*. Of course, modern readers know that such a bird does not exist on earth, and thus we consider it marvellous. Contemporary readers of *A Thousands and One Nights* had a far more limited knowledge of ornithology, however, and they no doubt were likely

to believe that rocs actually existed in Asia. Thus Todorov excepts the exotic marvellous from the pure marvellous, because while it may seem to present a mixture of natural and supernatural elements for a modern reader, it must have been taken as purely exotic by its contemporary readers.

On the other hand, Todorov enumerates as examples of Type C items like the flying carpet, the magic pome with healing power and the tunnel that opens at the words "Open sesame!" Todorov excepts them from the pure marvellous because these objects are no longer marvellous in our times, having been replaced by such products of scientific and technological progress as the airplane, the antibiotic and the safe that opens with the coincidence of voice patterns. However, instruments for the communication with the other world, such as Aladdin's magic lamp, belong to the pure marvellous and not to the instrumental marvellous.

These two varieties of marvellous are "imperfect" in very different ways. Type B is imperfect because it was not considered supernatural by contemporary readers. On the other hand, Type C is imperfect because it seems possible now. (One cannot help, nonetheless, being somewhat doubtful of Todorov's assumption that the existence of airplanes diminishes the marvellous impression caused by a flying carpet. It is like saying that since public lotteries exist, the genie who grants three wishes is not worthy of amazement.)

Table 2 diagrammatizes the relations between Type B and C, and changes in our knowledge. The arrows represent shifts in reader's credulity, as variations in knowledge make certain narrated events seem more or less possible.

**(Table 2)**

	decrease	←	knowledge	→	increase
B	possible	←		→	impossible
C	impossible	←		→	possible

A definition which can exclude both of these types thus might run as follows: "The marvellous that depends on the degree of human knowledge is not worth calling pure marvellous." In other words, only that which has never been possible, nor will be, nor even can be imagined to be possible in the history of human beings is worth naming "pure marvellous."

However, is our definition of reality and supernatural so certain and unchangeable? Is there anything so "perfectly" supernatural or marvellous that it can never be "real" in Todorov's meaning? The critical flaw which makes his whole argument problematic is his assumption that the limit between the real and the supernatural is concrete and unmoveable.<sup>3)</sup> Now we can understand why he excepts Aladdin's magic lamp from Type C. He would not accept an analogy between magic instruments used to communicate with supernatural beings and radio-wave messages sent out to make contact with extra-terrestrials, for while he does accept the possibility of the existence of aliens on other worlds (i.e., they represent the imperfect marvellous for him.), he denies the existence of demons and fairies in this one.

Now we should go back to analyze Type A. Why should a gigantic being necessarily be imperfectly marvellous? Of course, it is possible that gigantic varieties of known creatures may exist. In Australia and South America, for example, there lives a species of earthworm more than one metre in length, and in the latter there also lives the capibara, a rodent the size of a small pony. That which concerns Todorov, however, is different. He questions the characteristic of hyperbole. When he says "this kind of supernatural does not violate the reason so much (*ce surnaturel-là ne fait pas trop violence à la raison*)" (60), he does not mean to imply that there might in fact be a boa constrictor big enough to swallow an elephant. He rejects it as "marvellous" because the manipulation variation of the size of known things is just an extension of our ordinary logic and not an introduction of a completely unknown/supernatural law. What is important for Todorov is that the pure marvellous must not have any resemblance with reality.

Todorov betrays the ambiguity of his definition of pure marvellous yet further, in his classification of Type D as imperfect marvellous. If his

purpose is to except science fiction -- in which known scientific theories are developed -- we could admit that his attitude is coherent. But he refers to stories ruled by "laws that contemporary science does not recognize," or to others which keep their logical coherence while "starting from some irrational premises." His example is a "scientific" solution involving mesmerism as the cause of fantastic events. Since, as (Todorov believes that) mesmerism is "supernatural," the story belongs to the marvellous, but only to the imperfect because it contains "scientific" explanation. So-called science fiction is a genre very similar to this.

This explanation is very confused and in need of some rearrangements (despite my efforts already to make it plain). The structure of such a story is fantastic-strange. Todorov, however, considers it fantastic-marvellous in spite of the "scientific" explanation in the text, for he does not believe mesmerism to be a sufficiently realistic reason. His classification is based solely on his own judgement vis-à-vis the text, so a reader who has no particular objection to the notion of mesmerism might regard it as fantastic-strange, as it presumably is supposed to be accepted. Such a reader, however, must first be inclined to accept the "mesmeric" explanations' "scientific" viability if he/she is to regard the story's structure as fantastic-strange. If, on the other hand, he/she believes (more strongly than Todorov) that mesmerism is a kind of magic or superstition, and a true mesmerist a sorcerer or witch, he/she will classify the story as fantastic-marvellous, without the qualification "imperfect." This arbitrariness derives from the fact that both the scientific marvellous and pure-marvellous are labelled under rubrics other than "real", and that the reader thus must decide which category a story belongs to solely on the basis of his/her subjective judgement of its possibility to be real (if he/she believes it impossible, he/she will classify it under the latter term).

Thus, the difference between the fantastic-marvellous and the fantastic-strange is not as evident as Todorov seems to believe. A realistic explanation for a twentieth-century reader (like Todorov) might seem marvellous to others. It is quite possible that George Orwell's *1984* would seem more marvellous to a sixteenth-century reader than any story of



demons and witches.

It follows, then, that it is no use discussing "scientific marvellous" and "pure marvellous" separately. We must put them together, for both belong to the same genre -- one ruled by "supernatural" laws.

However, Todorov is not entirely wrong when he declares "To all these varieties of "excused", carefully justified, imperfect variety of the marvellous, we can oppose the pure marvellous, that which cannot be explained by any means. (A toutes ces variétés de merveilleux «excusé», justifié, imparfait, s'oppose le merveilleux pur, qui ne s'explique d'aucune manière)" (62). Indeed, there are events inexplicable by any means. Such events belong to a territory without logic or order -- a territory with which reality has no clear analogy.

By thus refining Todorov's rather sloppy definition of "pure marvellous" and "imperfect marvellous", we can now isolate four distinct territories surrounding the marvellous as follows:

I. A territory which seems supernatural because it has been hitherto unknown to us, but which can be integrated into the real through an increase in our knowledge. Alternatively, a part of the real can be segregated by the inverse process.

II. A territory explainable by amplification or application of known laws.

III. A territory ruled by laws different from known ones, but logical and coherent in its way.

IV. A territory completely without logic or order.

Todorov's terms are not appropriate for these four territories. Thus, we shall call Territory I "marvellous reality", a term created by Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier.<sup>4)</sup> When we encounter a real but unknown world, or even when we look at the known world intensely, as if we have never seen it before, we find it fantastic in spite of its reality.

This might seem to be the same as fantastic-strange, but it is not. As regards the strange, we feel it to be fantastic because we have neglected

its reality, suppressing the knowledge, albeit unconsciously, that it's a part of our real world. On the other hand, we sometimes find a part of the real marvellous simply because we did not know of its existence.

Territory II is for those things which can exist in theory, but not in reality as far as we know. Once we ascertain their existence, we recognize them as a part of the real world. We shall call this territory "possible reality."

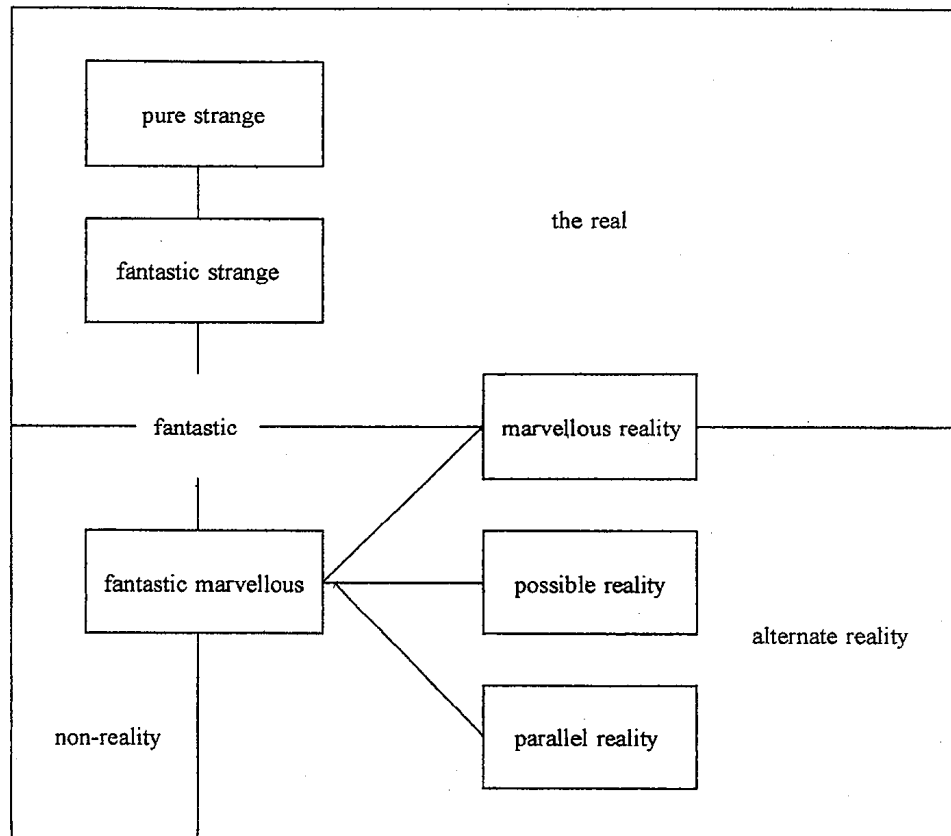
Territory III is designed for those "impossible" things that have their own logic and order, nonetheless are believed not to exist because the conditions required for their existence are not satisfied in this world. If we find a sphere in which these conditions can be satisfied (on earth or on some other planet in this real universe), we then recognize them as a "marvellous reality" for the first time -- and later, as we get accustomed to them, as a part of the real. The laws that govern this territory are parallel to but not connected with the known laws of this world, so we may call it "parallel reality."

We shall call Territory IV "non-reality," for it is impossible to assimilate it into the real even by analogy. If we find some logical coherence or substance in it, we swiftly reclassify it as belonging to one of the formerly mentioned three territories or directly to the real.

These four territories do not exist in parallel with each other. While "non-reality" is completely distinct from the real, "possible reality" and "parallel reality" have much in common with it. They can easily be integrated into the real, and indeed they may be considered to be in closer contact with the real than the "non-reality." Thus we might say that these two territories form an "alternate reality." The "marvellous reality", in turn, exists just on the borderline between the real and the other real.

Table 3 presents the relations between fantastic literature and its neighboring genres, and the various "realities" described above.

(Table 3)



Now, let us consider the psychological elements involved in fantastic literature, especially as they involve the upper half of Table 3.

All of what happens in the pure-strange is ruled by natural law. A reader may consider it fantastic, unwilling to accept it as real because of its brutality or insanity. If he/she does not feel any such revulsion, he/she will simply regard it as ordinary reality. This becomes yet clearer if one considers the difference between pure-strange and fantastic-strange. For example, say a mystery turns out to be a trick or crime. If the revealed truth ("reality") is extremely cruel, lunatic or weird, the reader will refuse to recognize it as ordinary reality and will categorize it instead as pure-strange. Todorov calls this case fantastic-strange. However, if the reader considers the truth an ordinary, normal crime or plot (at least in fiction), he/she will relax and view it once more as ordinary reality, and not strange.

Also important in this case are narrative features within the text itself. For instance, a character's terror, anxiety and repulsion, as presented in

the text, may strongly influence the reader's judgment, helping to transform ordinary reality into the fantastic. Ryûnoske Akutagawa's "Haguruma" (Cogwheels) is a good example. In this story, the reader's identification with the protagonist is crucial. Without it, he/she may consider the protagonist's neurotic reaction ridiculous. The opposite, of course, is also true. In fantastic-marvellous (concerning alternate reality/non-reality) fiction the reader tends to regard the story as marvellous without any particular encouragement. In this genre, the emphasis on the protagonist's reaction is used rather to heighten the story's credibility, to persuade the reader to think that it might be real.

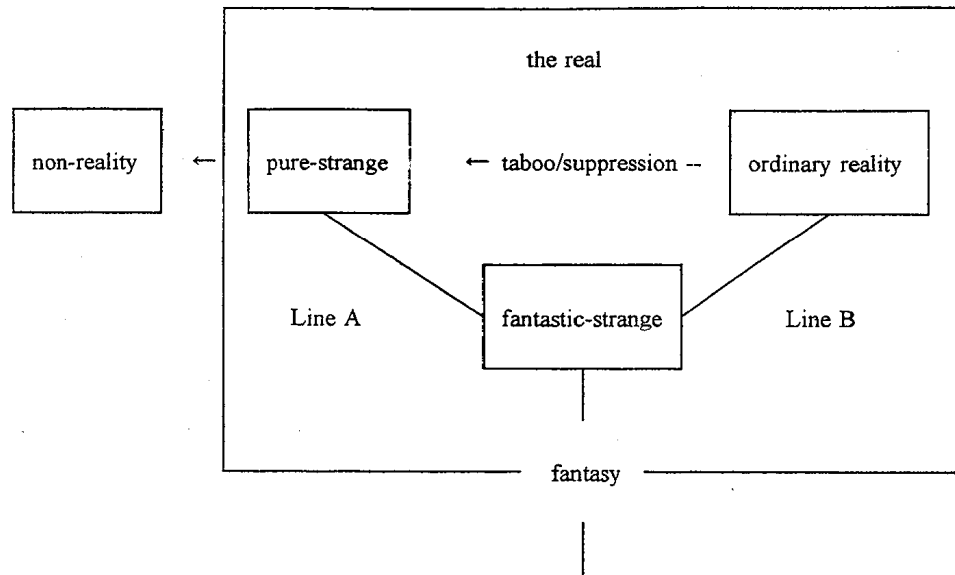
Of course, a strong sense of revulsion on the part of the reader may result in an ordinary real story being classified as pure-strange in spite of the author's intentions. The sexual perversions and cruelties, which are categorized by Todorov as "Themes of *You*" in Chapter 8, are not supernatural in of themselves. We find them strange or fantastic because we are held back by social taboos. If we were not restricted so much by such taboos, we would not find these perversions fantastic in of themselves.

If we feel very strong revulsion toward a story, we may classify it as non-real, not satisfied with simply calling it strange. When we read reports about cruel and absurd street violence and meaningless war crimes, we are tempted to deny their reality.

Considering these points, we may thus modify the upper half of Table 3 as in Table 4.

Looking at the lower part of Table 3, now logic emerges as the key to change a reader's judgment of a work from non-reality into fantastic, or even into real. From out of our hesitation, we begin to find logical coherence and possibility among things which at first seemed to have no logic or order -- that is to say, things which seemed to be of the non-reality. Once we find logic in them, we recategorize such texts into alternate reality, or even into ordinary reality, moving through either alternate reality or marvellous reality. We integrate possible reality into the real by expanding our concept of reality; and we accept the parallel reality upon finding a "real parallel" in our own universe. In the former case, we expand our

(Table 4)



A Reader's strong emotional reaction to the story, occurring with or without the influence of a character's reaction, will recategorize "fantastic-strange" into "pure strange".

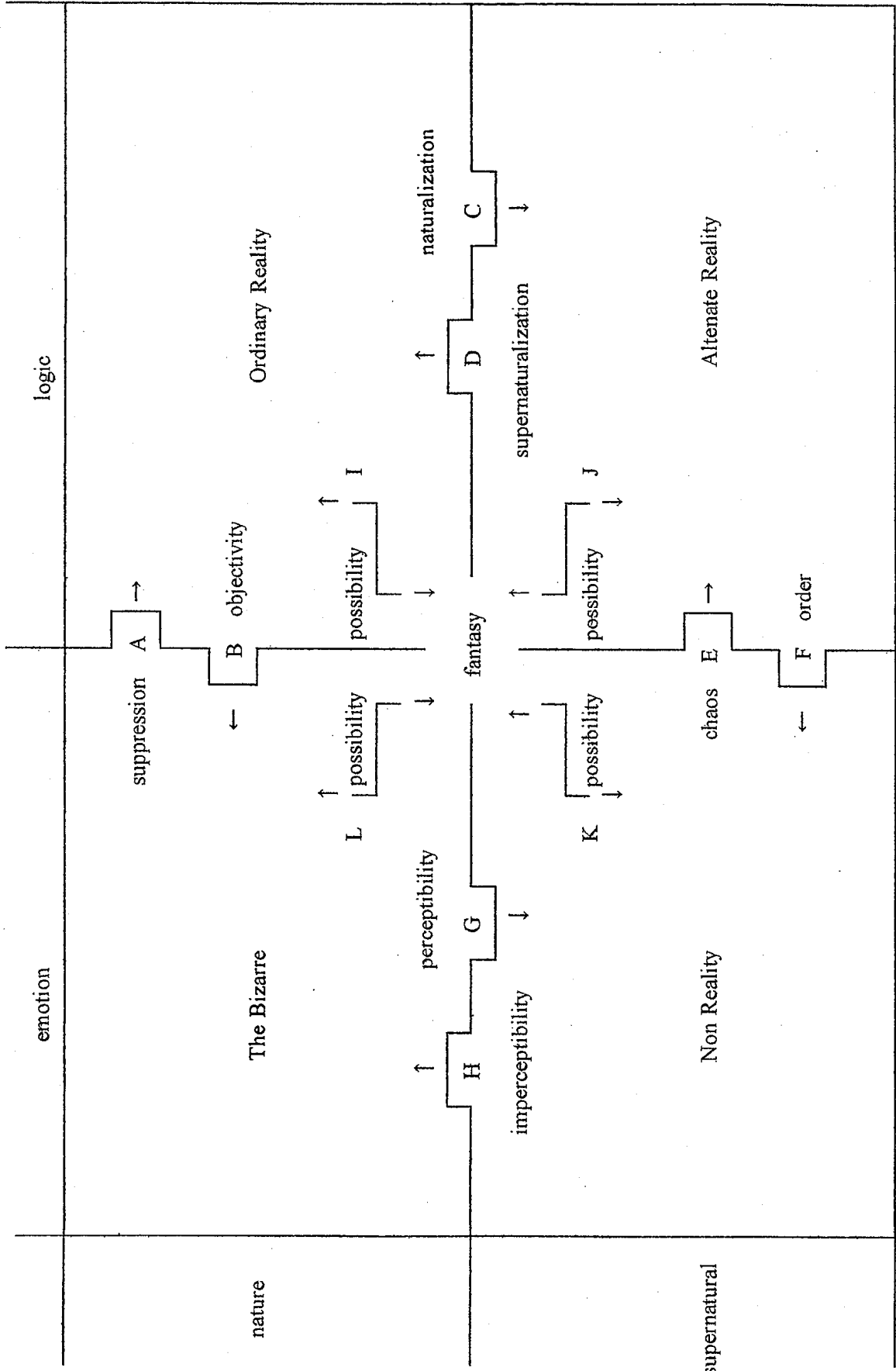
B Reader's cool reaction, occurring with or without an objective description, will recategorize "fantastic-strange" into "ordinary reality".

concept of the real syntagmatically, by extension, and in the latter, paradigmatically, by relativism.

The marvellous reality is a transitional area situated between these two other "realities" and the real. When we discover that a possible or parallel reality does exist in this universe, we find it marvellous at first, and then -- after the surprise is gone -- gradually integrate it into our understanding of the ordinary reality. For example, it was a "possible reality" at the turn of the century that dinosaurs might still survive in the highlands of New Guinea, while it was, and still remains, a marvellous reality that there exist certain creatures which have hardly changed in terms of appearance or physiology since the time of the dinosaurs. Fairy tales and myths seem to belong to the parallel reality; but when analyzed scientifically by a Vladimir Propp or a Claude Lévi-Strauss, they turn out to be marvellous or ordinary real.

In Table 5, we shall illustrate the relations between the strange, real, other-real and non-real, according to two conceptual oppositions, sentiment-logic and natural-supernatural.

(Table 5)



In the upper-right of the table is Ordinary Reality, the world that we normally consider real. It is ruled by known natural laws and supposed to display a degree of logical coherence concerning what happens in it. Within the sphere of influence of these same natural laws -- that is, in the upper half of the table -- there exists, however, another area which we are not so willing to admit into Ordinary Reality: which we may name "the Bizarre."

The lower part of the table belongs to the "supernatural" -- an area outside the influence of the natural laws known to us. On the right side is Alternate Reality, ruled by unknown but comprehensible laws. It includes the possible real and the parallel real. Finally, on the lower-left is Non Reality, an area of irrationality and disorder, totally out of our comprehension.

The lines between these four areas are not predetermined as Todorov imagines. Rather, they move from right to left and vice versa according to our personal emotional reactions, and up and down as there occur advances or lapses in our knowledge or technical progress. This movement is illustrated with arrows on the table. Let us look now the causes and significances of these shifts, examining them in alphabetical order.

A. Repression caused by taboo or strong terror/revulsion towards violent or brutal acts (e.g., The perversions and brutality categorized by Todorov as "Themes of *You*") widens the Bizarre and contracts Ordinary Reality.

B. Logic and objectivity help integrate the Bizarre into Ordinary Reality. e.g., Psychiatric analysis of a grotesque, brutal murder committed by a psychopath.

C. Increases in our knowledge and new technical innovations help integrate what seemed to belong to Alternate (Possible or Parallel) Realities into Ordinary Reality. Today it is not surprising to us that scientists can describe how the dinosaurs lived or explain the influence which space life exercises on the human body. We learn such things in school and watch scientists explain them on TV. Thus, basic scientific knowledge which our parents or grandparents might well have considered

supernatural now forms a part of our Ordinary Reality, however remote such knowledge may be from everyday life.

D. Our knowledge of nature does not always increase. Sometimes it decreases. Even today, scientifically attested "nature" and "reality" can be denied for religious reasons. On the other hand, demons and spirits were part of Ordinary Reality in the Middle Ages, while they are now believed to be supernatural by most people. In such cases, Alternate Reality makes inroads on Ordinary Reality.

E. Alternate Reality has its own logic, whether systematic or otherwise. We call it (Alternate) Reality because of this logical coherence; but if we fail to recognize such a pattern of coherence, we swiftly change our minds and consider it irrational (i.e., Non Reality). Also, if a reader develops a strong emotional revulsion toward an Alternate Reality story, he/she will assume it to be mere nonsense (again, Non Reality), in spite of its evident logical coherence. This kind of variation in readers' emotional reactions may help explain why the evaluation of the science fiction differs so much.

F. If, on the other hand, a reader finds logic in what formerly seemed irrational, he/she will categorize it as Alternate Reality. When somebody tells us about foreign superstitions and strange customs, we may at first dismiss them as nonsenses (Non Reality). Once we understand the logic and system behind them, however, we begin to recognize their hitherto once dismissed meanings. We will then perceive them as Alternate Reality if they seem to be remote or fictitious and not a part of our Ordinary Reality. Or, we may even integrate them directly into our Ordinary Reality via line F-C, if we are certain of their reality (e.g., scientifically attested popular or oriental therapies and complicated but logical manner codes of an aboriginal tribe). Such a system, however logical, of course can still be denied and called ridiculous (Non Reality) by a reader experiencing a strong emotional reaction.

G. As an example of a shift from Non Reality to the Bizarre, we may note these instances when we fail to recognize a very irrational and incomprehensible happening, because *it seems impossible*. Later we admit rationally that it did happen and that it is possible, classify it nonetheless



as the Bizarre.

H. Our reaction toward an incomprehensible happening may be the reverse of G. We do know that something has happened but deny it so vehemently that we drive it from Nature, declaring that *it is impossible*.

Finally, lines I-J and I-K represent Todorov's fantastic-marvellous, for they are hesitations between the Natural and the Supernatural. Line I-L stands for the fantastic-strange.

\* \* \* \*

Since the nineteenth century, many attempts have been made by writers to expand or even destroy the formerly approved boundaries of the Real. At the turn of the century, for example, naturalist writers such as Zola and the fin-de-siècle decadents tried to integrate the Bizarre into Ordinary Reality. The surrealists tried to go further, advancing into Non Reality through their experiments in psychoanalysis. Thus, it is hardly surprising that, as Todorov points out, the surrealists shared an interest in "Themes of *You*," -- extreme sexual desire, perversion, cruelty and violence -- with traditional fantastic literature.

At the same time, writers of the science fiction and exotic stories also have tried to expand the limits of the real into Alternate Reality. Todorov's notion of "Themes of *I*" -- "pan-determinism"<sup>5)</sup>, the pluralization and division of personality, destruction of the border line between subject and object, deformation of time and space -- have been widely pursued in science fiction just as in fantastic literature.

In his study of fantastic literature, Todorov fails to recognize that we can integrate Alternate Reality into Ordinary Reality, not only in our imagination, but also in reality when we expand our knowledge of the real, via Marvellous Reality. In other words, he believes that what we call "nature" is a determined area which cannot be expanded or contracted. He fails to recognize that different times and cultures have their own concept of the real, and that his modern, European view is just one among many. This failure explains why Todorov could not make a clear definition of the imperfect marvellous or exotic marvellous. The Resurrection, for example,

is real to fundamentalist Christians, allegorical to other Christians and some non-believers, fantastic or even nonsense to others.

Throughout this thesis, we have considered relations between Ordinary Reality and other areas of experience, on the basis of Todorov's definition of the fantastic. As a result, we have seen that questioning whether something is "real" or not plays a crucial role in "fantastic" literature just as it does in real life.

One cannot, however, say as much about all so-called fantasy works. For example, it is of no use trying to analyze *Alice in Wonderland* or *The Lord of the Rings* according to the parameters we have set out in Table 5. We do not stop to ask ourselves whether something is real or not when we read these works -- at least not all the time. Nonetheless, it would be utter nonsense to exclude them from the category of fantastic literature. Thus, we categorize them as fantastic literature for other elements in their stories.

In this way, we must keep in mind that the "fantasy" defined by Todorov and considered in this thesis is just one of the fundamental elements of fantastic literature. To define this genre more accurately, we would have to specify and analyze other important esthetic elements in its composition, such as the gothic and grotesque, nonsense, fancy and hyperbole.

On the other hand, we can conclude from our study that whenever author and reader share the same stabilized vision of Ordinary Reality, or of nature, the type of fantasy we have considered will play an important role in the main current of fantastic literature. Thus, Table 5 should be of use in the analysis of gothic novels and horror stories written from eighteenth to twentieth century, an era in which modern rationalism and science were believed established and absolute. Also it may be of help in explaining the change within fantastic literature from a Gothic to a Post-Modern style -- a change which coincides with the destruction and invalidation of the concept of a unique and unchangeable "Reality."

## Notes

1) All page numbers after quotations refer to Tzvetan Todorov, *Introduction à la littérature fantastique*. Paris: Seuil, 1970.

2) For example, the reader will not consider fantastic a passage in which a character suddenly starts flying in the air if he/she interprets it a poetic (metaphoric) representation of the character's excitement (the "poetic" explication); nor will he/she feel a speaking donkey to be fantastic if he/she takes it as an allegory of a stupid man (the "allegorical" explication).

3) Most previous studies of fantastic literature share this flaw with Todorov's work. Vax and Caillois, for example, also carry out their studies without ever clearly defining their concept of the real. See Roger Caillois, *Au cœur du fantastique*. 1965. Trans. in Japanese by Ikuo Miyoshi. Tokyo: University of Hosei Press, 1975. and Louis Vax, *L'art et la littérature fantastique*. 1960. Trans. in Japanese by Hanya Kubota. Tokyo: Hakusui-sha, 1961.

4) Carpentier first used this term in the prologue to his famous novel *El reino de este mundo* (1949). He used it to express the fantastic variety and immensity of Latin American nature and society. However, he did not restrict its application exclusively to Latin America, so we may use it as a general term.

5) Todorov's "pan-determinism" means the characteristic tendency of fantastic literature to find an unknown, supernatural causality -- to find, in other words, a cause and effect relation between events which seem to have none under natural law. This assumption of other causality is not always personal. Popular belief and myth often deny the causality assumed by modern science in a collective way. In modern horror stories, "pan-determinism" plays an important role as paranoia. See Stephen King, *Danse Macabre*. 1981, '83. Trans. in Japanese by Rei Anno. Tokyo: Fukutake Shoten, 1993.