

## ABSTRACT

## Square Thought and Plastic Memory in the Novels of Earl Lovelace

Thalia T.M. Arneaud

This thesis examines the societies and characters created by Earl Lovelace using the theory of square thought and plastic memory extrapolated from the *Dune* series of Frank Herbert. In analysing Lovelace's work, it looks at the contribution of plastic memory to individual and societal evolution - plastic memory being, a merging of ancestral memory and the human instinct to adhere to tribal forms in society, which continuously causes the recreation of familiar societal patterns. Additionally, square thought is the individual's inability to recognise this influence of ancestral memory and the instinct to adhere to tribal forms making the individual unable to find a way to make plastic memory work positively and not destructively towards personal and societal evolution. This thesis suggests that in order for the individual to dispel with the self-destructive actions created by some ancestral memories, he or she must first acknowledge and understand how plastic memory may be contributing to the psyche, thereby bringing an end to square thought.

In analysing Lovelace's work, this thesis looks at the contributions of various writers, critics and scientists who have examined ancestral memory and/or Lovelace's work: Carl Jung, Stephen Pinker, Antonio Benitez-Rojo, Wilson Harris, Funso Aiyejina, Daryl Cumber Dance, Maureen Warner-Lewis, Harold Barratt, Louis James and Evelyn O'Callaghan. According to his critics, the search for self or "selfhood" is one of the most significant themes in Lovelace's works.

Every individual's quest for "personhood" manifests differently and this thesis suggests that the reason for this is the impact of plastic memory on the individual. Square thought is the result of humanity's inability to understand and adjust to the action of plastic memory on the psyche. It is in acknowledging and adjusting to plastic memory that humankind will dispel with square thought and proceed along the Golden Path of human evolution, which will ensure the perpetuation of the species unto the end of time.

Keywords: Thalia T.M. Arneaud; Earl Lovelace; Frank Herbert; Science Fiction.