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Arthur B. Evans

Jules Verne and the French Literary Canon

1863-1905

The curious contradiction of Jules Verne's popular success and literary rebuff in France began during his own lifetime—from the moment his first *Voyages extraordinaires* appeared in the French marketplace in 1863-65 until his death in 1905. From the publication of his earliest novels—*Cinq semaines en ballon* (1863), *Voyage au centre de la Terre* (1864), and *De la Terre à la Lune* (1865)—the sales of Verne's works were astonishing, earning him the recognition he sought as an up-and-coming novelist. He was showered with enthusiastic praise from some well-known authors, prominent scientists, and even a small number of literary critics. For example, his first novel received the following book review in the prestigious *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1863:

Les grandes découvertes des plus célèbres voyageurs constatées et résumées dans un rapide et charmant volume de science et d'histoire—de l'imagination et de la vérité—voilà ce qui distingue le brillant début de M. Jules Verne. Son livre restera comme le plus curieux et le plus utile des voyages imaginaires, comme une de ces rares oeuvres de l'esprit qui méritent la fortune des Robinson et de Gulliver, et qui ont sur eux l'avantage de ne pas sortir un instant de la réalité et de s'appuyer jusque dans la fantaisie et dans l'invention sur les faits positifs et sur la science irrécusable.¹

George Sand is known to have written a letter to her (and Verne's) publisher P.-J. Hetzel saying: "J'ai beaucoup de tes livres...mais je n'ai pas tous ceux de Jules Verne que j'adore, et je les recevrai avec plaisir pour mes petites et pour moi."²

And the following observations in 1866 by Théophile Gautier, when reviewing Verne's *Voyages et aventures du capitaine Hatteras*, were also among the first critical commentaries on Verne's works from the French literary community:

Il y a une volumineuse collection de voyages imaginaires anciens et modernes: depuis l'*Histoire véritable* de Lucien jusqu'aux *Aventures de Gulliver*, l'imagination humaine s'est complue dans ses fantaisies vagabondes où sous prétexte d'excursions aux contrées inconnues, les auteurs...développent leurs utopies ou exercent leur humeur satirique.

Les voyages de M. Jules Verne n'appartiennent à aucune de ces catégories. S'ils n'ont pas été réellement accomplis et si même ils ne sauraient l'être encore, ils offrent la plus rigoureuse possibilité scientifique et les plus osés ne sont que la paradoxe ou l'outrance d'une vérité bientôt connue. La chimère est ici chevauchée et dirigée par un esprit mathématique. C'est l'application à un fait d'invention de tous les détails vrais, réels, et précis qui peuvent s'y rattacher de manière à produire l'illusion la plus complète...

M. Jules Verne, dans son récit exact et minutieux comme le livre de bord, fait naître l'absolue sensation de la réalité. La technicité maritime, mathématique et scientifique employée à propos et sobrement imprime un tel cachet de vérité à ce fantastique *Forward* qu'on ne peut se persuader qu'il n'a pas accompli son voyage d'exploration. ... En outre, M. Jules Verne, qui ne néglige pas le côté humain et cordial, sait faire aimer ses personnages.³

From the ranks of the French scientific community, the following review by the geographer Saint-Martin is quite representative. It appeared in the popular scientific journal *L'Année géographique*:

Il est bien difficile que la science et la fiction se trouvent en contact sans alourdir l'une et abaisser l'autre; ici elles se font valoir par une heureuse alliance qui met en relief le côté instructif de la relation tout en laissant son attrait au côté d'aventures. Les plus habiles y trouvent à apprendre, et la masse des lecteurs y puisera presque à son insu, des notions irréprochables que bien peu auraient été chercher dans des livres d'un aspect plus sévère. J'ajouterai, et c'est là pour moi le plus grand mérite des compositions de M. Verne, que loin d'éloigner des lectures plus graves, elles y attirent plutôt d'acquisitions variées dans les récits d'un voyageur instruit qui est en même temps un conteur spirituel.⁴

Lastly, a small number of literary critics contemporary to Verne also commended his works. One of the most interesting and detailed is Marius Topin's *Romanciers contemporains* (1876), a 417-page collection of literary discussions about such celebrated authors as Hugo, Balzac, Dumas, Flaubert, and Zola. The following selection of excerpts gives a reasonable idea of Topin's opinions concerning Verne's oeuvre:

Voici maintenant le roman scientifique...le genre dont M. Jules Verne est l'incontestable inventeur. Assurément bien d'autres avant lui s'étaient efforcés de mêler dans leurs récits, avec une juste mesure, l'utile à l'agréable, et d'être à la fois instructifs par la portée sérieuse de leur oeuvre et piquants par l'invention ingénieuse. Mais nul n'y a réussi comme M. Verne.⁵

Toutes les combinaisons...tous les artifices que les romanciers ordinaires imaginent pour nouer et dénouer une situation, M. Verne les a empruntés à la science. Aux merveilles usées de la féerie, il a substitué les merveilles réelles de la nature; aux crimes accumulés du roman d'aventure, il a substitué des procédés dont les notions récentes de la science font les frais.⁶

M. Verne est le romancier le plus populaire de notre temps et, nous l'ajoutons avec joie, le plus justement populaire. Il est de ceux qui honorent leurs lecteurs, car rien n'est sorti de sa plume qui ne soit sain, substantiel, et élevé...dans ses oeuvres le beau moral resplendisse dans tout son éclat à côté du vrai scientifique.⁷

It is also interesting to note that Topin's discussions of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* seem more textually-oriented than most critics from this period; the majority appear to deal almost exclusively with Verne's personal life. Consider, for example, Adolphe Brisson's chatty discussion of Verne in his *Portraits intimes*,⁸ Georges Bastard's newspaper account in "Célébrités contemporains: Jules Verne en 1883" where he describes the author's physiognomy, his yacht, and his work habits,⁹ and Jules Clarétie's accurate but also strictly biographical *Jules Verne* of the same year¹⁰ (the first of many Vernian biographies to be published in the years to follow). In surveying most of the early criticism and reviews of Verne's novels, it is often evident that his growing popularity as a writer seems to have produced more interest in him as a public figure than in his actual works.

In this context, mention must also be made of two additional popularizers of Verne's novels in France which eventually brought him more public recognition (and certainly more wealth) than his texts themselves: i.e., those theatrical productions adapted from his novels and two early experiments in the new art of cinematography. The former include *Le Tour du monde en 80 jours* which Verne co-produced with Adolphe d'Ennery in 1874 (a huge box-office success, eventually chaulking up over 50 years of performances at the Châtelet Theatre), *Le Docteur Ox* in 1877 (with music by Jacques Offenbach), *Les Enfants du capitaine Grant* in 1878 and *Michel Strogoff* in 1880 (both also with d'Ennery), and *Voyage à travers l'impossible* in 1882 (a fanciful pastiche of a variety of Vernian "voyage" motifs—some found in his earlier novels, others not). The latter included

two silent movies by Méliès in 1902 and 1904: *De la Terre à la Lune* and *Voyage à travers l'impossible* respectively. These films are of particular importance when considering the phenomenal success of those cinematic adaptations of Verne's works that appeared in America during the mid-20th century and which functioned as the prime popularizers of the *Voyages extraordinaires* (and the myth of "Jules Verne, the Father of Science Fiction") in the United States. Thus, both French theatre and early cinema contributed to further enhancing Jules Verne's reputation as a highly successful "popular" author.

But the word "popular" in French literary circles is a two-edged term. It was undoubtedly due to his "popularity" that Verne was systematically shunned by the French literary and university establishment as being "a mere writer of children's stories." Very representative, for example, were the views of Emile Zola who repeatedly dismissed both Verne and his novels as totally non-literary:

...un aimable vulgarisateur, M. Verne obtenait des succès énormes avec ses livres qui succédaient aux contes de Perrault, entre les mains des enfants. Les féeries d'il y a trente ans étaient tirées de ces contes; il devenait logique que les féeries d'aujourd'hui fussent tirées des livres de M. Verne.¹¹

Si les *Voyages extraordinaires* se vendent bien, les alphabets et les paroissiens se vendent bien aussi à des chiffres considérables... [Ils sont] sans aucune importance dans le mouvement littéraire contemporain.¹²

Verne's lack of "official" literary status is also reflected in the strange irony of the Académie Française's "crowning" the *Voyages extraordinaires* in 1872 (along with the poetry of Coppée)—an award which Verne's publisher Hetzel thereafter unflinchingly mentioned in the frontispiece of each of Verne's novels—whereas their author, Jules Verne himself, was consistently snubbed and never offered membership to this prestigious assembly. It perhaps should be noted, however, that Verne apparently never expended much energy toward soliciting such an appointment. Time and time again, his publisher and friends encouraged him to push his own candidacy more insistently, and to be more sensitive to the political and social amenities that were prerequisite to such a nomination. But Verne invariably refused to do so. One wonders, in retrospect, if Verne's reluctance was a product of his disinterest or, as is more likely the case, a question of pride coupled with a fear of overt rejection. Verne's correspondence indicates that he repeatedly discussed with Hetzel his chances of entering the Académie—several letters even show a great deal more than just passing interest in such a possibility. But, as Verne himself

admitted in one such letter, the very *genre* itself of his *Voyages extraordinaires* would probably preclude any chance of his being nominated:

Je ne vous ai parlé de l'Académie qu'à propos des genres de littérature, et je n'ai pas dit autre chose que ceci: dans l'échelle littéraire, le roman d'aventures est moins haut placé que le roman de moeurs. Aux yeux de tous les critiques, Balzac est supérieur à Dumas père, ne fût-ce que "par le genre."¹³

And Verne then goes on to say, in a very rare and revealing commentary on his own literary beliefs:

Je ne dis pas autre chose, grand dieu! que ce que je fais! ... Je crois d'une grande façon générale, et question de forme à part, que l'étude du coeur humain est plus littéraire que les récits d'aventures. Ces récits peuvent réussir davantage, je ne dis pas non. Mais il vaut mieux avoir fait *Eugénie Grandet* que *Monte-Christo* [sic]...¹⁴

As excerpts from these letters clearly show, Verne was well aware of how his scientific-adventure tales were viewed within the dominant literary ideology of his society. And, *homme de lettres* himself (and being well-schooled in French literary history), he shared these fundamental values. Nevertheless, despite his self-deprecating remarks about the overall worth of his own efforts, Verne must have also realized that the Académie Française was not the exclusive reserve of writers of *romans de moeurs*, and his correspondence suggests that he continued to hope that he might someday be recognized as having made an important contribution to his country's *belles lettres* and eventually be awarded his place in the history of French literature. But he was to be bitterly disappointed in this regard. The Académie Française—although willing to acknowledge the popularity and “wholesomeness” of his *Voyages extraordinaires*—was adamant in its unwillingness to acknowledge Jules Verne as a writer of “real” literary merit. Even the most noted educators and literary historians of the time such as Ferdinand Brunetière, Emile Jaquet, Jules Lemaître, and René Doumic never once mentioned Jules Verne or his *romans scientifiques* in their respective reference books on French literature—a silence more damning than the worst reviews, and more painful than the Académie's refusal to recognize him personally.

But what were the underlying social reasons for Verne's lack of “official” recognition? First, although quite difficult to pinpoint in retrospect without venturing into anachronistic revisionism, one obvious factor seems to have been the rigid and hierarchically-defined notion of *littérature* itself during this period: a very deeply-rooted social concept in France—consecrated not only by time and ideology, but also by the French educational system—and

one founded on a deep nationalistic pride in the “great works and great men” of the centuries-old French literary tradition. Literary canonization was (and continues to be) the result of a three-fold social process of initial *triage*, curricular institutionalization, and publishing practices. First, literary critics are given the responsibility of identifying those works of “merit” according to the litmus-test of *le Beau* and *le bon goût*: “c’est le goût qui choisit...selon les règles immuables, identiques, également souveraines dans tous les arts.”¹⁵ Then, professional educators and academics ratify such choices by allowing only those properly-sanctioned literary texts into the French classroom (for pedagogical purposes of linguistic modelling and cultural training).¹⁶ Finally, an important and often-overlooked accomplice in this canonization process, book publishers provide extended longevity to those selected texts, reprinting various editions of the same titles year after year for successive generations of teachers and students. This canonization loop, operating as it does between these mutually-dependent entities, is a closed one and highly resistant to change. And, since Verne’s particular genre belonged to no identifiable tradition within the French literary heritage, his *Voyages extraordinaires* could not pass beyond the first stage of this canonization process. Those same hierarchical standards long used by literary critics to discern “high art” from “low” and “major works” from “minor” were insufficient and inappropriate for judging such a radically new literary form. Thus, Verne’s *roman scientifiques* were classified as “secondary” literature or, even worse, “paraliterary.” And once rejected from the loop, Verne’s works were subsequently not taught in the schools, unabridged reprints of his works were not published on a regular basis, Verne was not cited in literary reference books, and the entirety of the *Voyages extraordinaires* continued to remain outside the “official” French literary canon.

Second, as the notion of what truly constituted a *roman* was itself slowly evolving, the widespread belief still persisted in 19th-century France that its primary subject-matter should continue to be a psychological portrayal of human love. In the words of one critic:

[Verne] n’est pas à proprement parler un romancier, car l’amour, base de tous les romans, brille par son absence dans la plupart de ses ouvrages. La femme y est presque toujours reléguée au second plan ... ses héros n’ont pas de temps à perdre aux doux propos du petit dieu malin.¹⁷

From a 20th century perspective, of course, this convention seems rather quaint and ironic. And it seems even more so when viewed historically—i.e., when considering the difficulty that the *roman* (romance) had originally encountered in becoming an acceptable literary genre in the first place, precisely *because* of its subject-matter.

Third, there was the inevitable question of style. Echoing the pejorative comments of Zola, Charles Lemire paraphrases the reactions of most late-19th-century French *littérateurs* who condemned Verne's works, saying:

Jules Verne? ...un conteur de contes de fées à prétentions pseudo-scientifiques! Un amuseur de collégiens! ...un tissu d'invéraisemblances sans psychologie et sans style! ... Littérairement, cela n'existe pas!¹⁸

Verne himself was very sensitive to this prerequisite for literary respectability, and he laboriously reworked his compositions time and time again to improve their style. At one point, he confided in his publisher and friend Hetzel (who often acted as his sounding-board on such questions), saying:

Ce que je voudrais devenir avant tout, c'est un écrivain, louable ambition que vous approuvez pleinement. Vous me dites des choses bien aimables et même flatteuses sur mon style qui s'améliore... Rien ne m'a donc fait plus de plaisir qu'une telle approbation venant de vous... Tout ceci, c'est pour vous dire combien je cherche à devenir un styliste, mais sérieux; c'est l'idée de toute ma vie.¹⁹

But Verne's efforts to conform his writing style to historical expectations were obviously doomed from the start: his very subject matter dictated a kind of style which had never before been attempted. In creating his *romans scientifiques*, Verne was combining two very different sorts of discourse—scientific and literary—traditionally viewed as mutually exclusive.

As Roland Barthes has observed:

Il est bon ton aujourd'hui de contester l'opposition des sciences et des lettres... Mais du point de vue du langage...cette opposition est pertinente; ce qu'elle met en regard n'est d'ailleurs pas forcément le réel et la fantaisie, l'objectivité et la subjectivité, le Vrai et le Beau, mais...des lieux différents de parole... [L'écriture] vise le réel même du langage; elle reconnaît que le langage est un immense halo d'implications, d'effets, de retentissements, de tours, de retours, de redans... L'écriture fait du savoir une fête.²⁰

But Verne's own stylistic "fête du savoir"—his plays on words, anagrams, cryptograms, and double-entendres, his complex juggling of narrative voice and point of view, his revolutionary creation of technological and scientific exoticism—this entire critical perspective on his *Voyages extraordinaires* was totally alien to and ignored by the critics of his time. From a typically 19th-century and purely quantitative frame of reference, Verne was

labelled an author who simply did not have “enough style.” And, considered with the other evidence described above, he was promptly and irrevocably classified as a writer of mere “popular” fiction.

But there are three other social reasons why Verne’s works could not be recognized as canonical during the latter half of the 19th century: certain changes taking place within the French literary establishment itself, the continuing conflict between the Catholic Church and the forces of anti-clericalism, and the progressive rise of anti-scientism among the French public itself.

The first of these concerns the emergence of a new ideological mandate for writers of “true” literature in France during this period: they were expected to write *in opposition to* their (presumably bourgeois) reading public. In reaction to the growing presence of what Sainte-Beuve had earlier castigated as *la littérature industrielle*²¹ (i.e., mass-produced and inexpensive books churned out in ever-increasing quantities) as well as to the oppressive bourgeois social climate of the Second Empire, a new literary and artistic aesthetic took shape in the world of French letters around the middle of the century: *l’Art pour l’Art*. As Sartre described this unique development in his *Qu’est-ce que la littérature?*:

A partir de 1848, en effet, et jusqu’à la guerre de 1914, l’unification radicale de son public amène l’auteur à écrire par principe *contre tous ses lecteurs*. Il vend pourtant ses productions, mais il méprise ceux qui les achètent, et s’efforce de décevoir leurs vœux; c’est chose entendue qu’il vaut mieux être méconnu que célèbre, que le succès, s’il va jamais à l’artiste de son vivant, s’explique par un malentendu. Et si d’aventure le livre qu’on publie ne heurte pas assez, on y ajoutera une préface pour insulter. Ce conflit fondamental entre l’écrivain et son public est un phénomène sans précédent dans l’histoire littéraire.²²

All literary works viewed as having some “useful” function to society in practical, moral, or educational terms immediately became suspect. Any novel, short story, collection of poetry, or theatrical play that was believed to harbor any intentions toward public edification was dismissed by the intellectual elite as intrinsically non-literary. For them, true literature must focus, to the exclusion of all else, on a portrayal of *le Beau* and on the primacy of Form over Content. Judged according to these criteria, Verne’s *Voyages extraordinaires*—overtly didactic and strongly referential—were obviously not “true” literature.

Secondly, there is the question of *Voyages extraordinaires* and the Catholic Church. The intense religious debates in France during the second half of the 19th century are familiar to any who have studied the history

of that time. One issue of violent contention was the question of *public education*: e.g., lay versus Catholic, science curricula versus “letters” curricula, etc. Although Verne’s publisher Hetzel made great efforts to maintain a neutral religious position in his publications, there was often no middle ground acceptable to both sides. For example, Hetzel’s popular periodical *Magasin d’Education et de Récréation* (in which most of Verne’s novels first appeared) was condemned in 1868 by the Catholic bishop Dupanloup. Monseigneur Dupanloup was recognized as one of the leading educational experts of the day, and he was a vigorous proponent of the superiority of Catholic parochial schools and their “humanist” curricula which systematically excluded all science instruction. Hetzel’s reaction to this condemnation, in an 8-page letter to Dupanloup, stands as a true testament to tongue-in-cheek editorial diplomacy:

Monseigneur,

J’ai lu avec une douloureuse surprise à la suite d’une lettre que vous avez publiée récemment une note relative au *Magasin d’Education et de Récréation* dont j’ai seul la direction. Je ne vois qu’un moyen de convaincre votre conscience qu’elle s’est méprise ou qu’on l’a abusée, c’est de mettre sous vos yeux l’ouvrage dont vous parlez et que vous réprochez cette note. Je regrette extrêmement, Monseigneur, de ne pouvoir vous épargner de lire les huit volumes dont se compose le *Magasin* que vous avez condamné. Pour un enfant ce serait tout profit et tout plaisir peut-être. Pour Votre Grandeur, ce sera une pénitence. Si l’avez un peu méritée, vous me pardonnerez de désirer vous l’imposer.²³

And Verne himself, because of his immense popularity, was not immune to concern by religious authorities. Although his novels are teeming with references to *Dieu, la Providence, and le Créateur*, they just as often tend to cite *le hasard, le destin, and la fatalité* as the hidden forces governing the actions of his heroes and villains. This particular narrative trait, while not meriting him a total condemnation by the Church, nevertheless earned him the following warning by the powerful Catholic journalist Louis Veillot (in a letter addressed to Hetzel):

Je n’ai pas encore lu les *Voyages extraordinaires* de M. Verne. Notre ami Aubineau me dit qu’ils sont charmants, sauf une absence...qui désempellit tout et qui laisse les merveilles du monde à l’état d’énigme. C’est beau mais c’est inanimé. Il manque quelqu’un...²⁴

Needless to say, the *quelqu’un* referred to in this letter—the one who, according to Veillot, seemed conspicuously absent from Verne’s *Voyages extraordinaires*—was God and/or Jesus Christ.

Finally, another reason for Verne's rebuff seems to have been more sociological than literary or religious. Verne was the one of the first novelists in France to attempt to bridge a deep cultural chasm that divided French society as a whole throughout the 19th century. On the one side were the progressive and energetic Positivists who, taking full advantage of the tools of the Industrial Revolution and a Guizot-type laissez-faire brand of governmental capitalism, were rapidly industrializing the French countryside in the name of Progress and Science. On the other were the partisans of anti-scientism and the practitioners of *l'Art pour l'Art* (both sometimes in uneasy coalition with the Catholic Church) who viewed this unrestricted technological growth as a direct threat to human values. This age-old struggle—as exemplified in the 20th century, for example, by C.P. Snow's celebrated "Two Cultures" debates²⁵ and by New Criticism's stinging denunciation of Science as "the villain of history which has...made man the alienated, rootless, godless creature that he has become in this century"²⁶—was particularly acute in France throughout the mid-to-late 19th and early 20th centuries. From the works of respected writers like Michelet,²⁷ Vigny,²⁸ Flaubert,²⁹ and the Goncourt brothers,³⁰ to the post-war Dada and Surrealists, French *littérateurs* continually attacked the positivistic precepts and false hopes of France's social engineers Auguste Conte, Ernest Renan, Hippolyte Taine, and others. Note, for example, Brunetière's catchy slogan popularized during the 1890s where he speaks of the demonstrated "faillite de la Science,"³¹ or Marcel Schwob's demand that all "descriptions pseudo-scientifiques, l'étalage de psychologie de manuel et de biologie mal-digérée" be permanently banned from the French novel.³² Despite the attraction that modern technology held for a few (initially) "non-mainstream" writers like the poet Apollinaire and the satirist Alfred Jarry, such public sentiments of anti-scientism in France reached a zenith immediately after the cataclysm of World War I. And although dozens of French literary works and paintings from the 1920s might be cited as examples of this prevailing public attitude, it is perhaps fitting that the French novelist and caricaturist Albert Robida be singled out. As the well-known humoristic proselytizer of scientific progress and technological gadgetry during the 1880s and 1890s—in such popular novels as *Le Vingtième siècle* and *La Vie électrique*—Robida became in 1918 one of their most ferocious critics in his (appropriately titled) novel *L'Ingénieur Von Satanas*:

le débordement d'horreurs apportées par ce qu'on appelait Science et Progrès, Civilisation et autres fadaïses écroulées, illusions noyées dans les fleuves de sang. ...

Où nous a-t-elle conduits cette Science haïssable? ... Oui, l'engin est tout, et la valeur de l'homme, son esclave, rien, ou presque rien...

Dans quel gouffre sanglant nous a-t-il précipités, ce fameux Progrès dont nous étions si fiers, quand nous nous rengorgions bouffis d'admiration pour nous-mêmes, ce Progrès qui a permis soudain la démolition rapide et complète, l'écroulement subit d'une civilisation illusoire, laquelle en réalité n'était qu'un dégénérescence, et une maladie mortelle?³³

Consequently, amid such rapidly rising tides of anti-scientism in France during the late-19th and early 20th centuries, it is hardly any wonder that Jules Verne's *romans scientifiques* might be viewed somewhat unfavorably in certain circles.

Thus, it appears to have been a convergence of many different factors which dictated that Jules Verne, despite the enormous popular success of his *Voyages extraordinaires*, was not recognized as an important literary figure in France during his lifetime. Of course, no simple answers can be given to such a complex question. In the preceding pages, I have discussed several different hypotheses to account for why I believe Jules Verne did not (or could not) become part of the late 19th-century French literature canon. But two facts are inescapable: Verne's works were indeed rebuffed by the French literary establishment of his time, and the author himself was painfully aware of this rejection. As Verne explained it to one of his American interviewers in 1894:

The great regret of my life is that I have never taken any place [sic] in French literature... A little more justice to me from my own countrymen would have been prized by me... That is what I regret and always shall regret... Dumas used to say to me when I complained that my place in French literature was not recognized: "You should have been an American or an English author. Then your books, translated into French, would have gained you enormous popularity in France and you would have been considered by your countrymen as one of the greatest masters of fiction." But, as it is, I am considered of no account in French literature.³⁴

1905-1955

The period of 1905 to 1955 in France is characterized by three developments in the evolution of Verne's literary reputation: his public enshrinement as a popular cultural icon, a sharp decline in the publishing and sales of his *Voyages extraordinaires* themselves (particularly the original unabridged versions), and the beginnings of an underground "Jules Verne cult" composed of youngsters seeking adventure, adults a sort of nostalgic escapism, and writers a new vision of the world. One modern Verne biographer has described this period as follows:

c'est la traversée du désert. Hetzel (fils), sans prévenir Michel [Verne], cède en 1914 ses droits exclusifs sur les *Voyages extraordinaires* aux éditions Hachette, qui laissent épuiser la plupart de ses titres. Jules Verne est considéré comme un auteur pour enfants passé de mode. Les précieuses éditions polychromes "au phare" se couvrent de poussière dans les greniers ou dorment dans les bibliothèques. De temps en temps, un jeune garçon curieux grimpe en haut de la tour, se pique au fuseau, et alors c'est le grand réveil, parfois l'éblouissement, qui décide d'une vocation: celle des aviateurs Byrd, Wright, Bréquet; du chimiste Georges Claude, etc. Jules Verne, c'est aussi le mot de passe, la référence secrète des plus grands artistes de Tolstoi à Apollinaire, de Raymond Roussel à Michel Tournier.³⁵

The enshrinement of "Jules-Verne-the-man" as a kind of French folk hero was propagated by two highly reverential biographies published soon after his death: Charles Lemire's *Jules Verne*³⁶ and Marguerite Allotte de la Fuÿe's supposedly authoritative *Jules Verne: sa vie, son oeuvre*.³⁷ The former, a resident of Verne's adopted hometown of Amiens, spared no effort in eulogizing Verne's mythical life with venerative discussions of his personal habits, his family, his friends, and his wide popularity—all continually punctuated with homages paid to the author by other writers and journalists from his time. But Lemire's well-meaning biography also tampered with established historical fact, "retouching" Verne's public image for posterity. The following small but all too typical example shows the effects of such distortions: C.P. Cambiare's otherwise fine 1927 study of Edgar Allan Poe's influence in France contains the following statement:

As Verne knew English very well, he did not need to have recourse to translations. Speaking of him, Charles Lemire writes: "Ses livres de prédilection étaient Walter Scott, Fenimore Cooper, et Dickens qu'il lisait en leur langue et citait souvent..."³⁸

In this passage, some twenty years after Lemire's biography originally appeared, one witnesses the inevitable aftermath of Lemire's myth-making. Henceforth, Jules Verne would be known as able to read English fluently—whereas, as the author himself had stated on several occasions (to his Anglo-American interviewers among others): "Unhappily, I read only those works which have been translated into French. ... Owing to my unfortunate inability to read English, I am not so familiar as I would like to be with Mayne Read and Robert Louis Stevenson..."³⁹ And Lemire's biography was only the first to "improve" on Verne's life with such laudatory fabrications—there would be others much worse.

Such creative embellishments on Verne's life had no greater practitioner than Marguerite Allotte de la Fuÿe. As Verne's great-niece and one

who had access to many previously unpublished documents kept within Verne's family, her 1928 biography was immediately hailed as the first "authoritative" and "canonical" biography on the author of the *Voyages extraordinaires*. And her book retained this (unwarranted) distinction for generations of readers and researchers—yielding the limelight only in 1973 when Verne's grandson Jean Jules-Verne decided to set the record straight with an updated and more accurate biography of his grandfather.⁴⁰ While Allotte de la Fuÿe's text contained much documented material unknown to earlier readers and critics of Verne, it also sought to further idolize him in the public's mind by liberally "embroidering" on the facts of Verne's life—to such an extent, in fact, that modern Vernian critics are still sorting out her truths, her half-truths, and her inventions.⁴¹

Ironically, while his enshrinement as a national legend made a cultural hero of him, Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* sank deeper and deeper into oblivion. Hetzel fils sold his rights to the novels to the large publishing house Hachette in 1914. And, to remedy a sluggish sales problem, Hachette decided to revamp Verne's most popular novels and launch their famous series called the "Bibliothèque Verte": severely abridged and watered-down versions of Verne's original works, adapted specifically to young boys (a counterpart to their "Bibliothèque Rose" series intended for young girls). Sales immediately picked up, the strategy was seen as an unqualified business success, and the two series continue today. As a direct result, educators and literary historians now discussed less often the question of Verne's appeal to adults versus children and more often the question of his appeal to young boys versus young girls. Consider, for example, the following observations by Marie-Thérèse Latzarus in her 1924 book on children's literature in France:

Les petites filles aiment, sans doute, les romans de Jules Verne; pourtant elles les apprécient généralement moins que ne le font les petits garçons. Le plus souvent, elles lisent rapidement les pages dans lesquelles sont décrits les appareils. ... Elles sont plutôt attirées par le but poursuivi; les petits garçons, eux, s'intéressent en général à toutes les questions de mécanique...⁴²

And while this and other studies⁴³ consecrated Jules Verne as a writer of fine children's stories, the French literary establishment gradually forgot about him altogether. Erudite literary critics persisted in panning his works (convinced, no doubt, of the wisdom of their *fin-de-siècle* predecessors), academics shunned any mention of his contribution to French literature, and publishers discontinued printing full-length versions of the *Voyages extraordinaires*. It is quite emblematic that the 1920s and 1930s are extremely

meagre in Vernian criticism, with one important exception: the birth of the *Société Jules Verne* and its *Bulletin de la Société Jules Verne* (1935-38), founded by Jean Guernonprez. The *Société*—the first official “club of learned amateurs” devoted to Jules Verne—published in its *Bulletin* many articles on Verne’s life and works, excerpts from Verne’s correspondence, various eye-witness testimonies, and accounts of his literary status in other countries. In so doing, the *Bulletin de la Société Jules Verne* kept alive the flame of Vernian scholarship during an otherwise very lean period. Its exhortations to “Propagez la lecture des *Voyages extraordinaires!*” and “Faites de la propagande en faveur de la *Société Jules Verne!*” must surely have had some modest effect, but its brief existence was unfortunately cut short by World War II. The *Bulletin* was not to reappear until some thirty years later in 1967.

Another important constituency within this growing “Jules Verne cult” during the first half of the 20th century was a number of young French writers who had been weaned on the *Voyages extraordinaires* during their formative years. Many went on to become celebrated *littérateurs* in France’s most elite literary circles—authors like Jean Cocteau, Paul Claudel, François Mauriac, Blaise Cendrars, Raymond Roussel, Antoine Saint-Exupéry, Jean-Paul Sartre, Marcel Aymé, René Barjavel, Claude Roy, Michel Carrouges, Michel Butor, and Roland Barthes among others.⁴⁴ And they ultimately paved the way for the sudden renaissance of public interest in Jules Verne and the scholarly (re)discovery of the *Voyages extraordinaires* in France during the 1960s and 1970s. Defying many decades of canonical repression and politico-literary correctness, they unabashedly proclaimed their admiration for Verne and his “prodigieuse puissance de faire rêver.”⁴⁵ Raymond Roussel, for example, repeatedly sang the praises of Verne’s “genius” in his own fiction and personal correspondence, saying:

Je voudrais aussi...rendre hommage à l’homme d’incommensurable génie que fut Jules Verne. Mon admiration pour lui est infinie. Dans certains pages de *Voyage au centre de la Terre*, de *Cinq semaines en ballon*, de *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers*, de *De la Terre à la Lune et Autour de la Lune*, de *L’Ile mystérieuse*, et d’*Hector Servadac*, il s’est élevé aux plus hautes cimes que puisse atteindre le verbe humain...⁴⁶

Demandez-moi ma vie mais ne me demandez pas de vous prêter un Jules Verne! J’ai un tel fanatisme pour ses oeuvres que j’en suis jaloux. ... C’est Lui, et de beaucoup, le plus grand génie littéraire de tous les siècles; il “restera” quand tous les autres auteurs de notre époque seront oubliés depuis longtemps.⁴⁷

And, in Roussel’s case at least, one astonishing fact emerges: Verne’s influence on him was just as often stylistic as it was thematic. Roussel’s

constant borrowing from the *Voyages extraordinaires* (v. his 1926 *Etoile au front*, for example), his use of Verne-like cryptograms, enumerations, exotic and rare vocabulary, technicisms, and double-entendres (v. his 1913 *Locus Solus*) establish a palpable link between these two authors so seemingly distant from one another in French literary studies.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, several new critical studies on Verne and his *romans scientifiques* appeared from within the very heart of the French literary community. The soon-to-be-famous author Michel Butor and the respected critic Michel Carrouges spearheaded this seminal *avant-garde* with two articles entitled “Le Point suprême et l’âge d’or à travers quelques oeuvres de Jules Verne”⁴⁸ and “Le Mythe de Vulcain chez Jules Verne”⁴⁹ published in the 1949 edition of *Arts et Lettres*. In the former, Butor shrewdly and sensitively analyzes many of the leitmotifs in Verne’s opus: primordial initiation rites and the human quest for rebirth, the use of symbols and cryptograms, the Earth’s elements, the role of Providence, etc. In these recurring themes throughout the *Voyages extraordinaires* Butor finds many parallels to André Breton’s hypothetical “point suprême” described in the latter’s *Seconde Manifeste du Surréalisme*, to Henri Michaux’s hallucinatory visions, to Lautréamont’s oxymoronic juxtapositions, and to the haunting images of Henri Rousseau and Max Ernst. In the latter, Carrouges examines Verne’s apparent obsession with volcanoes and eruptive islands—especially as they relate to humanity’s age-old mythic battle with the forces of Nature, its descent into subterranean netherworlds, and its heroic rebirth. Whereas Butor integrates Verne solidly into the French literary heritage, Carrouges links Verne to the mythological origins of all Western literatures and concludes his richly suggestive psycho-historical study of these human archetypes by concluding:

Chez Jules Verne, la mythologie anthropomorphique du type greco-latine antique est évacuée au profit d’exposés scientifiques, mais à travers ces descriptions positives, tous les éléments du vieux mythe vulcanien reparaissent renouvelés, laïcisés, mais intacts. D’une façon générale, on peut dire que les grands romans d’aventure modernes représentent un mode profane de transposition des vieilles épopées sacrées.⁵⁰

These ground-breaking critical analyses by Butor and Carrouges contributed to a growing impetus for a complete reappraisal of Jules Verne and his works in literary and academic circles throughout France. But yet another critical work (published the following year) provided further credentials to Verne’s slowly growing stature in literary history: Jean-Jacques Bridenne’s *La Littérature française d’imagination scientifique*.⁵¹ Bridenne’s detailed, historical survey served to define a scientifico-literary lineage for Verne

and his *Voyages extraordinaires*. It identified Verne as a literary descendant of the *voyages imaginaires* of Lucian, Cyrano de Bergerac, and Voltaire, as a direct offspring of the scientific and mystery tales of Edgar Allan Poe, and as a powerful precursor to the two 20th-century genres of science fiction and the detective novel in the works of authors like J.-H. Rosny aîné, H.G. Wells, Albert Robida, Gaston Leroux, Conan Doyle, et al. Bridenne characterizes Verne as the first important writer of these types of “scientific” literature, and he castigates the “pontiffs and snobs” of the French literary establishment, saying:

L’indifférence ou l’antipathie de pontifes et de snobs à l’égard de la littérature d’imagination scientifique a empêché le créateur de Phileas Fogg et du capitaine Nemo d’être un Wells avant la lettre, un répondant moderniste à Villiers de l’Isle-Adam, un Loti technicien.⁵²

Quelles que soient les réserves s’imposant et qui, en bonne justice, ne doivent pas être automatiquement portées à son débit, Jules Verne, premier romancier véritable de la Science, n’est pas plus méprisable littérairement que scientifiquement, il s’en faut de beaucoup.⁵³

And finally, in 1953 and 1955, the pathway toward more extensive scholarship on Verne was permanently opened by several more influential studies. Parménie and Bonnier de la Chapelle published the personal correspondence of Verne’s publisher P.-J. Hetzel,⁵⁴ casting an entirely new light on the editorial environment in which Verne worked and clarifying many previously-unknown aspects of Verne’s private life, stylistic concerns, and literary opinions. One of the first modern, scholarly, and non-biographical books of literary criticism on Verne, *Voyage au monde de Jules Verne* by René Escaich was published two years later and discussed Verne’s sources, his major themes, his fictional characters, and his treatment of history, nationalism, and geography.⁵⁵ And, during the same year, two preeminent French literary journals—*Livres de France*⁵⁶ and *Europe*⁵⁷—made the decision to dedicate an entire issue to Verne and his works, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the author’s death. The former included a variety of essays by recognized figures like Georges Duhamel, Marguerite Allotte de la Fuÿe, Bernard Frank (who had earlier published a rather undistinguished biography on Verne⁵⁸), and Jean Guermonprez of the *Société Jules Verne*, as well as excerpts from Verne’s correspondence and various hommages to Verne by famous public figures (like the Emperor William II of Germany, among others). *Europe* offered a considerably more sophisticated selection of critical articles by Pierre Abraham, Georges Fournier, Georges Sadoul, and Pierre Sichel and covered topics such as Verne’s public versus private life, his political leanings, his

portrayal of Nature, the illustrators of the *Voyages extraordinaires*, modern cinematic adaptations of Verne's works, and his status in countries like Hungary and Russia (where Verne had always been held in high "literary" esteem).

In the wake of this sudden influx of scholarly and semi-scholarly publications into the French *belles lettres* marketplace, Verne and his *Voyages extraordinaires* began gradually to emerge from hallowed oblivion. And, as the 1960s and 1970s approached—years which were to witness a veritable explosion of renewed interest in Verne in all segments of French society—it was already evident that Jules Verne's reputation in his native land was undergoing a cultural metamorphosis that could be described as nothing short of extraordinary.

1955-1978

This sudden *prise de conscience* and reassessment of Jules Verne in the French literary canon during the 1960s and 1970s was undoubtedly the result of the convergence of a great many social and historical forces. Among them, one might include the following, among others:

1. the acceleration of technological development in France during this period, and the accompanying—perhaps subliminal—need to revisit those fictional works that portrayed, in more simple terms, the relationship between human beings and machines.
2. the unprecedented achievements in space exploration and deep-sea research, recalling the best-known topoi of Verne's fictional universe, and suddenly bringing him back into the public's eye.
3. the progressively non-mimetic and self-conscious tendencies in modern French fiction, creating a kind of backlash revival of more highly-referential forms of literature.
4. the increase in popularity of science fiction in the French marketplace, sparking an interest in this genre's historical antecedents.
5. certain developments in French literary criticism itself throughout this period which acted as the catalyst for a comprehensive reappraisal of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*.

With the advent of structuralist and semiotic literary analysis—along with the competing schools of Marxist socio-critical and Freudian psychoanalytical criticism—the very notion of what comprised "literary-ness" and literary canons suddenly became the focal-point of intense scholarly attention. And Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* proved to be a perfect testing-

ground for the demonstration of such literary theories. As one critic has explained this unexpected (re)valorization of Verne's works:

Cette oeuvre offre en effet un remarquable terrain d'études pour les *techniques d'analyse des textes* les plus actuelles: lecture mythologique, psychanalytique, idéologique, politique, initiatique, épistémologique; analyse structurale du récit, du discours, voire "analyse textuelle." Par ailleurs, maints *contextes* s'y croisent: échos de la littérature générale, scientifique, politique de l'époque; domaines, complémentaires, de la littérature "marginale"; littérature pour la jeunesse, récit d'aventures, d'anticipation ou de terreur, roman populaire; influences contemporaines...sur des écrivains aussi divers que Roussel ou Cendrars, Cocteau ou Saint-Exupéry, Butor ou Le Clézio.⁵⁹

But the question is a bit more complex than it might appear at first glance. For example, the first stirrings of this renewed interest in Jules Verne and his *romans scientifiques* came neither from the universities nor from those more sophisticated literary scholars later to be associated with Vernian criticism. It came, rather, from the French public at large, from private groups of Verne enthusiasts, and from the French publishing industry itself. At the outset of this Jules Verne revival, one reviewer for *Le Figaro littéraire*, for instance, made the following observation about Verne's burgeoning popularity: "Il est lu, traduit, célébré comme les plus grands, mais sa position littéraire ne va pas s'améliorant."⁶⁰ And another popular sf writer and critic, while acknowledging the broad-based appeal which Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* seemed to be enjoying, nevertheless complained of an almost total lack of "serious" university study of Verne's texts:

Plus surprenante encore est l'abstention de la critique et en particulier de la recherche universitaire. Les bons ouvrages sur Jules Verne sont rares et, à ma connaissance, aucune thèse de lettres ne lui a été consacrée. La Sorbonne le juge-t-elle trop scientifique? Ou bien trop populaire et, par là, trop suspect? Que faudra-t-il pour que nos savants professeurs découvrent enfin que la littérature n'est pas une collection d'oeuvres arbitrairement, sinon capricieusement, définies mais ce qui se lit?⁶¹

But this critical "time-lag" was relatively short-lived. The often stodgy French *universitaire* community eventually joined the French reading public in its renewed enthusiasm for Verne's *Voyages Extraordinaires*, and by 1978 Verne was comfortably ensconced in the French university curriculum.

Let us take a closer look at the details of this Vernian renaissance in France during the 1960s and 1970s. It appears to have occurred in two successive waves, peaking in the years 1966 and 1978. The first crescendo seems to have been generated by two scholars in particular: Roland Barthes and Marcel Moré. Perhaps inspired by the 1955 quinquennial celebrations and the popular interest in Verne's works that resulted from it, Roland Barthes included in his 1957 collection of articles called *Mythologies* an insightful essay titled "Nautilus et Bateau Ivre."⁶² This essay, when viewed in retrospect as part of the history of literary criticism, was profoundly prophetic:

L'oeuvre de Jules Verne (dont on a fêté récemment le cinquantenaire) serait un bon objet pour une critique de structure: c'est une oeuvre à thèmes. Verne a construit une sorte de cosmogonie fermée sur elle-même, qui a ses catégories propres, son temps, son espace, sa plénitude, et même son principe existentiel.⁶³

Although many years would pass before Barthes would return to Verne's oeuvre and actually sketch the outlines for just such a comprehensive structural analysis—in the critical journal *Poétique*⁶⁴—and although even more years would pass before Verne would finally receive serious university study, Barthes was nevertheless among the very first to recognize Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* as ideal narrative corpus for advanced literary exegesis. Marcel Moré's contribution to the reexamination of Verne's novels was even more provocative. He created an immediate public controversy with two psycho-thematic studies, his *Le Très curieux Jules Verne*⁶⁵ in 1960 (referring to Mallarmé's 1874 cryptic comments on Verne) and, three years later, his *Nouvelles explorations de Jules Verne*.⁶⁶ Moré not only traced Verne's possible sources and influences in a totally unorthodox manner (e.g., Huysmans, Dostoievsky, Wagner, Nietzsche, et al.) but also convincingly analyzed many apparent obsessions present in the *Voyages extraordinaires*: the search for a father-figure (recalling Verne's "curious" relationship with his own father and with his surrogate father Hetzel), the need for brotherly love (i.e., Verne's rapport with his brother Paul), and others. Moré's study was one of the first to apply Freudian psychoanalytic methods to Verne's life and works and, by slicing through many of the established myths surrounding Verne's patriarchal and grandfatherly image—even hinting at possible latent homosexual tendencies in this revered cultural icon—Moré's publications caused a small scandal in France.

The door for a more profound examination on Verne's life and works was now opened. As 1966 dawned, the literary journals *L'Arc*,⁶⁷ *Arts et Loisirs*,⁶⁸ and *Nouvelles littéraires*⁶⁹ devoted special issues to Jules Verne,

featuring an astonishingly rich variety of essays by several well-known French writers and scholars: Michel Foucault, Michel Serres, Marcel Brion, J.-M.-G. Le Clézio, Marcel Schneider, Marc Soriano, Georges Borgeaud, René Barjavel, Pierre Versins, Marcel Lecomte, Francis Lacassin, Pierre-André Touttain, and even Michel Butor and Marcel Moré. Other critical works of 1966 include those by the Marxist critic Pierre Macherey who offered a materialist-sociological interpretation of Verne in his *Pour une théorie de la production littéraire*⁷⁰ and by Simone Vierne who dared to question the true authorship of several novels in Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* in her "Authenticité de quelques oeuvres de Jules Verne."⁷¹ Further, in the 1966 publishing market, Livre de Poche decided to print (in unabridged format with original *gravure* illustrations) one million copies of Verne's ten most popular novels—a decision which dramatically increased the availability of Verne's original texts at reasonable cost. And the Swiss publisher Editions Rencontre took the unprecedented step of publishing (in unabridged hard-cover editions, with original illustrations, and with scholarly prefaces by Charles-Noël Martin and Gilbert Signaux) the *entire* series of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*—an accomplishment not equalled since the original Hetzel editions and the short-lived Hachette facimiles of the 1920s. Suddenly Verne's entire opus, including his short stories and posthumous works, was fully accessible to all. And Parisian journalists of periodicals covering the literary scene like the *Quinzaine littéraire*,⁷² *Le Figaro littéraire*,⁷³ and *Lectures pour tous*⁷⁴ soon began to acknowledge a true "Jules Verne revival."

The impetus given to the study of Verne by the many events of 1966 continued through the end of the decade and into the next. As the republication of his *Voyages extraordinaires* continued unabated, the *Bulletin de la Société Jules Verne* was resuscitated in 1967 through the efforts of Joseph Laissus, Oliver Dumas, and other "amateur scholars." The *Bulletin* immediately reprinted in toto their earlier pre-WWII issues and then continued their quarterly publication of articles and current-events information about Verne's life, works, and international status. Of particular value were the efforts made to establish a comprehensive bibliography for Verne's many works.⁷⁵ The *Bulletin* rapidly became the leading continuing source for serious scholarship on Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*; many years before the universities in France began to consider Verne as an appropriate author for advanced literary study, scholars like Jean Chesneaux, Daniel Compère, Piero Gondolo della Riva, Simone Vierne, Pierre Terrasse, François Raymond, Robert Taussat and others were already widening and deepening the scope of Vernian criticism. And work of the *Société Jules Verne* (and its international counterparts⁷⁶) continues today. For example, adding to those archival and research possibilities offered by the Musée Jules

Verne, the Archives Jules Verne, and the Centre universitaires de recherches verniennes founded in 1965-67 by the city of Nantes (Verne's birthplace), the *Société* also established a Centre de documentation Jules Verne in the author's adopted city of Amiens. Housed in Verne's former residence, the Centre contains an impressive collection of over 6000 items relating to Verne and his works, all indexed and cross-referenced.

The final years of the 1960s and early 1970s continued this now-ineluctable trend toward Jules Verne's popular rehabilitation and eventual literary canonization. For example, in an early harbinger of things to come, Jules Verne and his *Voyages extraordinaires* were cited for the first time in 1967 and 1971 in two academic anthologies of French literary history: Paul Guth's *Histoire de la littérature française*,⁷⁷ and the authoritative sixteen-volume Arthaud series entitled *Littérature française*.⁷⁸ Following a successful 1965-66 exposition in Nantes celebrating the centennial of Verne's prophetic *De la Terre à la Lune*, Paris's Ecole Technique Supérieure also held in 1967 an elaborate exposition called "Jules Verne et le courant scientifique de son temps." The Apollo moon flight in 1969 and Neil Armstrong's comments in Paris years later⁷⁸ further served to heighten international interest in Verne as a technological visionary. French university scholars and various "learned amateurs" found their book-length studies on Verne immediately accepted for publication: Ghislain Diesback's *Le Tour de Jules Verne en quatre-vingts livres* (1969),⁸⁰ Jean Chesneaux's very influential *Une Lecture politique de Jules Verne* (1971),⁸¹ Marie-Hélène Huet's *L'Histoire des Voyages Extraordinaires* (1973),⁸² Simone Vienne's myth-oriented *Jules Verne et le roman initiatique* (1973),⁸³ the long-awaited "authoritative" biography on the author by Jean Jules-Verne entitled simply *Jules Verne* (1973),⁸⁴ and finally Michel Serres' highly structuralist *Jouvenances sur Jules Verne* (1974).⁸⁵ And French radio and television, as well as the French film industry, began to further popularize this unusual cultural phenomenon by broadcasting literary discussions on Verne's works, televising TV dramatizations of some his *Voyages extraordinaires*, and producing full-length films of several of his novels.⁸⁶

It was toward the end of the 1970s in France, during the heyday of the French Structuralist movement in literary criticism, that Jules Verne definitively shed his "paraliterary" image within the French *Academe* and intellectual elite. For example, the prestigious *Revue des Lettres Modernes* in 1976 began to publish, under the direction of François Raymond, an on-going series called *Jules Verne*.⁸⁷ This series was to become the scholarly forum for serious university-level critical analyses of Verne's texts from a wide variety of methodological perspectives and academic disciplines. In another valuable support-structure for advanced Vernian research (and sponsored by the *Société Jules Verne*), Piero Gondolo della Riva published

in 1977 a detailed *Bibliographie analytique de toutes les oeuvres de Jules Verne*,⁸⁸ the most authoritative listing to date of all Verne's primary texts, providing Vernian researchers with top-notch reference material for studying this very prolific author. But it was during the year 1978—in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Verne's birth—that this increasing academic study of Jules Verne was consummated by two important events: his novel *Voyage au centre de la Terre* was placed on the Agrégation reading-list within the French university system (precipitating a rush of undergraduate and graduate theses on this and other novels of the *Voyages extraordinaires*), and, that same year, Jules Verne was chosen as the topic for one of several academic colloquia held at Cérisy-la-Salle.⁸⁹ These two symbolic gestures seemed to do more for the acceptance of Jules Verne within the French university literary establishment than all the previous studies of Verne's works published throughout the prior two decades combined. As expected, an explosion of Vernian criticism accompanied these two events: Christian Robin's *Un Monde connu et inconnu*,⁹⁰ Marc Soriano's psychoanalytical *Jules Verne*,⁹¹ Charles-Noël Martin's excellent *La Vie et l'oeuvre de Jules Verne*,⁹² and Jean-Michel Margot's computer-assisted listing of all secondary materials on Verne titled *Bibliographie documentaire sur Jules Verne*,⁹³ to name but a few. Three international colloquia in Amiens were sponsored by the Université de Picardie in 1975, 1978, and later in 1985, and the texts of those scholars presenting papers there appeared in *Nouvelles recherches sur Jules Verne et le voyage*,⁹⁴ *Jules Verne: filiations, rencontres, influences*,⁹⁵ and *Modernités de Jules Verne*.⁹⁶ Literary journals once again devoted special issues to Verne: one of the more important was (again) *Europe*, which offered a rich collection of previously-unpublished essays by Verne experts like Marc Soriano, Daniel Compère, François Rivière, Philippe Mustière, Alain Buisine, Francis Lacassin, Christian Robin, and François Raymond. The French publishing industry itself joined this anniversary salute to Jules Verne: Hachette announced its intention to publish (for the first time since the Rencontre editions of 1966) a complete and unabridged series of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, and the publishing house of Michel de l'Ormeraiie made a similar announcement for the creation of a deluxe facsimile edition of Hetzel's original red-and-gold versions of Verne's novels. And two years later, within the French university system, a development of great significance took place: the completion of the first *Doctorat d'Etat* dissertations on Jules Verne,⁹⁷ the capstone of academic respectability.

Thus, three quarters of a century after his death, Jules Verne finally gained the literary recognition denied him during his own lifetime. Although perhaps not (yet) viewed as being of the literary stature of a Baudelaire or a Zola, his place in the history of French literature was

nevertheless secured. His *Voyages extraordinaires* were finally recognized as an important literary monument, and he was now an “official” part of the French literary canon.

ADDENDUM

Verne’s literary canonization in France during this period had important repercussions on international Vernian scholarship. Prior to the 1970s and 1980s, English-language studies on Verne were based (for the most part) on hackneyed and severely bowdlerized translations from the French; it is only recently that accurate English-language translations have begun to appear in the Anglo-American marketplace.⁹⁸ As a result, the many myths attributed to Verne—which had become, over time, deeply embedded in the American and British public’s consciousness by virtue of Hollywood cinema, Disneyland, and the popularity of science fiction—continued to cling tenaciously to his literary reputation. One American bibliographer, for example, characterized the state of pre-1980 anglophone scholarship on Verne as follows:

In English language criticism to date, for instance, the same basic four notions seem to be repeated over and over.

First, Verne is thought of as a writer of adventure novels for children. Unlike *Gulliver’s Travels*, “Rip Van Winkle,” or *Frankenstein*, however, Verne’s works do not repay rereading as an adult. ...

Second, Verne is thought of as unreservedly pro-science and pro-technology. ... In a world which has found more relevance in the dystopian vision, Verne simply seems old-fashioned.

Third, much English language criticism of Verne contrasts him with the great science fiction writer who preceded him, Edgar Allan Poe, and with the one who followed him, H.G. Wells. ... Verne took from Poe the nuts-and-bolts, realistic, plausible dimension that has earned him such titles as “the poet of hardware” and “the Father of Hard Science Fiction,” but this quality too has seemed less appealing to modern readers than Wells’ “soft” social science fiction. While Verne was writing “Facts Every Boy Should Know” and mechanically writing thrillers to the end of his life, Wells has a sense of social injustice and thus performed a social mission. ...

Fourth, Verne, who said “What one man can imagine, another man will someday be able to achieve,” has been thought of as a prophet whose careful, scientific presentations have caused imagination to become reality by inspiring others to great scientific achievements ... True as these statements are, prophetic skill is not

a good literary criterion, and Verne's literary currency has faded as the science and technology he foresaw has advanced.

Thus, English language criticism has not passed beyond the sterile and superficial level. There are few provocative overviews, few close analyses of individual works, and the pessimistic dimension to his works are virtually unknown. ...the main insights of English language criticism are relatively undeveloped and scattered in diverse places.⁹⁹

But during the mid to late 1980s, partly due to this renaissance of French interest in Verne during the previous two decades, his literary reputation suddenly began to improve in Great Britain and America as several university scholars completed their Ph.D.s on his *Voyages extraordinaires*: Andrew Martin at Cambridge in 1982, William Butcher at Queen Mary College in 1985, and myself at Columbia University also in 1985. All these doctoral dissertations on Verne were subsequently published as books¹⁰⁰ and constituted the first serious English-language scholarship on Verne in several decades and paving the way for more advanced study of this French author in the United States and England.

As we now enter the new millenium, the flow of both French- and English-language Vernian criticism has not diminished. The discovery and publication by Hachette in 1994 of Verne's "lost novel" *Paris au XXe siècle* (translated and published in English by Random House in 1996 as *Paris in the Twentieth Century*) drew unparalleled world-wide attention to Verne and to his often-misunderstood literary legacy. In France, the continuing efforts of scholars like Simon Vierne,¹⁰¹ Olivier Dumas,¹⁰² Daniel Compère¹⁰³ the late François Raymond,¹⁰⁴ Piero Gondolo della Riva,¹⁰⁵ Jean-Paul DeKiss,¹⁰⁶ Michel Lamy,¹⁰⁷ Christian Robin,¹⁰⁸ and the Colloque d'Amiens¹⁰⁹ have provided sophisticated bibliographical, biographical, and analytical commentary on Verne and his works. For Anglo-Americans, the 1990s have witnessed the birth of the North American Jules Verne Society (1993-94, Arthur Edwards, president) as well as a flood of new English-language studies and reference texts on Verne including those by Lawrence Lynch,¹¹⁰ Peggy Tweeters,¹¹¹ myself and Ron Miller,¹¹² and, perhaps more significantly, those by Brian Taves and Steve Michaluk¹¹³ and Herbert R. Lottman,¹¹⁴ whose encyclopedia and biography (respectively) of Verne are important watersheds in English-language Vernian scholarship. Finally, for both francophone and anglophone aficionados of Verne of the 1990s, the Internet and cyberspace¹¹⁵ has rapidly become an important public site for all things Vernian—a particularly appropriate tribute to an author whose *romans scientifiques* sought to popularize through fiction both the wonders and the dangers of modern technology.

NOTES

1. L.M. "Bibliographie," *Revue des Deux Mondes* 43 (1863), 769.
2. Letter to P.-J. Hetzel. Reprinted in P.-A. Touttain, "Verniana," *Cahiers de l'Herne* 25 (1974), 343.
3. Théophile Gautier, "Les Voyages imaginaires de M. Jules Verne," *Moniteur Universel* 197 (16 juillet 1866).
Reprinted in P.-A. Touttain, ed., *Cahiers de l'Herne* 25 (1974), 85-87.
4. Vivien de Saint-Martin, "Histoire du capitaine Hatteras," *Année Géographique* (1864), 270.
5. Maurius Topin, *Romanciers contemporains* (Paris: Charpentier, 1876), 375.
6. Ibid. (382).
7. Ibid. (395-96).
8. Adolphe Brisson, *Portraits intimes* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1899), 111-20.
9. Georges Bastard, "Célébrité contemporaine: Jules Verne en 1883," *Gazette illustré* (8 septembre 1883). Reprinted in P.-A. Touttain, ed., *Cahiers de l'Herne* (25) (1974), 88-92.
10. Jules Clarétie, *Jules Verne*. Paris: A. Quantin, 1883.
11. Emile Zola, "Adolphe d'Ennery," in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: François Bernouard, n.d.), 271.
12. Emile Zola, *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris: Cercle du Livre Précieux, 1967-70, tome II), 235.
13. Letter reprinted in Charles-Noël Martin, *La Vie et l'oeuvre de Jules Verne* (Paris: Michel de l'Ormerie, 1978), 221.
14. Letter reprinted in Martin (222).
15. Topin (384).
16. For an interesting analysis of the ideological dynamics of how language and literature is taught in the French public schools, see France Vernier, *L'écriture et les textes* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1974) and Renée Balibar, *Les Français fictifs* (Paris: Hachette, 1974).
17. Charles Raymond, "Jules Verne," *Musée des Familles* 42 (1875). Reprinted in Jean Jules-Verne, *Jules Verne* (Paris: Hachette, 1973), 329.
18. Charles Lemire, *Jules Verne* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1908), 107.
19. Letter to P.-J. Hetzel reprinted in Martin (138-39).
20. Roland Barthes, *Leçon* (Paris: Seuil, 1978), 20.
21. C.-A. Sainte-Beuve, "De la littérature industrielle," *La Revue des Deux Mondes* (1 septembre 1839), 675-91.
22. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), 148.
23. Letter reprinted in Parménie et Bonnier de la Chapelle, *Histoire d'un éditeur et de ses auteurs, P.-J. Hetzel* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1953), 491.
24. Letter reprinted by Ghislain Diesbach in *Jules Verne: Le Tour du monde en 80 livres* (Paris: Julliard, 1969), 199.
25. C.P. Snow, *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1960.
26. As quoted in René Welleck "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra," *Critical Inquiry* 4:4 (1978), 619.
27. Michelet, for example, railed against the heartlessness of science in *Le Peuple* (1846) proclaiming: "Science barbare, dur orgueil, qui ravale si bas la nature animée, et sépare tellement l'homme de ses frères inférieurs!" Jules Michelet, *Le Peuple* (Paris: Didier, 1946), 80.

28. Alfred de Vigny, in his poem “La Maison du berger” (1844), nostalgically evoked the loss of spontaneity and of the unknown which science had seemed to banish from everyday life:

La distance et le temps sont vaincus. La science
Trace autour de la terre un chemin triste et droit.
Le Monde est rétréci par notre expérience
Et l'équateur n'est plus qu'un anneau trop étroit.
Plus de hasard. Chacun glissera sur sa ligne,
Immobile au seul rang que le départ assigne,
Plongé dans un calcul silencieux et froid.

Alfred de Vigny, “La Maison du Berger.” In *Poèmes antiques et modernes* (Paris: Ernest Flammarion, n.d.), 273.

29. See Gustave Flaubert’s stinging satire of science in *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, where he parodied Positivism by portraying two comically inept office clerks who, in blind veneration of Science, attempt to assimilate and apply the entirety of human knowledge by systematically putting into practice their readings of the scientific books of their day—with invariably catastrophic results.
30. The Goncourt brothers, well-known partisans of *l’Art pour l’Art*, greeted with heavy sarcasm (and unknowing foresight) the scientific tales of Edgar Allan Poe, saying: “Quelque chose que la critique n’a pas vu, un monde littéraire nouveau, les signes de la littérature du XX^e siècle. Le miraculeux scientifique, la fable par A plus B... Plus de poésie; de l’imagination à coup d’analyse: Zadig juge d’instruction, Cyrano de Bergerac élève d’Arago. Quelque chose de monomaniaque. Les choses ayant plus de rôle que les hommes, l’amour cédant la place aux déductions...la base du roman déplacée et transportée du coeur à la tête et de la passion à l’idée, du drame à la solution.” Edmond and Jules Goncourt, *Journal*, tome I (Paris: Flammarion, n.d.), 108.
31. Ferdinand Brunetière, “La Renaissance de l’idéalisme.” In *Discours de Combat* (Paris: Perrin, 1914), 16.
32. Marcel Schwob, “Préface” to *Coeur Double*. In *Oeuvres complètes* tome II (Paris: Bernouard, 1928), x.
33. Alfred Robida, *L’Ingénieur Von Satan* (Paris: Renaissance du Livre, 1919), 270.
34. R.H. Sherard, “Jules Verne at Home,” *McClure’s Magazine* 2:2 (Jan. 1894), 115-21.
35. Marc Soriano, *Jules Verne* (Paris: Julliard, 1978), 323.
36. Charles Lemire, op. cit.
37. Marguerite Allotte de la Fuye, *Jules Verne: sa vie, son oeuvre*. Paris: Simon Kra, 1928. Rpt. Paris: Hachette, 1966.
38. C.P. Cambiare, *The Influence of Edgar Allan Poe in France* (NY: Stechert, 1927; rpt. NY: Haskell, 1970), 242.
39. Marie A. Belloc, “Jules Verne at Home,” *Strand’s Magazine* (Feb. 1895), 208.
40. Jean Jules-Verne, *Jules Verne*. Paris: Hachette, 1973.
41. See, for example, Olivier Dumas “Quand Marguerite se contredit,” *Bulletin de la Société Jules Verne* 64 (1982), 312.
42. Marie-Thérèse Latzarus, *La Littérature enfantine en France dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle* (Paris: PUF, 1924), 227-28.
43. See M. Lahy-Hellebec, *Les Charmeurs d’enfants* (Paris: Baudinière, n.d.).

44. See "Verniana," in P.-A. Touttain, ed. *Jules Verne: Cahiers de l'Herne* 25 (1974), 343-47.
45. Ibid. (346).
46. Raymond Roussel, *Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres* (Paris: Pauvert, 1963), 26.
47. Letter from Roussel to Eugène Leiris. Reprinted in *Arts et Lettres* 15 (1949), 100-01.
48. Michel Butor, "Le Point suprême et l'âge d'or à travers quelques oeuvres de Jules Verne," *Arts et Lettres* 15 (1949), 3-31. Reprinted in his *Repertoire* (Paris: Ed. de Minuit, 1960), 130-62.
49. Michel Carrouges, "Le Mythe de Vulcain chez Jules Verne," *Arts et Lettres* 15 (1949), 32-58.
50. Ibid. (53-4)
51. Jean-Jacque Bridenne, *La Littérature française d'imagination scientifique*. Lausanne: Dassetonville, 1950.
52. Ibid. (135).
53. Ibid. (138).
54. A. Parménie and C. Bonnier de la Chapelle, *L'Histoire d'un éditeur et ses auteurs, P.-J. Hetzel*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1953.
55. René Escaich, *Voyage au monde de Jules Verne*. Paris: Ed. Plantin, 1955. This book was first published four years earlier in Belgium under the title *Voyage à travers le monde vernien* (Brussels: Ed. "La Boétie," 1951).
56. *Livres de France* 5 (1955), 3-16.
57. *Europe* 33:112-13 (avril-mai, 1955), 3-125.
58. Bernard Frank, *Jules Verne et ses voyages*. Paris: Flammarion, 1941.
59. François Raymond, "Pour une espace de l'exploration," *Jules Verne I: Le Tour du monde* (Paris: Minard, 1976), 1.
60. Robert Kanters, "Situation de Jules Verne," *Le Figaro littéraire* (21 avril 1966), 5.
61. Gérard Klein, "Pour lire Verne," *Fiction* 197 (1970), 137.
62. Roland Barthes, "Nautilus et Bateau Ivre," *Mythologies* (Paris: Seuil, 1957), 80-92.
63. Ibid. (80).
64. Roland Barthes, "Par où commencer?" *Poétique* (1970), 3-9.
65. Marcel Moré, *Le Très curieux Jules Verne*. Paris: Gallimard, 1960.
66. Marcel Moré, *Nouvelles explorations de Jules Verne*. Paris: Gallimard, 1963.
67. *L'Arc* 29 (1966).
68. *Arts et Loisirs* 27 (1966).
69. *Nouvelles littéraires* 44 (24 mars 1966).
70. Pierre Macherery, "Jules Verne ou le récit en défaut," *Pour une théorie de la production littéraire* (Paris: Maspero, 1966), 159-240.
71. Simone Vierre, "Authenticité de quelques oeuvres de Jules Verne," *Annales de Bretagne* 73 (1966), 445-58.
72. Bernard Gheerbrant, "Jules Verne ressuscité," *Le Quinzaine littéraire* (21 avril 1966), 16-17.
73. Kanters, op.cit. (16-17).
74. Charles Guider, "Jules Verne, plus jeune que jamais," *Lectures pour tous* 150 (1966), 16-17.
75. Olivier Dumas et al., "Bibliographie des oeuvres de Jules Verne," *Bulletin*

- de la Société Jules Verne* NS 1 (1967), 7-12; NS 2 (1967), 11-15; NS3 (1967), 13; NS 4 (1967), 15-16.
76. It is worth noting, for example, the new *North American Jules Verne Society* which was recently founded in the fall of 1993-94 through the efforts of non-university North American Verne enthusiasts such as Arthur Edwards of Quincy, Massachusetts (USA), Betty Harless of Indianapolis, Indiana (USA) and Andrew Nash of Toronto, Ontario (Canada).
77. Paul Guth, *Histoire de la littérature française*. tome II (Paris: Fayard, 1967), 538.
78. *Littérature française*. Paris: Arthaud, 1971.
79. "Lorsque j'ai posé le pied sur la Lune et que j'ai vu la Terre flottant comme un ballon bleu dans le ciel obscur, j'ai tout de suite pensé à Jules Verne..." Reprinted in Igor and Grichka Bogdanoff, *L'Effet Science-Fiction* (Paris: Laffont, 1979), 66-8.
80. Ghislain Diesbach, *Le Tour de Jules Verne en quatre-vingts livres*. Paris: Julliard, 1969.
81. Jean Chesneaux, *Une Lecture politique de Jules Verne*. Paris: Maspero, 1971.
82. Marie-Hélène Huet, *L'Histoire des Voyages Extraordinaires*. Paris: Minard, 1973.
83. Simone Vierne, *Jules Verne et le roman initiatique*. Paris: Ed. Sirac, 1973.
84. Jean Jules-Verne, *Jules Verne*. Paris: Hachette, 1973. Translated by Roger Greaves as *Jules Verne: A Biography* (NY: Taplinger, 1976).
85. Michel Serres, *Jouvences sur Jules Verne*. Paris: Ed. de Minuit, 1974.
86. See, for example, Daniel Compère's articles "Jules Verne à la radio et à la télévision" in *BSJV* 31-32 (1974), 189-90; *BSJV* 33-34 (1975), 48; *BSJV* 35-36 (1975), 95-96; *BSJV* 39-40 (1976), 190; and *BSJV* 41 (1976), 32. See also his "Filmographie des oeuvres de Jules Verne" in *BSJV* 12 (1969), 82-84; *BSJV* 16 (1970), 137; and *BSJV* 21 (1972), 123.
87. François Raymond, ed. *Jules Verne 1: Le Tour du monde*. Paris: Minard, 1976.
88. Piero Gondolo della Riva, *Bibliographie analytique de toutes les oeuvres de Jules Verne*. Paris: Société Jules Verne, 1977.
89. See *Jules Verne et les sciences humaines*. Centre culturel international de Cérisy-la-Salle. Paris: UGE, "10/18," 1979.
90. Christian Robin, *Un Monde connu et inconnu*. Nantes: Centre universitaire de recherches verniennes, 1978.
91. Marc Soriano, *Jules Verne*. Paris: Julliard, 1978.
92. Charles-Noël Martin, *La Vie et l'oeuvre de Jules Verne*. Paris: Michel de l'Ormerie, 1978.
93. Jean-Michel Margot, *Bibliographie documentaire sur Jules Verne*. Ostermundigen (Suisse): Margot, 1978.
94. *Nouvelles recherches sur Jules Verne et le voyage*. Colloque d'Amiens I, Paris: Minard, 1978.
95. *Jules Verne: filiations, rencontres, influences*. Colloque d'Amiens II, Paris: Minard, 1980.
96. *Modernités de Jules Verne*. Colloque d'Amiens, III, Paris: PUF, 1988.
97. Jean Delabroy, "Jules Verne et l'imaginaire," Université de Paris III (Sorbonne), 1980; and Charles-Noël Martin, "Recherches sur la nature, les origines, et le traitement de la science dans l'oeuvre de Jules Verne," Université

- de Paris VII (Jussieu), 1980.
98. See, for example, Walter James Miller's pioneering efforts in his *The Annotated Jules Verne: Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (NY: Crowell, 1976) and his *The Annotated Jules Verne: From the Earth to the Moon* (NY: Crowell, 1978), Sidney Kravitz's excellent but as yet unpublished translation of *Mysterious Island* (1986), Emanuel K. Mickel's *The Complete Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1992) or William Butcher's superb translations of *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (London: Oxford UP, 1992) and of *Around the World in 80 Days* (London: Oxford UP, 1995).
99. Edward J. Gallagher et al, eds., *Jules Verne: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1980.
100. See Arthur B. Evans, *Jules Verne Rediscovered* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988), Andrew Martin, *The Mask of the Prophet* (London: Oxford UP/Clarendon Press, 1990), and William Butcher, *Jules Verne's Journey to the Centre of the Self* (London: Macmillan, 1990).
101. Simone Vierne, *Jules Verne* (Paris: Balland, 1986) and *Jules Verne, mythe et modernité* (Paris: PUF, 1989).
102. Olivier Dumas, *Jules Verne*. Lyon: La Manufacture, 1988. Dr. Dumas is also the very-active president of the Société Jules Verne in France and the editor-in-chief of the very authoritative *Bulletin de Société Jules Verne*.
103. Daniel Compère, *Jules Verne, écrivain* (Geneva: Droz, 1991) and *Jules Verne: parcours d'une oeuvre* (Amiens: Encrage, 1996).
104. François Raymond, ed., *Série Jules Verne* (Paris: Minard, Lettres Modernes, 1976-93).
105. Piero Gondolo della Riva, *Bibliothèque de toutes les oeuvres de Jules Verne, 2e ed.* Paris: Société Jules Verne, 1985.
106. Jean-Paul DeKiss, *Jules Verne: le rêve du progrès*. Paris: Gallimard, 1991.
107. Michel Lamy, *Jules Verne, initié et initiateur*. Paris: Payot, 1994.
108. *Cahiers du Musée Jules Verne* (Nantes: Amis de la Bibliothèque, 1981-1993).
109. The papers given at this important Verne conference are now published in a new collection entitled *Revue Jules Verne*, Revue du Centre de Documentation Jules Verne d'Amiens (#1, nouvelle série: 1er semestre 1996).
110. Lawrence Lynch, *Jules Verne*. NY: Twayne, 1992.
111. Peggy Twesters, *Jules Verne: The Man Who Invented Tomorrow*. NY: Walter & Co., 1992.
112. Arthur B. Evans and Ron Miller, "Jules Verne: Misunderstood Visionary," *Scientific American* (April 1997), 92-97. See also my recent articles "The 'New' Jules Verne," *Science-Fiction Studies*, Vol. 22, #65 (1995), 35-46, as well as "Literary Intertexts in Jules Verne's *Voyages Extraordinaires*," *Science-Fiction Studies*, Vol. 23, #69 (1996), 171-187.
113. Brian Taves and Steve Michaluk, Jr. *The Jules Verne Encyclopedia*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 1996.
114. Herbert R. Lottman, *Jules Verne: An Exploratory Biography* (NY: St. Martin's, 1996), translated and published in French as *Jules Verne* (Paris: Flammarion, 1996).
115. The most important of these Internet sites is the one by Zvi Har'El at <www.math.technion.ac.il/~rl/JulesVerne>.