

Seattle Pacific University

From the Selected Works of Michael J. Paulus, Jr.

August 1, 2015

Libraries and the Apocalyptic Imagination

Michael J. Paulus, Jr., *Seattle Pacific University*



SELECTEDWORKS™

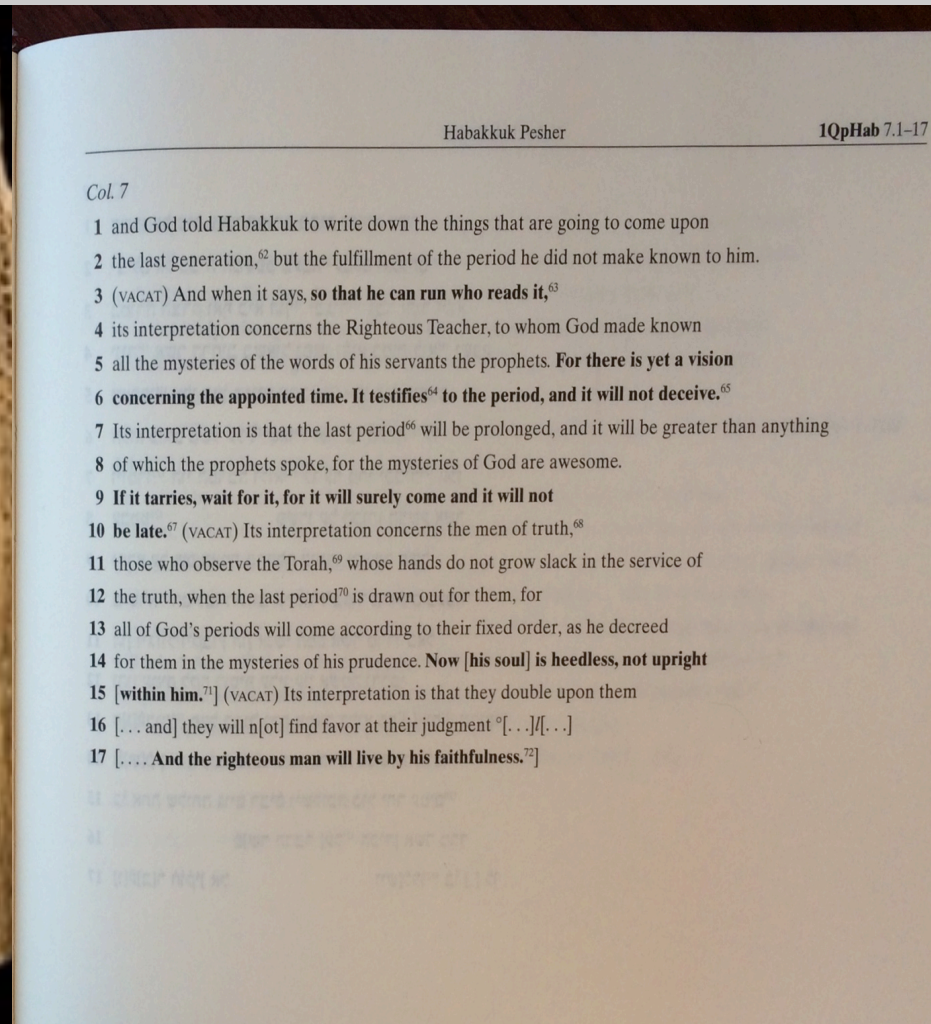
Available at: http://works.bepress.com/michael_paulus/49/

Libraries and the Apocalyptic Imagination

Michael J. Paulus, Jr., Seattle Pacific University
Library History Seminar XIII, Boston, Mass., August 1, 2015



Pesher Habakkuk, from the Dead Sea Scroll Library



Apocalypses



Apocalypse ride at Six
Flags (2013); scenes from
Oblivion (2013) and *After
the Dark* (2013)



The Apocalypse of John, Chapter 10



Seattle's Coming Apocalypse

“[earthquakes] present us with problems of time. ... The brevity of our lives breeds a kind of temporal parochialism ...



THE REALLY BIG ONE

An earthquake will destroy a sizable portion of the coastal Northwest. The question is when.

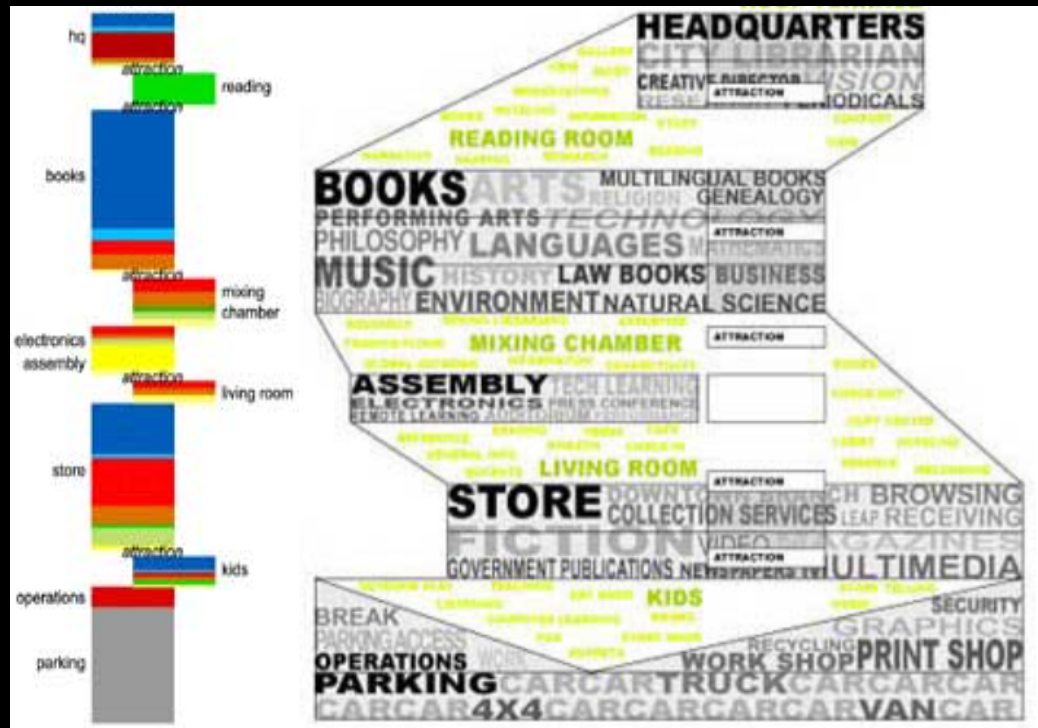
BY KATHRYN SCHULZ

The Cascadia subduction zone remained hidden from us for so long because we could not see deep enough into the past. It poses a danger to us today because we have not thought deeply enough about the future. That is no longer a problem of information ... Nor is it a problem of imagination ... we excel at imagining future scenarios, including awful ones. But such apocalyptic visions are a form of escapism, not a moral summons, and still less a plan of action. Where we stumble is in conjuring up grim futures in a way that helps to avert them.”

Seattle's Suzzallo and Central Libraries



Seattle Public Library Central Library



The Apocalyptic Archive

Trinity College
Library circa 18th
century; circa 20th
century; as the
Jedi Archives

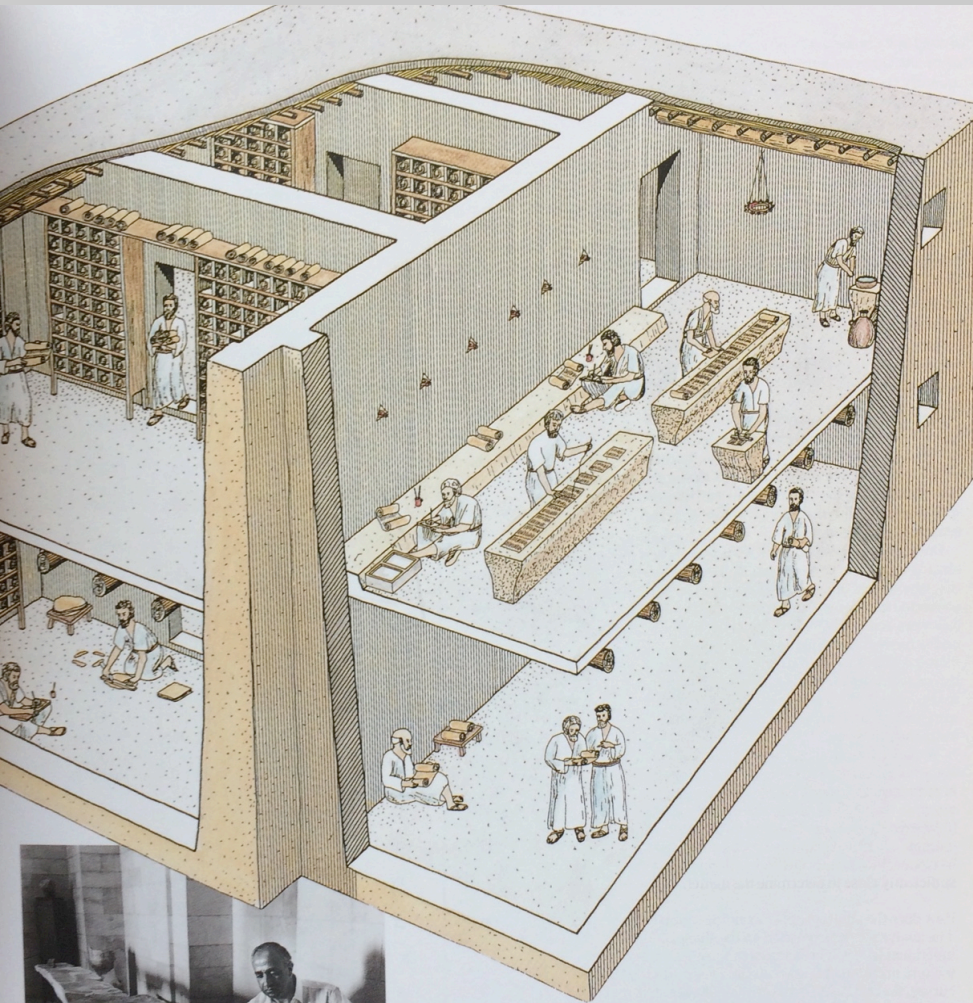


The Apocalyptic Library at Qumran



Settlement and Caves at Khirbet Qumran

The Apocalyptic Library at Qumran

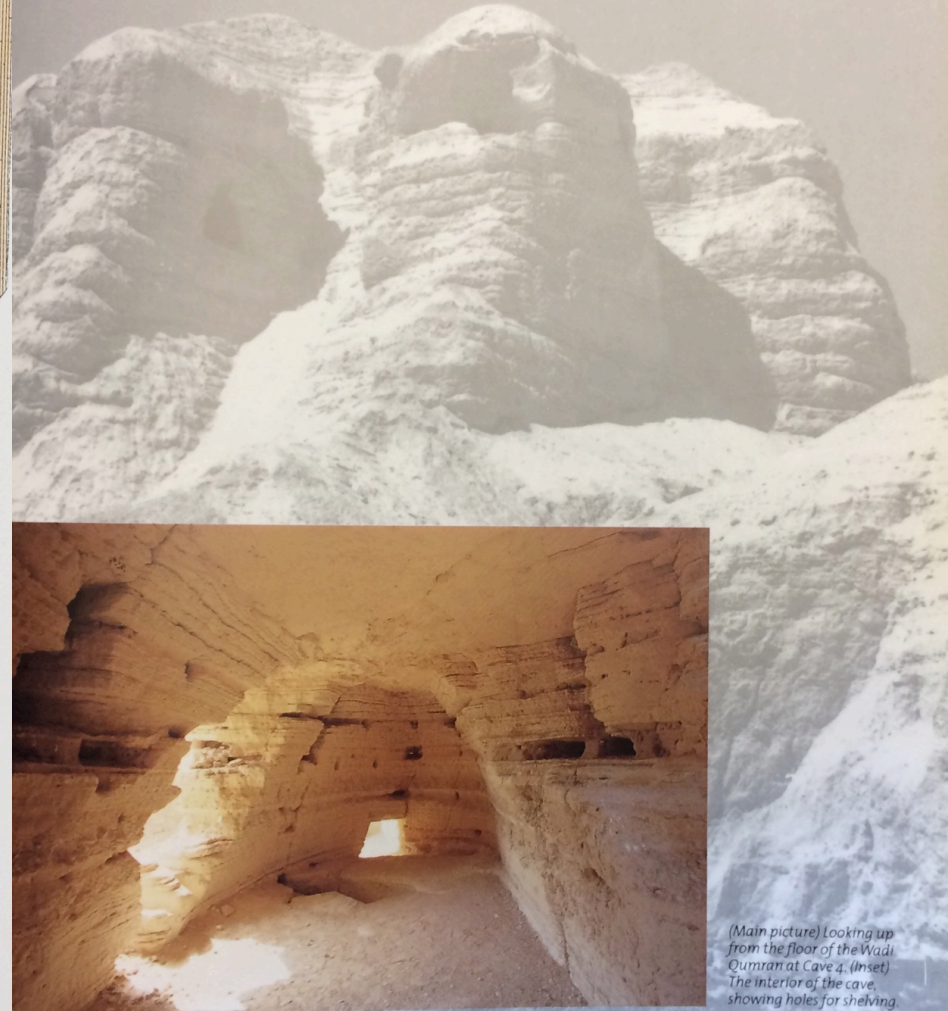


(Above) A reconstruction of the manuscript production process that may have occurred at Qumran.

(Left) Joseph Saad sits at a reconstructed plaster table in the Palestine Archaeological Museum.

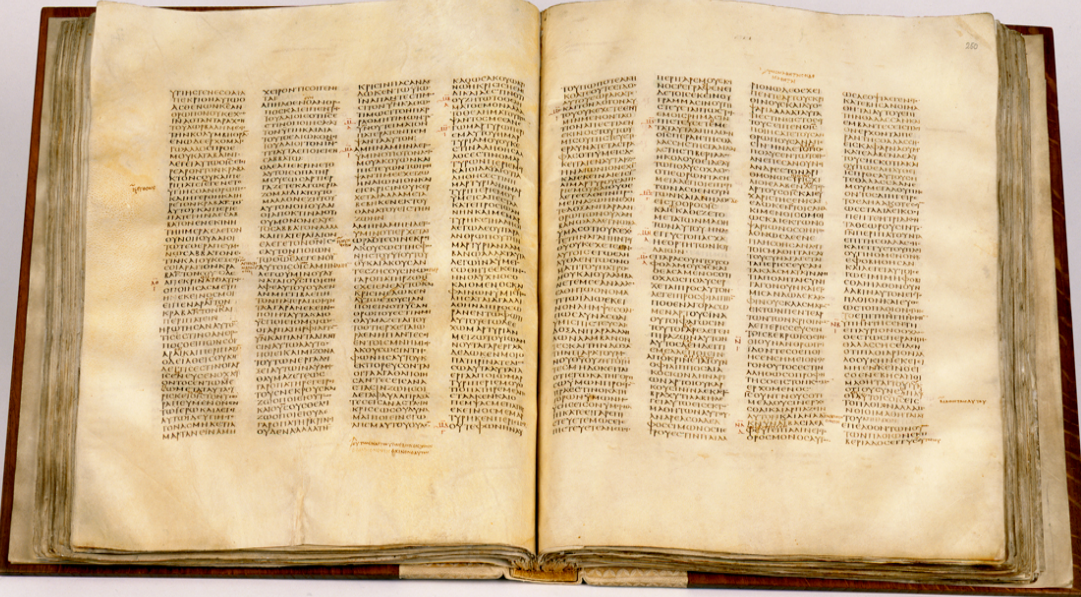


Pages from *The Complete World of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Thames & Hudson, 2002)



(Main picture) Looking up from the floor of the Wadi Qumran at Cave 4. (Inset) The interior of the cave, showing holes for shelving.

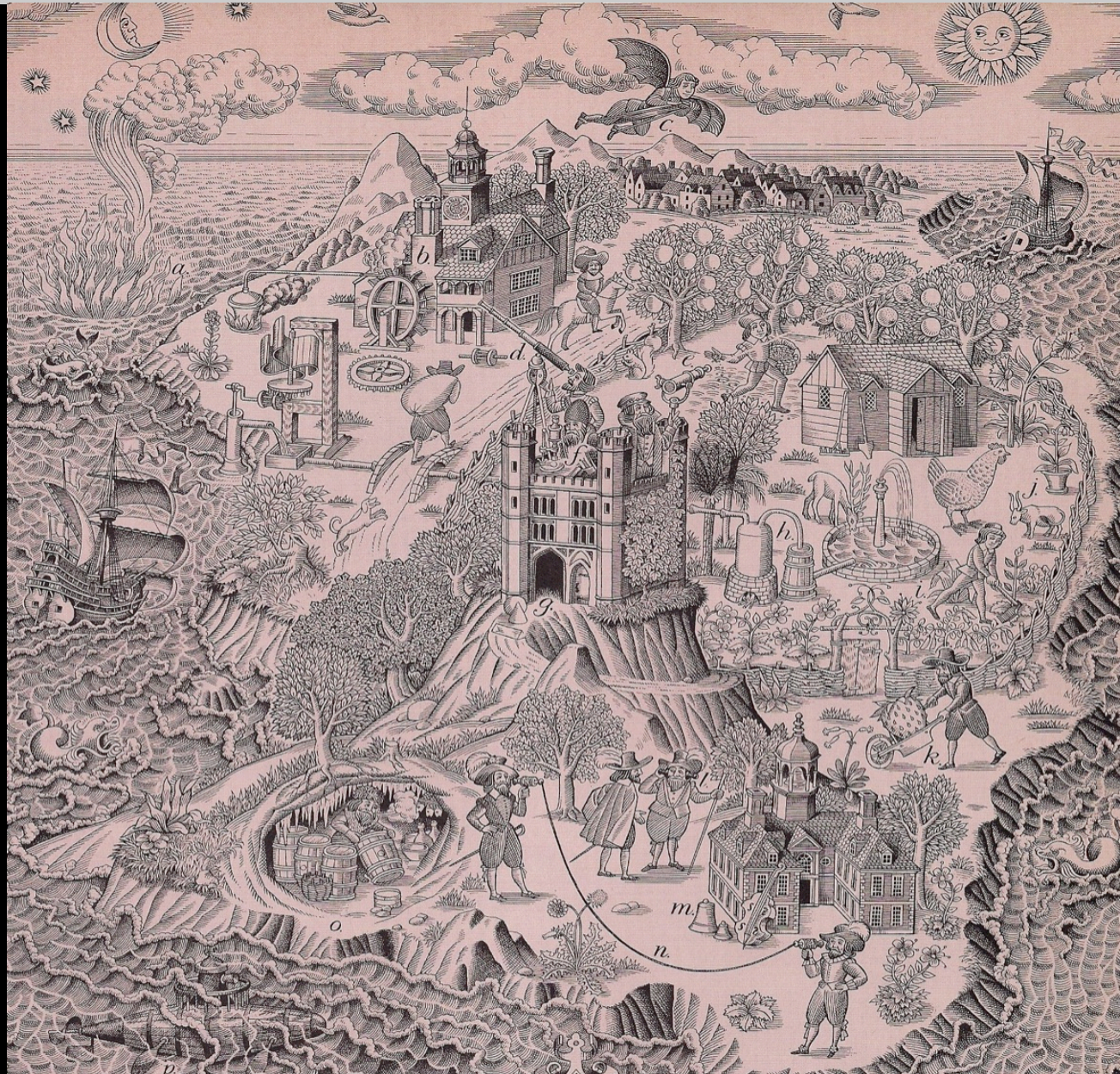
The Christian Apocalyptic Library



The Modern Apocalyptic Imagination

The New Atlantis
(1627):

“The end of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible.”



The Last Man (1826) and *The Time Machine* (1895)

THE LAST MAN.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF FRANKENSTEIN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Let no man seek
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
Him or his children.

Milton.

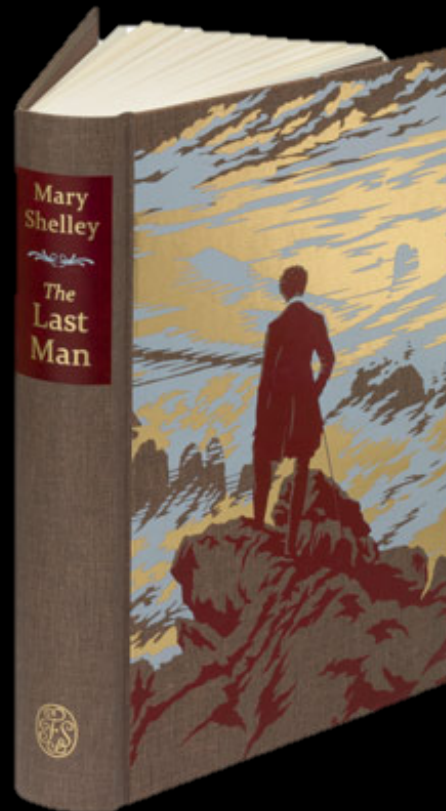
VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1826.

Title page of
1st ed.;
Folio Society
ed.

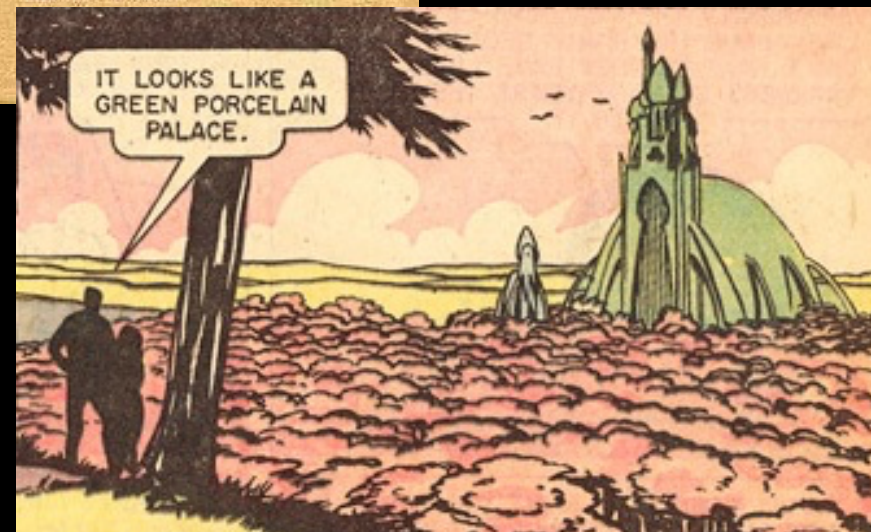


The Time Machine



H. G. Wells

Cover of 1st
ed.; panel
from Classics
Illustrated
Time Machine
(1956)



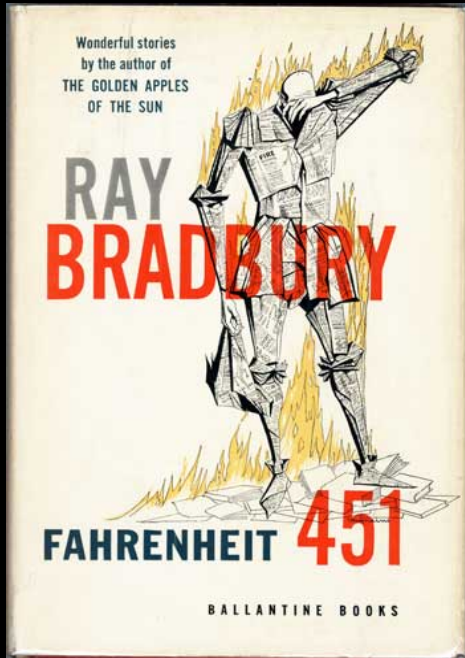
Brave New World (1931) and Nineteen Eighty-Four (1941)



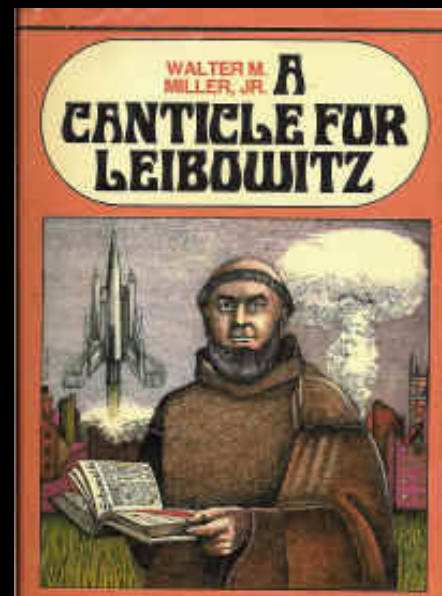
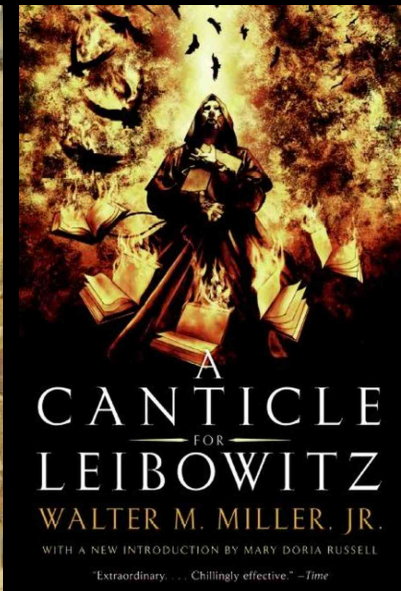
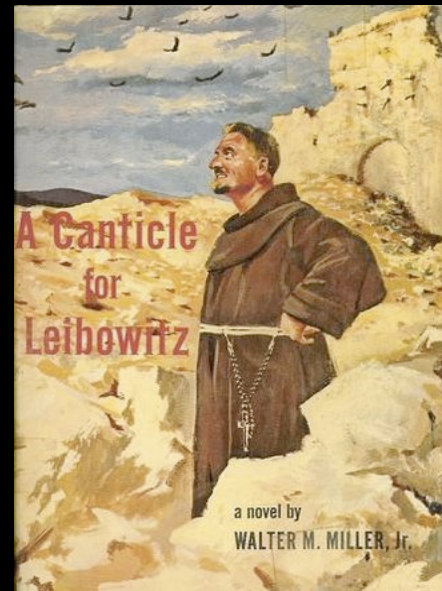
1st edition covers and scenes
from the film *Nineteen Eighty
Four* (1984)



The Book People and the People of the Book

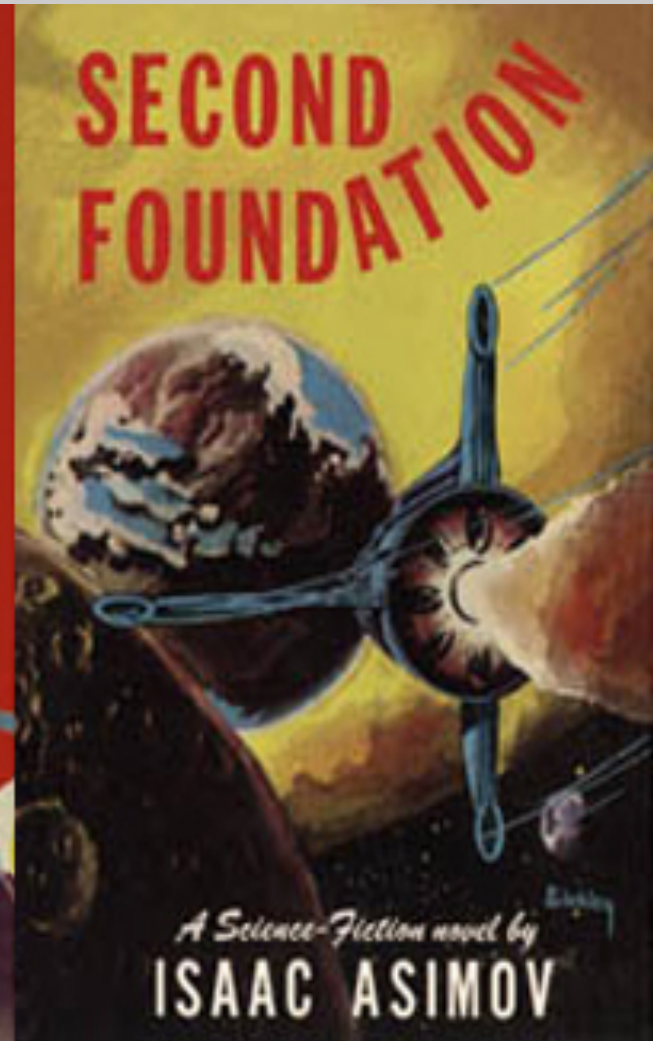


Novel (1953)
and film (1966)



Covers for
*A Canticle
for
Leibowitz*
(1960-
2006)

The Foundation Trilogy (1951-53)

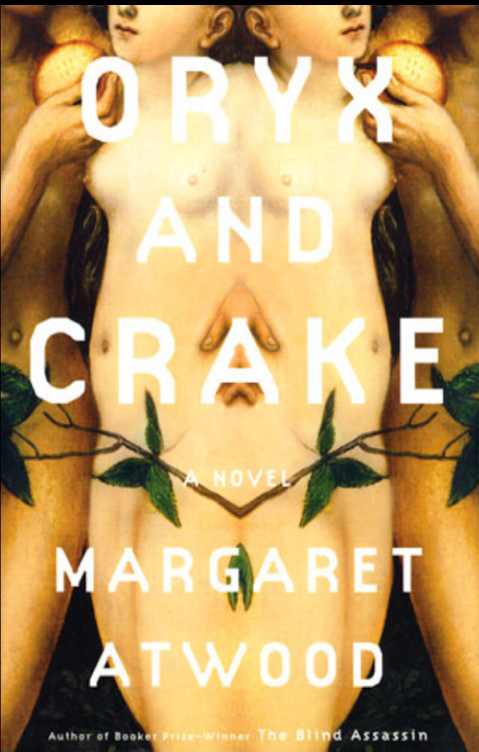


1st edition covers

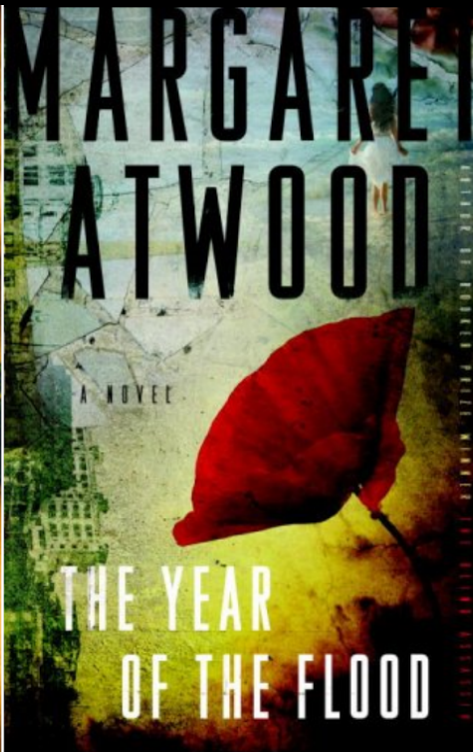
The Anti-Libraries of Babel and Tlön



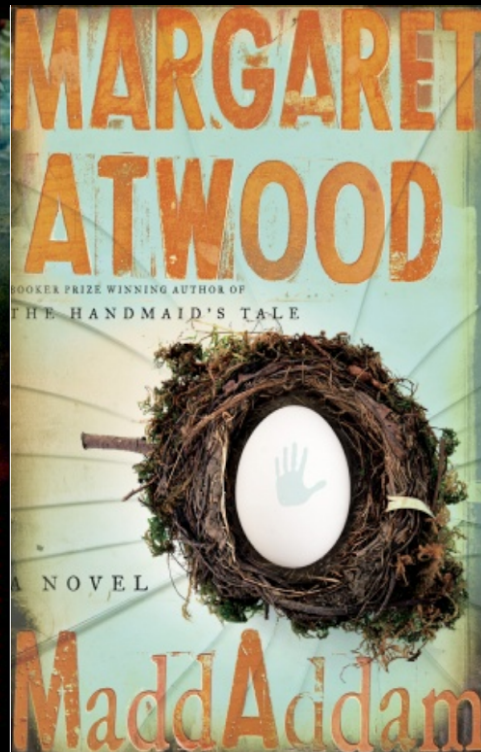
The MaddAddam Trilogy and *Station Eleven* (2014)



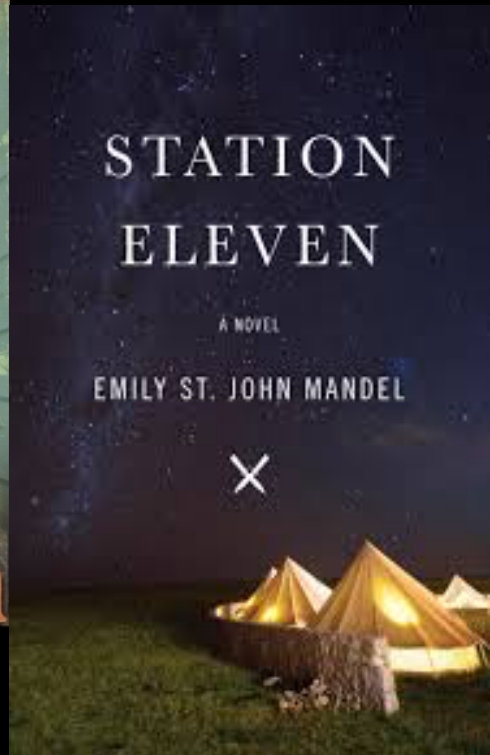
(2003)



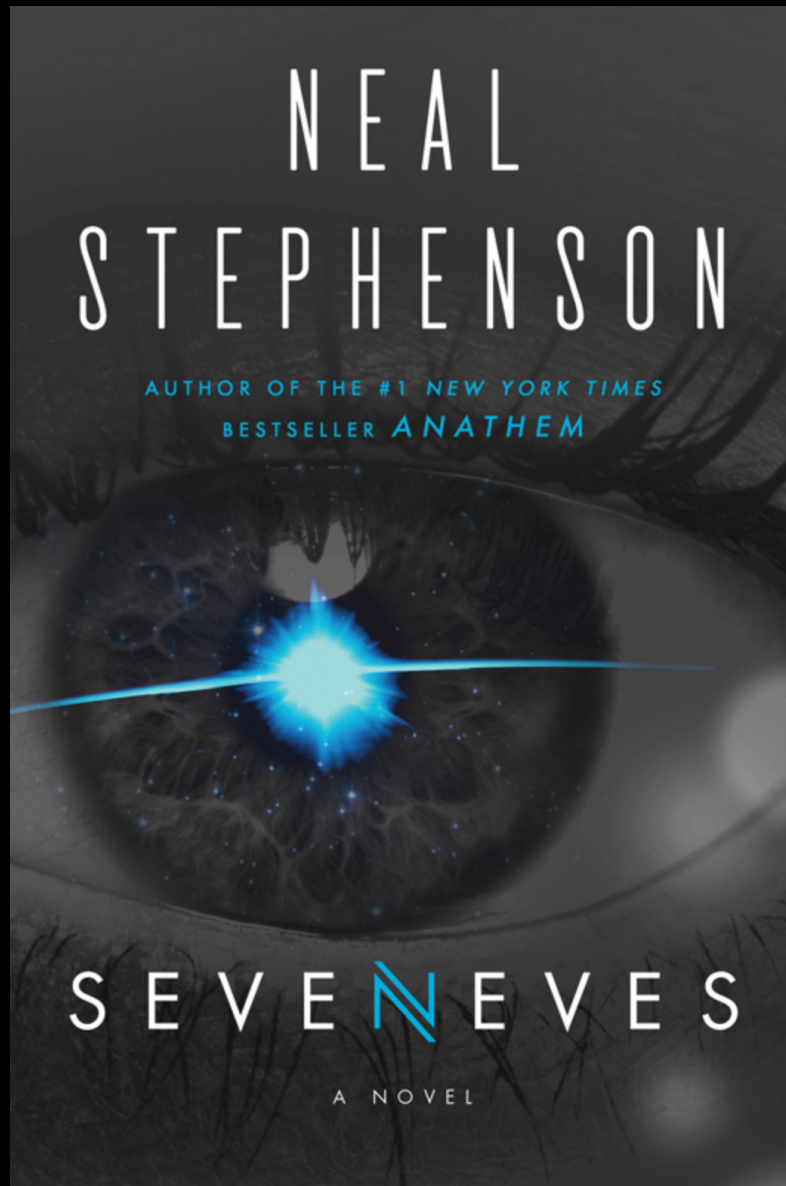
(2009)



(2013)



Seveneves (2015)



The End of the Library

- An archive of memory and knowledge
- A sign and site of anticipation
- An infrastructure for attention and action

