



THE WAY(S) OF THE “SMALL WORLD”: EXPLORING THE CARNIVALIZED GLOBAL CAMPUS IN DAVID LODGE’S *SMALL WORLD: AN ACADEMIC ROMANCE*

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ABSTRACT

In *Small World: An Academic Romance* Lodge shows how inexpensive jet travel and the frequency of international conferences have transformed the world’s scattered university campuses into a single global campus – a ‘small world’ in which everyone in a given subject area knows almost everyone else. Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of the ‘carnavalesque’ and its riotous implications are interwoven into the densely allusive texture of this novel. The narrative, rooted in modern reality, has a pronounced mythical underpinning attached to it, made manifest by the Holy Grail-like quest for the post of UNESCO Chair of Literary Criticism as well as the likening of conferees to the modern-day pilgrims. In the course of the narrative one finds records of several conference proceedings – presentations, lectures, literary discussions etc., which frame the central developments in *Small World*. In this ‘academic romance’ Lodge satirizes the fashion of literary theory which fascinated the European and American academia in 1980s.

Key words: international conferences, global campus, carnivalesque, UNESCO Chair of Literary Criticism, literary theory.

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Small World, published in 1984, is the second novel in David Lodge’s campus trilogy¹. It represents Lodge’s most densely and variously plotted novel. Hailed by Merritt Moseley as “the ultimate academic novel” (81), *Small World* transports its readers to an academic ambience more vibrant than the one experienced in *Changing Places*, the first novel in Lodge’s campus trilogy. Most of the characters in *Small World* are professional academics and the novel follows them around the international circuit of literary conferences. *Small World* has explicit links with *Changing Places*. Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp² reappear here, as do their wives – Hilary Swallow and Desiree Zapp. Although they are not Lodge’s primary focus in this novel, they play a significant role in the development of the narrative. The

narratives of certain less important figures from the earlier novel likewise are extended to 1979, when *Small World* takes place. The faculty-exchange scheme by which Swallow, Zapp and their wives originally came together and the spouse-swapping in which they temporarily engaged ten years earlier are alluded to, as are many other significant incidents from the earlier book, so that some readers may feel they are taking up where they left off at the end of *Changing Places*. But in one crucial aspect *Small World* is a significantly different novel. It faithfully depicts not simply a later period in the lives of the academic characters encountered earlier but a strikingly different academic culture. Here the local campus communities in which Swallow, Zapp and their colleagues worked have been replaced by a single global campus that knows neither national

nor linguistic boundaries. A worldwide marketplace of ideas has supplanted the various national ones as the site for agency and exchange. As Morris explains, "Scholars don't have to work in the same institution to interact, nowadays: they call each other up, or they meet at international conferences" (Lodge, *Small World* 43). Or as he more bluntly puts it later, "The American Express card has replaced the library pass" (64). The premise of the two-way faculty exchange program supporting *Changing Places* is thus expanded exponentially, with seemingly endless possibilities for academic exchanges among countless scholars on campuses in every part of the world.

The appeal of this novel lies in its riot of densely, and richly, interwoven (and intercut) narrative configurations. *Small World* is divided into five parts, with parts I, II, III, and V further divided into two sections each and part IV into three sections. Parts I, III, and IV are of virtually equal length (about eighty pages each), part II is somewhat shorter (sixty-seven pages), and part V considerably shorter (twenty-five pages). All of this relative regularity and symmetry is, however, quite deceptive in terms of the way in which the reader actually experiences Lodge's text. Part I begins as many novels and epics do, "in *media res*, followed by an expository return to an earlier time" (Genette 36). In *Small World*, this entails returning to the events of the previous evening. From here the novel moves ahead slowly and in a more or less linear fashion through the first section of the first part. Persse McGarrigle, a naïve and inexperienced Irish academic (from University College, Limerick), is the first character to be introduced in this section. All fifty-five pages are set at the University Teachers of English Language and Literature conference being held at the University of Rummidge, and they focus on Persse's pursuit of an unregistered "freelance" conferee named Angelica Pabst. The next section (the second section of part I) begins simply (enough) with the word "meanwhile," which at once serves to place the reader clearly in narrative time and to mark the beginning of the end of narrative linearity, to be supplanted by a simultaneity of plots. Having moved ahead, the narrative stops, loops back and, in a sense, begins again, covering some of the same

time period from a different focal point. First Lodge treats Zapp and Hilary, bringing their lives up to date since *Changing Places*. With the exit of Hilary, Swallow enters to tell his story within Lodge's story; Swallow gives vent to a leisurely, decidedly old-fashioned tale of a brief love affair some years ago with a woman named Joy, whom he believes to be dead.

The narrative development in the first section of part II is very rapid. Covering just a four-hour time window, from 5:00 to 9:00 a.m. (Greenwich Mean Time), this section deals with no fewer than seventeen more or less major characters, in twelve different settings from London to Chicago to Australia, and numerous cars, planes, and phone lines in between. Thirty one subsections are covered in less than thirty pages – the longest being two and one-half pages, the shortest one and one-half lines. The narrative intercutting is greater here than anywhere else in the novel, as is the reader's sense of narrative vertigo as Lodge furiously moves back and forth between time zones unrelentingly. The pace slackens a bit in the second section (fifteen subsections in thirty pages) as Lodge's chronicle of the same day continues, and again in the first section of part III where one comes across seventeen subsections in about forty pages. In so far as the action here is limited (relatively speaking) to just four or five main lines, it is possible to discern "a degree of linear development based, however, on the narrative's own peculiar logic of improbable coincidences" (Ertekin 67). In the second section of part III, the narrative pace again slackens and the focus further narrows. Although one encounters fifteen sections in just thirty-eight pages, the first five sections primarily revolve around Persse's continuing, and still unsuccessful, pursuit of Angelica; the next ten sections, in a complementary fashion, prefigure the reunion of Swallow and Joy.

There is a certain narrative backsliding in the first section of part IV, comprising six sections in twenty pages, but the second section – comprising four sections in twenty pages is devoted solely to Persse, whose adventures here, as elsewhere in the novel, take on an antic linearity. Retreating from the ever-elusive Angelica (whom he has come to mistake for her sister, a porn star), Persse goes to

Innisfree where, instead of Yeats's peace and solitude, he discovers his cousin Bernadette's seducer. This discovery leads him to search for Bernadette, a search which in turn leads him back to his pursuit of Angelica, which in its turn leads the reader to the third section of part IV, covering fifteen sections in forty pages. Here Persse's incessant flights to Los Angeles, Seoul, Honolulu, Tokyo alternate with the complementary narrative of Zapp's captivity; he is being held hostage by a gang of leftists who mistakenly believe he is still married to the now wealthy Desiree Boyd, who, they again mistakenly believe, will pay a huge ransom for Zapp's release. Into this duplex narrative of Persse and Zapp, Lodge folds two additional ongoing narratives. The persistently unsuccessful efforts of Rodney Wainwright (a lecturer at the University of North Queensland, Australia) at completing a paper for Zapp's Jerusalem conference on the Future of Criticism intercuts with the frenzied conversations between Robin Dempsey (a professor at the University of Darlington) and "Eliza," a computer software programme developed by one of her colleagues, Joseph Weizenbaum.

The first section of part V (the final part of the novel) brings nearly all of the principal characters together at the annual, end-of-the-calendar-year middle-of-the-academic-year MLA conference; and the second section of this final part, running less than two pages long, wraps up the novel as well as the year (its 31 December 1979) on a typically Lodgean note of irresolution and anticipation. The readers find the hapless, but always hopeful, Persse about to embark on yet another quest, or alternately, on "another episode in a seemingly endless cycle of romances within Lodge's cycle of romances within the larger literary history of romance" (Arizti 129).

Lodge's readers are likely to perceive *Small World* as a novel that posits the idea of globalization of academe. An important corollary to this globalization, and a key component of the global campus as Lodge depicts it, concerns the rapid incursion, and proliferation, of postwar continental theory into Anglo-American literary study. Not until the 1970s did such a theory come to be read widely in England and America or enter the general

academic parlance, partly because the English translations of many of the major texts (such as Michel Foucault's *Archeology of Knowledge*, Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology*, and several key essays by Roland Barthes) were not available until then and partly because what would prove to be the most influential commentaries on the new theories and theorists – Jonathan Culler's *Structuralist Poetics* (1975) and Terry Eagleton's *Literary Theory* (1983), to name just two – were yet to be written.

One measure of this radical shift to a new body of theoretical approaches is provided by the two anthologies that Lodge edited. The first, *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism: A Reader* (1972), includes and elaborates on methodological statements representing the New Criticism and related formalist approaches, the history of ideas, literary history, Marxist and other sociopolitical approaches, the psychoanalytical approach, myth and archetypal criticism, and what Lodge termed "prescriptive criticism- credos and manifestoes" (*Twentieth Century Literary Criticism* ["Foreword"] xvii). Significantly, of the fifty included selections in this anthology, only nine were not written originally in English. But like *Small World*, his second anthology, *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (1988) – which he termed both a sequel and a compliment to the earlier one – posits not so much a rewriting of the earlier critical map as a vehement discarding of it. Here the majority of the figures and their literary endeavours are European rather than English or American. The list of categories have been expanded to include theoretical schools lately arrived on the Anglo-American scene: structuralism, Poststructuralism, deconstruction, cultural history, reception theory, narratology.

In his foreword to *Modern Criticism and Theory*, Lodge notes the "strains and stresses within the institutional structures that contain and maintain the academic study of literature" that have been brought on by recent theory and by the elevation of theory as a field of study (xi). The preceding novel *Changing Places* exposes one to the defining tendencies of postwar university life. Connor comments on how the "membrane of self-satisfaction" surrounding the university has proven to be selectively, and cautiously, receptive; as

outsiders constantly enter the university premises – some to remain as students or faculty members, others to pass through the premises fairly quickly – and as the institution and its members are inevitably forced to cope with societal pressures and attendant bigoted politics prevailing outside the sacrosanct boundary of the university arena (69). Adhering to the central and representative tendencies of campus fiction, Lodge focuses his attention on the areas he has experienced most intimately- the students and teachers of the department of English, which John Sutherland has ironically described as “traditionally the quietest and most self-engrossed corner of the university” (158).

Lodge in *Changing Places*, however, was very sensitive to the inner vexations afflicting the cloistered world of the traditional English department in a time when the traditional modes of knowledge and pedagogy were in the process of radical change that demanded replacing the traditional disciplines with newer epistemologies and methodologies. The traditional campus and the classroom, however, appeared increasingly indifferent and remarkably resistant to such changes. The anxiety Connor has imputed to English departments and the study of literature goes all the way back to the 1930s – a time when F. R. Leavis and his followers struggled vehemently to propound and advance the sanctity and value of an English literary tradition in a society increasingly falling prey to the mass objectification and consumerism. *Small World* posits how the recent developments have considerably precipitated the anxiety of the teachers and the taught.

As *Changing Places* illustrates, by the late 1970s, Morris Zapp aspired to exhaust the possibilities of commentary on Jane Austen by examining her work from “every conceivable angle, historical, biographical, rhetorical, mythical, Freudian, Jungian, existentialist, Marxist, structuralist, you name it” (Lodge, *Changing Places* 44)— in a way, covering all the significant categories from Lodge’s first anthology *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism: A Reader*. The relentless pursuit of newer theoretical modes and critical stances have rendered impossible the kind of pluralism Zapp proposed earlier. In Lodge’s portrait of the global

campus, scholars mostly compartmentalize themselves into schools vociferously promoting the various “isms” of literary theory. They rarely search for common ground, and they tend to demonize those not of their persuasion.

In *Small World* Morris Zapp appears in a new avatar – that of a self-proclaimed poststructuralist critic. As the novel begins, Morris has already abandoned his Austen project, which he now cites to illustrate the fallacies of the traditional modes of criticism dictated, and established, by Poststructuralism (and by his own most recent book, *Beyond Criticism*). “You see before you”, he confesses to a conference audience, “a man who once believed in the possibility of interpretation” (Lodge, *Small World* 24). He goes on to show the futility of his Austen scheme and of others like it by declaring that “[e]very decoding is another encoding” so that assigning a definite, and fixed, meaning to any statement is always just over the horizon (25). It just escapes our grasp. By Morris’s deconstructionist logic, “Conversation is like playing tennis with a ball made of Krazy Putty that keeps coming back over the net in a different shape”, so much so that not even the listener’s repeating back the exact words of a statement indicates an understanding of meaning originally intended by the speaker; it may signify something else (26). Rather, the listener brings “a different experience of language, literature and non-verbal reality to those words”— that is, they become fundamentally and etymologically “different” words when employed by another speaker (26). The apparently greater ease of assigning fixity to the meaning of a written text is illusory at best and, if anything, even more obfuscating because it is more speculative and devoid of any definitive inferences. The activity of reading, Morris reveals, is “not a to-and-fro-process . . . but an endless, tantalizing leading on, a flirtation without consummation” (26).

Other less significant characters are identified specifically with other important theoretical-critical stances. Their (and Morris’s) competition for professional eminence in the form of a newly announced UNESCO Chair of Literary Criticism makes up a major section of the rollicking satire and comedy here. Part of the challenge of

dramatizing the comedy of the novel concerns the presentation of theorists and their theories so that both the academically cognizant and the reader unacquainted with literary theory can be thoroughly amused. Having focused up to that point on just a few characters (including Morris Zapp and Philip Swallow), he wanted to break out of such a leisurely, limited form and increase the scope and tempo of his book in order to effectively unfold, and expand, the idea of the global campus. He aimed for a favorable sense of simultaneous involvement by introducing “a whole raft of minor characters from different countries, instead of having the main characters meet others in a picaresque fashion” (Haffenden 163).

The self-explanatory narrative of Lodge’s fiction is complemented by the delightful clarity and succinctness evidenced in his critical writings (including his introductions to the various theoretical figures in the two critical anthologies). Several new characters arrive on the scene whose storylines stretch to the end of the novel, as has been observed before, along with the continuing narratives of the Swallows and Morris Zapp. First to appear is Fulvia Morgana, an affluent and stylish Italian Marxist scholar. Next is Arthur Kingfisher, an elderly Viennese-American “whose life is a concise history of modern criticism” (Lodge, *Small World* 93-94). Being one of the chief assessors for the UNESCO chair, he is also reportedly the doyen of the international community of literary theorists. And there’s more – he is accompanied by his beautiful, yet doltish, young Korean mistress who has dedicated her whole life effectually to protecting the great man against the importunities and pitfalls of the academic world and the fact that he perennially despaired of an erection or a genuinely original thought. Siegfried von Turpiz is a Berliner, a lover of fast cars, and a leading exponent of *rezeptionasthetik* (response theory), whose right hand is mysteriously hidden in a black glove he has apparently never removed, thereby prompting a riot of humorous speculations. Michel Tardieu, a leading narratologist at the Sorbonne, has a young man named Albert for a lover. Rudyard Parkinson, Regius Professor of Belles-Lettres at All Saints’ College, Oxford is an aging don lately preoccupied with

writing mostly book reviews. His undisguised hostility towards American scholars is especially pointed towards Morris Zapp, whom he scorns as “a brash, braggart American Jew, pathetically anxious to demonstrate his familiarity with the latest pretentious critical jargon” (100). Roland Frobisher, is a successful English novelist (bearing a distinct semblance to the quintessential Angry Young Man of the mid-1950s), though he has been suffering from a particularly difficult writer’s block for eight pathetically long years.

The critics of Lodge’s fiction perceive in these characters the prototypes for prominent literary critics such as Stanley Fish and George Steiner. Even the readers unfamiliar with such formidable figures or their theoretical stances, but thoroughly acquainted with Lodge’s parodistic mode of presentation, can effortlessly grasp the types being portrayed and caricatured, as well as the comedy of wit, manners and personality that is brought about in these portrayals. The struggle over the UNESCO Chair involves both the big names of literary criticism and the not-so-great. It shows the fawning, preposterous obsequies and kowtowing with which would-be appointees seek Arthur Kingfisher’s favor, as well as the old man’s shrewdness in wielding his power – as in a telephone inquiry from von Turpiz disguised as a conference invitation (which Kingfisher averts quite easily). And the force of rumor perennially does the rounds, at conferences and in academic circles generally, so that, for example, Morris learns of the proposed important chair only when he and Fulvia Morgana happen to be seated together flying from London to Milan.

Morris’s subsequent quest for this ultimate professional prize is countered vehemently not as much by other superstar theorists or members of rival critical schools as by his archenemy Parkinson. The tool with which Parkinson seems to defeat Zapp turns out to be Philip Swallow, whose elevation to serious candidacy for the UNESCO chair itself comprises one of the comic-satiric gems of this novel. In *Changing Places* Lodge hilariously noted that Philip’s sole claim to professional distinction lay in his searing ability to evaluate undergraduates. Now Philip is again cast as bearing insubstantial

academic importance with almost no concrete accomplishments. He eulogizes nothing more than a vague but enthusiastic love of the literature and remorselessly invokes the unfashionable rubrics of great literature as the guardians and repository of great truths, of great writers as persons of genius and wisdom, of literary meaning as authorially intended, and of the critics' job as an obligation to "unlock the drawers, blow away the dust, and bring out the treasures into the light of the day" (Lodge, *Small World* 317).

Not that the Philip Swallow of this novel is precisely the same figure he was in *Changing Places*. "I built up his character a little," Lodge admitted in an interview (Haffenden 164). Now older, Philip is also more confident- one colleague attributes this development to his affair with Desiree. He has also assumed the position of the English chair (and professorial rank) at Rummidge. He has published a book of modest fame and reception on the early-eighteenth-century English essayist William Hazlitt, significantly titled *Hazlitt and the Amateur Reader*. The book garnered sarcastic and deprecating reviews; Morris regarded it as "totally brainless" (Lodge, *Small World* 235). More importantly, he has gained cognizance within the British Council circuit, so that he often gets to travel to remote lands to lecture on his love of literature or on Hazlitt, or on both. In spite of such remarkable achievements, he remains a monumental longshot for the kind of advancement and expertise the UNESCO chair represents. Of course, Parkinson first sees Philip as a way of promoting his own candidacy. Hell bent on diminishing Morris's chances, he latches on to a review copy of Philip's book. Parkinson makes Philip and his book the centre of a *TLS* (*Times Literary Supplement*) essay titled, "The English School of Criticism", which discredits and disparages contemporary theory. But the creature outstrips the creator in this instance, as a U.N. official misinterprets the motives behind the *TLS* article and leaks to the press magnanimously that Philip Swallow is the leading contender for the UNESCO chair, to Philip's amused puzzlement and other candidates' vehement consternation.

Philip's rapid, and perhaps undeserved, rise is but one of the many opportunities this novel gives

Lodge to satirize the global campus. The delightful combination of common professional interests and erotic opportunity makes the conference a likely place for the academicians off the domestic leash to form new, intriguing relationships, and therefore a setting full of interesting fictional possibilities. International conference hoppers are presented as generally intent on everything but scholarly concerns- particularly on the conviviality and riotous escape from ordinary existence afforded by fancy hotels, a rich and sublime cuisine, heavy partying, and late sleeping, usually paid for by a university or a granting agency. That the participants are hardly averse to sexual adventuring is hardly surprising. As Lodge has explained, "It is precisely the tension between professional self-display and erotic opportunity, between the ambition to impress many and the desire to impress one, that among the other things, makes the conference such a fascinating human spectacle, and such rich material for fiction" (*Write On* 71).

In *Small World*, Lodge notes the intense irony of the inveterate sexual attraction between two personalities who disapproves the other's scholarship and affiliation. This is particularly evident when an American at the Joyce symposium in Zurich discovers, after having spent the night with Fulvia Morgana, that she is "the raving Marxist poststructuralist whose essay on the stream-of-consciousness novel as an instrument of bourgeois hegemony . . . he has rubbished in a review due to appear in the next issue of *Novel*" (Lodge, *Small World* 238). An equally amusing moment of raucous ambivalence occurs when, as the only creative writers at von Turpiz's response-theory conference, Roland Frobisher and Desiree Zapp (now also a best-selling novelist on the strength of her single literary endeavour which was, ironically, based on her marriage to Morris) end up in bed together, each fearing that the other will use their liaison as material for the purposes of publication.

Desiree is not the only character carried over from *Changing Places* whose love life follows the trajectory sequenced in the earlier novel. Morris's, predictably, seems to have come to an abrupt halt. As he explains to Hilary Swallow: "I gave up screwing a long time ago. I came to the

conclusion that sex is a sublimation of the work instinct" (Lodge, *Small World* 59). Philip's involvement with women, on the other hand, has widened (and deepened). Hilary admits that he has grown handsomer in middle age and doesn't fail to note the mutual attraction between him and pretty students, a phenomenon Morris ascribes to Philip's having become the department chair: "They wet their pants at the thought of his power" (59). Hilary knows of one sexual encounter with a student, and she suspects more. What she doesn't know, though – and what Philip reveals to Morris – is that a few years earlier he became briefly but intensely involved with a married woman named Joy whom he met on a trip to the British Council. Though it had been just an overnight affair, she left an indelible impression on him. He still thinks that a fruitful relationship with her could have provided him the "intensity of experience" and desire "undiluted by habit" that he craves and finds so lacking in his marriage (66, 77).

Romantic though Philip's longings for Joy seem to be, they are overshadowed in intensity and significance by the arduous pinings of another of Lodge's international scholars – Persse McGarrigle. Persse is portrayed as inexperienced, both academically and sexually, and Lodge doesn't abstain from exploiting the full comic potential of his naivete. When the novel opens, he has just finished his M.A. and is teaching at an obscure Irish university and attending his first professional conference. He has little understanding, or cognizance of, the protocol operating among the veteran academics he comes across at the conference. He falls head over heels for the beautiful and intelligent Angelica³ Pabst—a doctoral candidate writing her thesis on romance—on their very first meeting. The starry-eyed, guileless Persse immediately proposes marriage to Angelica, blissfully unaware as he is of the universality of sexual encounters preceding the sacrosanct bond of nuptials in gendered interactions. He remains undeterred, and his faith in her remains unshaken, even upon eventually seeing Angelica with another man. Disappointment only spurs Persse ("a hopeless romantic," Angelica calls him [Lodge, *Small World* 38]) to pursue Angelica, his mysterious and elusive

love, relentlessly across conferences, all over the world. Even when he fails ultimately in his pursuit, he does not acknowledge the impossibility of attaining the imaginary as he prefers to substitute a new visage for the old one and risk the likelihood of more pain, dejection and utter disappointment. Specifically, he goes off in search of Cheryl Summerbee, the airline clerk, who has been so nice to him and who, disheartened by Persse's abject indifference towards her, up and quit her job and is not to be found without at least another novel's worth of searching. She has been in love with Persse during much of the time that he was pining for Angelica, who, in turn, has been engaged to another man (who, ironically, goes by the name of Peter McGarrigle) all along.

It is significant that behind such a potentially endless chain looms the post-structuralist theories of Derrida and others, and the whole notion of the indefinite deferral – of love, of meaning, of companionship, of closure, in any search for an absolute. Morris introduces and elaborates upon this idea in the conference paper titled "Textuality and Striptease" he presents early in the novel, delivered with his characteristic verve and designed, partly, to shock the sensibilities of his audience of British academicians primarily nurtured in the tradition of Leavisite moralism. With an implicit nod to Roland Barthes, he likens the lure of fixed meaning to that of the striptease, with its "promise of an ultimate revelation that is infinitely postponed," and develops an interesting parallel between the interpreter's desire and that of the striptease patron, for whom the removal of the layers of clothing and underwear leads only to further mystery and desire (Lodge, *Small World* 26). "The attempt to peer into the very core of a text, to possess once and for all its meaning, is vain— it is only ourselves that we find there, not the work itself," he declares (27). Mystery, inordinate desire, and re-emergent dissatisfactions— the ceaseless quests for love and truth, endlessly deferred— are seen as authentic to humans both as sexual beings and as users of language, while "the hermeneutic fallacy of a recuperable meaning" attached especially to traditional realism and its rubric of truth-telling is said to be inauthentic ("all strip and

no tease," Morris opines [26]). Depending on the perspective one wants to adopt, either Morris's ideas operate here as a gloss on the narrative that will follow or the remainder of the novel represents an exposition and a working out of, ultimately to the level of parody, of Morris's poststructuralist thinking and belief.

Conference papers frame the central developments in *Small World*. The issues Morris broaches in his conference paper are echoed and made explicit in Angelica's paper, delivered almost at the close of the novel at the MLA meeting in New York. Referring specifically to Barthes's connection between narrative and sexuality, she contrasts the pleasure derived from reading epics and tragedies, which engage the reader's curiosity and desire and move implacably to "an essentially *male* climax (a single, explosive discharge of accumulated tension" [Lodge, *Small World* 322]), with that provided by romances, which are not structured in the same manner:

[Romance] has not only one climax but many; the pleasure of this text comes and comes and comes again. No sooner is one crisis in the fortunes of the hero averted than a new one presents itself; no sooner has one mystery been solved than another is raised; no sooner has one adventure been concluded than another begins. . . . The greatest and most characteristic romances are often unfinished- they end only with the author's exhaustion, as a woman's capacity for orgasm is limited only by her physical stamina. Romance is a multiple orgasm. (322-23)

This view of romance, as an affront to the more respectable genres, squares with the traditional reservations leveled against romances. Renaissance critics of Ariosto attacked *Orlando Furioso's* indecency, its lack of definite unity, and its unabashed borrowing from other texts as scandals against the dominant notions of literary, social and moral decorum. Romance operates in a similar manner in *Small World*, "as an escape hatch from the constraints – formal, intellectual and ethical – of realistic fiction" (Bergonzi, *Myth of Modernism* 137). The comedy and satire of the novel reinforce, and

indeed fortify, the efficacy and the potential of the romance mode to satiate the appetite of Lodge's postmodern readers for metafiction. That the salient features of the novel – and virtually all of its subversive as well as explicit elements – hark back to the romance tradition is of primary significance.

In *Small World* Lodge describes the characters with all their human frailties— hypocrisy, self-absorption, laziness, careerism, insincerity, jealousy, infidelity and ingratitude. But at the same time he makes them appear tolerable and lets them play their roles uninhibitedly in the ambit of the carnivalized world of the novel. He also lures his readers into the 'carnavalesque' ambience of the narrative and entertains them in an 'academic' way. Following Angelica's definition of 'romance' one can believe that *Small World* ('an academic romance') offers multiple pleasures to the readers with multiple adventures (both academic and romantic) until the author gets exhausted in this grand circus of carnivalized academia.

Notes

1. The other two novels in David Lodge's campus trilogy are *Changing Places* (first published in 1975) and *Nice Work* (first published in 1988).
2. Philip Swallow and Morris Zapp are the primary characters in *Changing Places*, the first novel in Lodge's campus trilogy. Swallow is a professor at Rummidge University, England while Zapp is a senior professor at the Euphoric State University, America. In *Changing Places* Swallow and Zapp get involved in transatlantic faculty exchange programme and in the course of the story, the two academics exchange not only their jobs but also their wives and some of their character traits as well (Swallow gains experience and Zapp tolerance and humanity).
3. Angelica is the name of the woman praised in Ariosto's famous romantic epic of the Italian Renaissance, *Orlando Furioso*.

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