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## **An Inquiry into Cultural Value Systems and Conflicts in Science Fiction: Exploring Spiral Dynamics in *Foundation***

**Abstract:** Science fiction narratives illuminate the human condition by estranging us from our perception of reality and presenting authentic, imaginative frameworks. This article examines how the television series *Foundation* (Apple TV+, 2021-) approaches human value systems and emerging conflicts from a Spiral Dynamics perspective, emphasizing the series' immense worth in making sense of the contemporary world. Spiral Dynamics is a scientific model that describes the development of human beliefs, ideals, and values on a deep fundamental level. *Foundation* offers nuanced representations of discrepancies between different value systems and highlights the strengths and weaknesses of multiple stages. Thus, the series provides an opportunity to contemplate the conflict between the self-righteous morality of the West and the radicalized politics of tyrannical and/or religious regimes. *Foundation* scrutinizes the validity and the hegemony of science and rational thinking (Galactic Empire representing stage Orange) and juxtaposes it with various lower and higher stages. Red kingdoms (Anacreon and Thespis) and Blue/Purple religions (Luminism and Seer Church) are in conflict with each other and the Empire. Psychohistory, as a stage Yellow scientific device (and also the 'novum' of the series), advances holistic solutions to conflicts; it emphasizes that all perspectives are partial and there are alternative ways to integrate them. Consequently, this article aims to address how a science fiction saga could 'cognitively map' ongoing cultural conflicts. *Foundation* reflects planetary concerns, provides a complementary perspective on cultural values and conflicts, and paves a way for multi-perspectival, 'conscious' politics.

**Keywords:** Science fiction sagas, Spiral Dynamics, systems thinking, value systems, cultural conflicts, culture wars, *Foundation*.

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“Each one, each society, each nation,  
is seeking security at the expense of others”

Jiddu Krishnamurti

## Introduction

It goes without saying that science fiction enhances our understanding of who we are as human beings and where we stand. It aids us in making sense of our complex circumstances. A wide diversity of its themes not only reflects worries and expectations for the future, but also contributes to bringing specific problems to light and providing alternative viewpoints on the world, society, and contemporary lifestyles. Science fiction stories, whether they are set in the distant future or at vast distances “can speak to our condition in myriad ways” and the genre’s narrative possibilities “enable storytellers to question traditional social arrangements and moral norms -and offer alternatives- and to dramatize moral dilemmas” (Blackford 192).

The analyses of science fiction narratives enable us to disclose assumptions regarding the patterns of modern cultural and political conflicts in the real world. Through these assessments, we could identify global crises and reflect on the condition of civilizations and politics. In the end, science fiction is “a tool for thinking about and intervening in the world” (Vint 1–2). According to the author and literary critic Samuel R. Delany, “science fiction is not about the future; it uses the future as a narrative convention to present significant distortions of the present” (Delany 26). Paik argues that science fiction can achieve “profound and probing insights into the principal dilemmas of political life” (1).

According to numerous political experts, the globe is currently experiencing a civilizational crisis. This crisis is the culmination of multiple crises, such as geopolitical, economic, environmental, ecological, meaning, and culture wars, among others. As Beck emphasizes (Roemischer 24); “the world in which we now live is struggling with the appearance of all the memetic cultural expressions at once -ethnic tribes, egocentric warlords, both dangerous and redemptive ‘isms,’ a whole plateful of opportunists and materialists-in-the-making, and a host of postmodern egalitarian political, religious, and professional structures.” As mankind simultaneously experiences these challenges, science fiction demonstrates its power to (re)imagine communities. The genre expresses and symbolizes the dialectics of conflict, contradiction, and transformation.

In this study, the television adaptation of Isaac Asimov’s acclaimed *Foundation* series is examined through the lens of Spiral Dynamics. The aim is to investigate how speculative fiction, specifically a science fiction saga, might be used to comprehend real-world conflicts and potential solutions. The expansive mythology of the novel series has not been adapted to the full extent but the producers have succeeded in reinventing it with intriguing subplots,

stunning visuals, and complex themes. The series evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of concepts like militarism, capitalism, religion, and scientism and offers comments on their potential roles in the contemporary world.

Spiral Dynamics is a model that provides a holistic perspective on how people progress and what they individually and collectively value. This 'bio-psycho-social-spiritual' mapping refers to the evolutionary stages that the human and the collective psyches go through. It is exceptionally helpful to understanding reality and its systemic mechanism. Spiral Dynamics gives rise to a "profound clarity of insight into the sweeping patterns of human psychologies, beliefs, and values... that are, often unconsciously, guiding our choices and shaping our very identities" (Roemischer 4). By analyzing *Foundation* through this novel lens, we will be able to decipher the mentality of cultures and gain a meta-perspective on cultural value systems and their conflicts. According to Shippey, "the common element in the great body of science fiction is an interest in cultures, in the ways in which intelligent beings could live and think, as dictated by circumstances, their technical ability, their systems of thought" (Shippey 101). Examining and analyzing a science fiction text via the lens of a psychological development model could shed information on the real-world power structures. Weldes puts emphasis on intertextual relations between science fiction and world politics: "There are often striking similarities in the way SF tells stories, the way world politics is officially and popularly narrated, and the way analysts of world politics represent 'international relations'" (Weldes 13-14). According to her, science fiction narratives "allow us to imagine how we might better organize and structure local and global politics" (8). Menadue and Cheer (1) examine the usage of science fiction to describe and illustrate human culture in research literature and deduce two characteristics. First, science fiction's "role as a tool for advocacy and cultural insight" and second, "its effectiveness as an aid to learning and teaching." Another study illustrates that "reading science fiction inspires scientific comprehension and positive attitudes to science and that reading science fiction also has the potential to positively change new readers' attitudes toward science" (Menadue and Jacups 10). This paper will examine *Foundation* based on the principles of Spiral Dynamics in order to show how the series handles human value systems and emergent conflicts. The purpose is to investigate new ways of evaluating cultural values and conflicts. Thus, it will be argued how a science fiction story could depict the paths toward a more egalitarian, just, and peaceful future. As stated by famous science fiction author Frederik Pohl, "at its best science fiction gives its readers some new and otherwise unobtainable insights into our world -in fact, into all our possible worlds" (Pohl 14).

## A Brief Overview of Spiral Dynamics

Spiral Dynamics, in a nutshell, is a scientific psychological development model. The model was initiated by professor of psychology Clare W. Graves in the 1960s, and it has been developed by Don Edward Beck and Christopher C. Cowan through theoretical and practical aspects.<sup>1</sup> It is a conceptual framework that attempts to generalize about individual and historical development. According to the model, human development toward psychological maturity follows a predictable progression of stages.

Existing beneath the surface of diverse beliefs, faiths, and ideologies, lies a collection of operational value systems. Each level of development corresponds to the psychological and cultural realities of human beings. The creators of the model believed that the causes and solutions to conflicts lay deep in the human psyche. According to Beck and his colleagues (Beck *et al.* 211):

Spiral Dynamics (SD) is arguably the first major, systemic, conceptual system and complex way of thinking about everything that addresses the “big picture” and holistic perspectives currently in vogue in cutting-edge executive leadership thinking, provides a mechanism and methodology for looking at macro and micro issues simultaneously, and lays down a specific, practical and usable change technology that aligns and connects all of the variables, stakeholders, cultures, sub-cultures and other interests within an elegantly designed organism, one that integrates technology, business system, and human dynamics within a seamless, interactive process.

Instead of focusing on what behaviors and attitudes are, Spiral Dynamics emphasizes their causes. The concept has historically been known as “Value Systems Theory”. A value system is a set of standards of individuals or groups to evaluate the actions and states of others. The model’s interpretation of human values is highly nuanced and subtle. Each value system represents a different way of comprehending reality. Beck and Cowan invented the “vMEME” (or “Value-MEME”) to characterize the levels of biopsychosocial development of their hosts. vMEMEs refer to the commonality of the way that people see the world. They are collections of memes and coping mechanisms in response to life conditions. As stated by the authors, “what biochemical genes are to the DNA, memes are to our psycho-cultural ‘DNA’” (Beck and Cowan 30). It is crucial to bear in mind that memes “are not types *of* people but forms of adaptive intelligences *in* people” (Roemischer 24).

The model demonstrates a tremendous potential to recognize and analyze a multitude of diverse systems, cultures, and practices. It is adaptable to groups of individuals, including families, businesses, organizations, ethnic groups, religions, cults and sects, political parties, and countries.

The levels of development have been assigned their color as follows; Beige, Purple, Red, Orange, Green, Yellow, and Turquoise. These colors are assigned arbitrarily and they are without any sub-meaning. The first six value systems (or levels of development), from Beige to Green, constitute the First-Tier (or Tier-One) value systems, where each stage is biased towards the survival of the being, depending on the environment the person lives in. Conventional thinking dominates First-Tier. Every stage is a very broad category that has both positive and negative characteristics.<sup>2</sup>

The initial stage of the spiral, Stage Beige, is characterized by fundamental survival necessities. The primary objectives of this stage are staying alive and regulating of physiological needs, such as food, water, safety, temperature control, and reproduction. It is very unlikely to discuss self-awareness at this stage. For instance, newborn infants, mentally challenged homeless people, and senile elderly people are mostly at this stage.

Stage Purple, as a community-centered and family-oriented level of development, values mythical, magical, and supernatural powers. The emergence of the desire for bonding and co-existing with other people in Beige leads to Purple. People form tribes, clans, and extended families to feel ‘at home’ and to thrive together. They view natural occurrences as the work of supernatural beings and revere holy artifacts, rites of passage, chiefs, and elders. Beige and Purple are both extremely primitive and rudimentary stages.

The next stage Red refers to the assertion of raw self. Power-focused, egocentric, self-assertive, courageous, and mostly aggressive Red dignifies self-expression at all costs. Willpower, instant gratification, and the struggle for domination lie at the core of Red. Although Red is “raw, impulsive, and wild”, it is also “liberating”, “creative” and “a vital part of human nature, neither inherently good nor bad” (Beck and Cowan 216, 225).

Stage Blue is characterized by purposeful life, authoritarianism, and hierarchy. The core values of Blue are institutionalism, absolutism, being committed and disciplined, belief in order and transcendent truth, and acceptance of societal values. People and societies in Blue adhere to a certain set of rules and laws that are mostly based on moral codes of conduct. The religious and most authoritarian countries in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America stroll through this stage. From an evolutionary standpoint, Orange starts to emerge when Blue begins to question its beliefs, values, and constraints.

Orange considers science and rationality as the most important. Achievement, advancement, success, self-reliance, personal autonomy, efficiency, competition, and optimization comprise the set of values that characterize this stage. To give an example for Orange, the United States of America as a whole epitomizes its set of values and ideals. The “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” phrase from the country’s constitution embodies the Orange worldview. Some keywords for Orange are capitalism, libertarianism, entrepreneurship, pragmatism, secularism, materialism, and atheism.

The mechanistic and objectivist worldview of Orange represents the modern era of humanity. Green begins to emerge as the strictly scientific and rationalistic values of Orange

are questioned, deconstructed, and discarded by postmodernity. The core value memes of stage Green are humanism, pacifism, pluralism, compassion, open-mindedness, equality, equity, skepticism, relativism, environmentalism, and sustainability. Green is “seeking peace within the inner self and exploring with others the caring dimensions of community, a change from the status-seeking ORANGE to an egalitarian and humanistic code” (Beck *et al.* 26).

Each stage leans toward collectivism or individualism. Going from one stage to the next, the center of gravity shifts ‘sacrifice self’ (other-oriented or externally anchored) to ‘express self’ (me-oriented), like a spiral. Beige, Red, and Orange are more individualistic stages whilst Purple, Blue, and Green are collectivist-leaning stages. Additionally, we need to bear in mind that all these First-Tier stages are not aware of the developmental process.

The Second-Tier, or the ‘new paradigm’, consists of Yellow and Turquoise. Beginning with the first stage of Tier-Two, Yellow is able to recognize that people have varying levels of development and that all of reality is comprised of multiple perspectives. Yellow emerges from a chaotic habitat where uncertainty and change are the norms. As an integral level of development, it recognizes the significance and relevance of each stage. All of the First-Tier stages are negatively motivated and continually at odds with one another, as they are dependent on their survival agenda.<sup>3</sup> They tend to be exclusive and mono-perspectival; they validate their values and judge other value memes to be unsound or inadequate. Beginning with the Second-Tier, the stages are typically able to recognize the importance and validity of each of the preceding six levels. The Second-Tier patterns are much more holistic and abundance based. Yellow is “flexible, integrative, and knowledge-based,” while Turquoise is “holistic and global in structure, flowing and multidimensional in its processes” (Beck and Cowan 5). From the First-Tier perspective, individuals identify themselves with solely their own values (and generally believe that theirs are the best); however, with the Second-Tier, transpersonal perspective, they begin to appreciate the values of all stages. Stage Yellow is primarily defined by systems thinking and a view of the world as a collection of interrelated models.<sup>4</sup> Some of the characteristics of Yellow are accepting the “inevitability of nature’s flows and forms”, focusing on “functionality, competence, flexibility, and spontaneity”, finding a “natural mix of conflicting ‘truths’ and ‘uncertainties’” and “discovering personal freedom without harm to others or excesses of self-interest” (Beck and Cowan 275). Turquoise, the next stage after Yellow, transcends the human perspective and is “concerned with the *overall life* of a company, a school, a community, a nation, or of Gaia, the living planet” (Beck and Cowan 108). When systemic thinking alone is insufficient to resolve conflicts, communal effort becomes necessary. Turquoise embraces the whole of existence as a single living entity and regards the universe as alive and intelligent. It is a ‘sacrifice-self’ system that is more holistic and spiritual in comparison to Yellow. To find a deeper order, resonate with all the other value memes, and integrate intellect and emotions are the aims of

Turquoise. Logic, reason, and rationality begin to coexist alongside emotions, metaphysics, and spirituality. Both Second-Tier stages transcend survival issues, ideologies, religions, racial and ethnic associations, etc. Second-Tier (or Tier-Two) represents a paradigm shift from ‘one-truth’ to ‘many-truths’.

Spiral Dynamics, also known as “humanity’s Master Code” in Don Beck’s own words, anatomizes the evolution of the universe as a whole. Despite the fact that each stage builds upon the preceding stage, there is no stage that is superior to the others. In other words, the model does not impose a hierarchy. Each stage is intricately interconnected with the previous and succeeding stages. Instead of rejecting what came before, each stage builds upon its predecessors. Every stage derives from the constraints of the preceding stages. If one wants to climb up the spiral, she or he cannot skip any stage and must go through them in order. It is vital to leave behind restricting characteristics of previous stages. Adding more colors to the ‘psyche palette’ is more valuable rather than just going beyond any color. All of the stages have healthy and unhealthy manifestations as well as their own different shades.<sup>5</sup>

In conclusion, Spiral Dynamics is not about being in the First or Second-Tier, or actualizing ‘higher’ stages while abandoning the primary ones; rather, it is about “manifesting value systems in a specific context in the healthiest (read: as life preserving as possible) way” (Ranitz). The model facilitates our comprehension of lower stages and prevents us to act reactively to them. Therefore, it would be inaccurate to use this model to judge or typecast individuals, societies or cultures. Every person or a group of people is precisely who they need to be at this time, and they think and act in accordance with their stage.

### **The Examination of *Foundation* Through Spiral Dynamics**

The television adaptation of *Foundation* is an epic science fiction story with three major storylines spanning several centuries. The series is based on the seven-novel series, written in the early 1950s, of the same name by American writer Isaac Asimov (1920–1992). Asimov was mainly influenced by *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, which was a late 18<sup>th</sup>-century historical series by Edward Gibbon. The story takes place tens of thousands of years in the future and takes a big picture of a galaxy. The narrative structure of the novels is based on the conflict between the competing forces of individual desires and the ancient legacy of social inevitability. Despite the fact that the novel series is considered by many to be unadaptable since it focuses primarily on concepts rather than characters, the producers have attempted to create an exciting adaptation that is faithful to the spirit of the novels.

The series provides plausible and yet convincingly extraordinary imagined cultures and societies. They are at various stages of social, cultural, and technological development. The series displays striking parallels between the evolution of the human psyche and the

development of cultures and civilizations. The aim of the paper is to examine the series through Spiral Dynamics in order to gain a fresh perspective on cultural and societal conflicts in the real world.

The interstellar empire, also known as the Galactic Empire, rules the entire galaxy and contains millions of human-inhabited planets. It is the epitome of stage Orange, ruling the galaxy under a 'Pax Galactica' nearly 12,000 years before beginning to decline. The Empire's capital planet Trantor, a city that covers the entire planet (i.e. an ecumenopolis), has state-of-the-art technologies. The space elevator known as Star Bridge is an Ayn Randian skyscraper that represents capitalism. The science of the Empire invented the 'jumpdrive' that enables faster-than-light travel throughout the galaxy. It even possesses 'god-level' technologies, engendering the Genetic Dynasty.<sup>6</sup> However, the Empire was unable to fully actualize stage Orange, nor did it transcend Blue. We can see that technical and scientific expertise alone is insufficient to ensure the well-being of societies. The emperors are obsessed with the ideas of perpetuity and domination. The Empire has a meme complex that directly imposes its values and worldview on others. It seeks to maintain the peace between the kingdoms of outer reach; in the words of Brother Dusk, "if the people step out of the line, we hit them with a big stick." It has a strict materialist and reductionist stance and a Western capitalist spirit that is overly rationalistic.

Due to the lower order's 'unresolved problems', a resistance that seeks to bring down the Empire from within is formed. The emperors disregard and despise religion, but they have their own absolutist worldview. The only concern of the emperors is the image of the Empire; appearance is more important than efficiency. They did not leave out the self-righteous, absolutist, and authoritarian elements of Blue. Brother Day also possesses the impetus of unbridled Red, as evidenced by specific instances (such as getting an act of gruesome revenge against the infiltrator Azura Odili).

Mathematician Hari Seldon utilizes a form of science called 'Psychohistory' to predict the fall of the Empire. The idea of Psychohistory is, in his own words, "a predictive model designed to forecast the behavior of very large populations." It is a statistical process that can predict galactic-scale future events. It is a very simple formula but it explains a great deal, reminiscent of Occam's Razor principle. It constitutes both the series' central premise and its 'novum'. The concept of the novum refers to "a historically unprecedented and unpredicted 'new thing' that intervenes in the routine course of social life and changes the trajectory of history" (Csicsery-Ronay Jr. 5–6). As we all know, forecasting the future with accurate predictions is impossible for science, but by using Psychohistory, he predicts that the Galactic Empire will collapse and barbarism will rule the galaxy for thousands of years. The plan is to reduce the duration of an impending dark age from 30,000 years to a mere 1,000 years and to mitigate its disastrous effects. He intends to establish a place called 'Foundation' in order to actualize this idea. Foundation becomes a fortress and refuge for a group of scientists



recruited from across the galaxy, each of whom is an expert in their respective field. As the story progresses, the Empire begins to disintegrate in the first 50 years, and the Foundation loses contact with it.

Foundation's apparent purpose is to produce 'Encyclopedia Galactica' to collect and preserve humanity's knowledge. Thus, all the knowledge that will be lost during the dark ages will be preserved in this massive encyclopedia and transmitted to future generations. Consequently, humanity will not have to start from scratch once the dark ages have ended. At first glance, this appears to be a quantification-focused Orange idea. Data, analytics, and algorithms are of the utmost importance for Orange. Everything ought to be explicable through a mathematical equation or algorithm. However, the royal master statisticians of the Empire are unable to comprehend Seldon's mathematics, despite decades of study. From the Orange point of view, it is difficult to understand. The Empire considers the theory to be too obscure and esoteric. This incomprehension coincides with the limited visions of the Tier-One worldviews.

The workers of Foundation in Terminus, also known as Encyclopedists, are at stage Green. Following Hari Seldon's instructions, they intend to construct the Encyclopedia Galactica in order to preserve all human knowledge. They undertake the task of rebuilding civilization after its demise and take the enormous risk of self-sacrifice for the sake of humanity. The Foundation's egalitarian administration has community-oriented goals and objectives.

At the end of the first episode, Star Bridge is simultaneously attacked by two suicide bombers. The tower's collapse results in the deaths of 100 million Trantor residents. Despite their denials, the kingdoms of Anacreon and Thespis appear to be behind these attacks. Anacreon and Thespis are both Red kingdoms consisting of traditional hunter-gatherer societies with a long-standing feud. Brother Day labels them "barbarian kingdoms". Terrorism forms the basis of their military strategies against the Empire. In order to make an example of the outer worlds, Brother Day sends ships to attack both planets and executes the delegation members. Phara, the leader of the Anacreons survived the Empire's attacks on her planet when she was six years old. Her resentment stems from the deaths of her mother and brother; therefore, she demands retribution. As the highest-ranking military leader of Anacreon, she was given the title 'Grand Huntress'. She intends to locate the long-lost imperial war vessel *Invictus* and use its capability to space-jump into the core of Trantor.

Salvor Hardin, the protective Warden of Terminus, attempts to thwart Phara and the Anacreons. She warns them that the Empire will not let them escape and the vicious cycle will continue if they do so. However, the Foundation is unable to withstand the attacks and Anacreons recruits several of them to assist in repairing the starship. The discord between the Foundation and the Anacreons is a classic Red vs. Green conflict. Red's remorseless passion for vengeance cannot be mitigated by Green politics. Asimov's famous quote, "violence is the last refuge of the incompetent" becomes a doctrine for Green, although this "we are

all one human family” worldview is ineffective for resolving conflicts with other Tier-One stages. It is also evident that catastrophes are not unusual if the advanced technologies of Orange fall into the wrong hands, especially the selfish and warrior mindset of Red. The permissive Green and ambitious Orange are incapable of handling conflicts with the militant and wrathful Red properly. They anticipate the lower cultures to jump up to their levels, however, all those lower ones must first go through Blue, Orange, and the other cycles respectively, before they can get to Green, Yellow, and so on. Therefore, they are unable to resolve the Anacreon and Thespis issues on their own. All of these First-Tier value groups in the series are self-righteous and vindictive. They view themselves as right and condemn others as awry. It becomes necessary to establish a wedge between these stages so they can withstand counterattacks and future conflicts.

As a Yellow spiral wizard, Hari Seldon has a superior vantage point from which to view reality’s patterns. His worldview is based on systems thinking, which allows him to picture the entire galaxy as a series of interconnected, interacting webs. As a Yellow stage thinker, he is interested in creating systems in order to help people to move up the ladder at their own pace. Regarding the level of development, he adheres to the ‘transcend and include’ idea, and thanks to Psychohistory, he is able to predict what will occur next.

Yellow represents the holistic, ‘context-oriented’ stage, that involves seeking solutions from various stages. Second-Tier stages, beginning with Yellow, perceive First-Tier as essential for the overall growth and development of the human and collective psyche. The skillful Yellow-based thinkers are adept at understanding the logics of the First-Tier people and cultures. Second-Tier leadership, like Seldon’s, “is critical for distinguishing characteristics and value gifts of the different codes in people, and ultimately weaves all aspects of life together in a functional manner around a superordinate goal” (Beck *et al.* 38). First-Tier societies and cultures criticize and judge one another, and strive for dominance, whereas the Second-Tier observes this mechanism from above and takes a non-judgmental stance. Second-Tier takes into consideration all perspectives and juxtaposes them. We must include the previous stages for Yellow and Turquoise, as they do not simply vanish as we evolve.

Seldon intends to call forth the healthy aspects of Red. First, he attempts to unite the long-squabbling Anacreon and Thespis. The generations of animosity between these two cultures stem from a conspiracy organized by Emperor Cleon II. He values the master status of the kingdoms, that is, their noble warrior spirit, and encourages them to unite against the Empire. He desires to transform their Red instincts into a rational agreement between them. He endeavors to foster the emergence of a new stage of development for Anacreons and Thespins, which can successfully resolve some of the existing issues. He advocates placing rational thought above emotions. Seldon also utilizes the Green humanitarian aspirations of citizens to operate Foundation. He provides Orange scientists with a higher purpose, thereby paving the way for their entry into Green. In the final episode of the first season, he explains

that the Foundation “was never about curating knowledge; it was about curating people.” The integration of these three cultures in Outer Reach is part of his grand scheme. As a result, the Foundation survives the first crisis, and the alliance between these cultures will make them stronger.

Consequently, we could say that the series demonstrates the significance of a multi-perspectival approach. No culture or a value system is inherently evil; seeking the kernel of truth in all perspectives reveals the magnificent and kaleidoscopic nature of reality. As a Yellow problem-solver, Hari Seldon strives for the greater good and desires to engineer a “win:win:win” outcome. As stated by Beck and Cowan (284) “unless the greater good, the entire society, and the natural human Spiral are considered in negotiation, a simple and selfish win:win deal between only two parties will emerge.” For the sake of humanity, he seeks the ‘both and’ solution, rather than the ‘either or’ solution. Contrary to what we are accustomed to seeing in traditional science fiction (or fantasy) stories, destroying the evil empire is not the primary objective.

Religion and beliefs are also a major theme of the series. Luminism is the dominant religion in the galaxy, with a history of 15,000 years and approximately three trillion adherents. Cleon XIII perceives a threat to the Empire following the demise of the leader Proxima Opal. The candidate Zephyr Halima wishes to return to the Primary Octavo, a pre-Imperial Luminist doctrine which holds the belief that the soul is exclusive to individuated sentience. Therefore, if the religion returns to the text, the clones of the Genetic Dynasty could be deemed soulless.<sup>7</sup> This is emphasized by Cleon XIII’s statement; “If the galaxy comes to believe their leaders are less than rather than more than themselves, they may cease to follow.” Thus, he discovers the means to have Zephyr Halima murdered. Seldon has also predicted the dissidence of Luminism. The Seer Church, which is incredibly powerful on its homeworld Synnax, is a second traditional religion of the galaxy. The high-ranking members of the church deem science, technology, and analytical learning heretical. They closed universities and discredited mathematics. The church considers unbelievers to be infidels and even executes those who are interested in these matters. Despite the fact that both of these religions possess Purple characteristics, Luminism is closer to Blue because it is an organized religion. Observing the unhealthy aspects of Purple is possible within the Seer Church. Their reliance on tribalism increased their isolation and fear of outsiders and innovations. The inhabitants of Synnax are also hostile towards Trantor. From the perspective of an Orange, their beliefs are incomprehensible. Orange and Purple do not appear capable of fully accepting one another and continuing without conflict.

Hari Seldon, on the other hand, does not oppose or attempt to overcome religion. He considers the human need for a grand narrative to be crucial. He understands how religions have shaped the course of history. Another point is that no one is required to belong to their culture’s memetic center of gravity. As demonstrated by the case of Gaal Dornick, a

green individual may emerge from a Purple society. She can easily climb up the spiral ladder compared to others. As humans move up the ladder, they expand their consciousness and sense of self to include more individuals.

In the novel series, (and presumably in the second season), Hari Seldon establishes Scientism and advocates for science as a religion. The Foundation uses organized religion to spread its influence across the galaxy. This alteration initiates the transition of kingdoms from Red to Blue in order to serve the greater good. His primary objective is to give these people a sense of purpose. Choosing science over faith is not the only option, as the examples of Trantor and the Empire clearly demonstrate. Through *Foundation* and especially in the case of Hari Seldon, we are able to comprehend the value and utility of meta-thinking and meta-perspectives in resolving global issues. The series provides the opportunity to observe the system from an objective standpoint.

## Conclusion

Science fiction depicts worlds that appear distant and improbable, but it actually makes visible what we cannot perceive, even if it is right in front of us. It calls our habits, values, and the discourses we are subjected to into question, implying that they must be altered. Furthermore, there is an undeniable connection between speculative fiction and contemporary politics and cultures. The entire world is experiencing a ‘Seldon crisis’ at present. At this juncture, science fiction can help us model human interactions in new ways by allowing us to view our cultural and social conflicts from a different perspective. In this study, the long-awaited adaptation of Isaac Asimov’s *Foundation* series has been examined through the perspective of Spiral Dynamics.

Spiral Dynamics is an exceptional framework for comprehending where we have been, where we are, and where we are going. Through its lens, we can observe the evolution of the universe as a whole. It provides a clear outline for understanding current crises and conflicts among humans, cultures, and societies, as well as theoretical and practical solutions for the improvement of humanity. The model’s explanatory power coincides with the appeal of science fiction. According to Suvin, science fiction “presents syntagmatically developed possible worlds as models (more precisely as thought-experiments) or as totalizing and thematic metaphors” (Suvin 198). Both science fiction and Spiral Dynamics demonstrate that humans require a more systemic and integral approach to resolving conflicts, as opposed to seeking micro solutions and quick fixes.

*Foundation*, as a work of speculative fiction, contains a multitude of profound ideas for contemplation. It includes explanations of the past and present as well as forecasts for the future. Psychohistory becomes a symbol that we can use to comprehend the current state of

affairs. We humans need Yellow or higher perspectives that are adaptable and integrative to resolve complex problems and improve the world. Due to the interconnected nature of the global system, it is necessary to integrate multiple cultures. Each of the First-Tier stages of our civilization views the world through its own lens and attempts to impose its values on others. First-world nations, which are already in Orange or Green, have a tendency to criticize and judge third-world nations for being too religious, authoritarian, or simply less developed. Red and Blue cultures demonize Orange and Green societies because of their domination. Worldviews and cultures are dependent on survival, as demonstrated by Spiral Dynamics. Not only should we recognize the significance of physical survival, but also cultural survival, also known as the survival of the self-image (ideologies, religions, nationalities, ethnicity, etc.). Every culture has both positive and negative aspects, and Spiral Dynamics emphasizes their interconnectedness. To accelerate the ‘psycho-social-cultural’ evolution, humanity requires meta, nuanced, and multi-perspectival thinking. Spiral Wizardry is capable of monitoring the entire spiral and providing solutions to evolve beyond Tier-One. With the caveat that, no individual is intelligent enough to resolve all conflicts on their own. The integral approach must be embraced and internalized by the majority of individuals, which can only be accomplished through collective effort. In addition, models and concepts must be transcended in order to make the transition to Turquoise.<sup>8</sup> Spiral Dynamics is itself a Yellow stage model, and it seems inevitable that it will eventually need to be transcended.

As demonstrated by the plot of *Foundation*, science fiction stories help us understand that the world we live in is not solid and unchanging, and that despite the challenges we face, our lives can be reimagined and reconstructed in accordance with more altruistic and morally superior principles.<sup>9</sup> They teach us how to navigate the profound disparities that exist between cultures, and they have the potential to lead us to both growth and healing.

## End Notes

1. *Spiral Dynamics in Action Humanity’s Master Code* (2018) covers a variety of practical examples. Don Beck himself has played a significant role in coordinating the design of post-apartheid South Africa. There are also numerous applications in major industries, education, commercial interests, sports, and athletics.
2. Other essential developmental models include the following; Abraham Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs”, Jean Piaget’s “Theory of Cognitive Development”, Susanne Cook-Greuter’s “Ego Development Theory”, and lastly Ken Wilber’s “Integral Theory”.
3. To survive in this context refers to the survival of both the physical and intellectual/conceptual selves.
4. To mention a few of Yellow thinkers and scientists; Abraham Maslow, Clare W. Graves, Fritjof Capra, Noam Chomsky, Ervin László, Paul Feyerabend, and Niels Bohr. Beck and Cowan (47)

give some examples of Yellow level of thinking, such as “Carl Sagan’s astronomy, Peter Senge’s organizations, Stephen Hawking’s *Brief History of Time*, W. Edwards Deming’s objectives, Paul Newman’s version of stardom, chaos theory.”

5. Every stage has a memetic ‘center of gravity’. Nobody or no society is entirely Blue or Orange, but they predominantly manifest one of them. Additionally, Turquoise should not be considered as the ideal stage and Beige is the worst as well.
6. Mason (Practical Integral) notes that from the discovery of the double-helix model of DNA structure to the development of technologies that enable the modification of genomic sequences, ‘playing around with life’ is further evidence of Orange’s power.
7. For nearly four centuries, the Empire has been ruled by clones of Cleon I, known as the Genetic Dynasty. At any given time, there are three Cleons living in the palace; Brother Dawn, a young emperor-in-training; Brother Day, the active emperor; and Brother Dusk, the elderly, retired emperor.
8. In the *Foundation* novel series, the concept of Galaxia corresponds to Turquoise. It is a potential future state for the humanity in which all life and even organic matter incorporates in to one single organism. It closely resembles Ken Wilber’s Third-Tier, kosmocentric, “Unitive Self” concept.
9. Other major science fiction sagas that can be analyzed using Spiral Dynamics and through which we can contemplate the human condition include *Dune* (by Frank Herbert), Iain M. Banks’ *Culture* series, and the *Star Trek* franchise. To give a brief example, *Star Trek* is quite amenable to analysis, as its numerous races and species (Klingons [Red], Romulans [Blue], Cardassians [Blue], Ferengi [Orange], humans [Yellow], and Q race [Turquoise]) demonstrate.

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