

חדשות האגודה – יוני 2022 The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

תל אביב: מועדון הקריאה יעסוק בספר "שנת המבול" מאת מרגרט אטווד. המועדון יתקיים ביום חמישי, 6.23 ב-20:00. המועדון יתקיים באופן היברידי, בדירה באזור רמת אביב וכן בזום. לקבלת המיקום יש להירשם במייל של [דפנה קירש](#). קישור לזום יתפרסם סמוך לאירוע [בדף האירוע בפייסבוק](#). מנחה: הדס זעירא.

ירושלים: לפרטים על המפגשים של המועדון הקריאה ניתן להצטרף לקבוצת הפייסבוק: [מועדון הקריאה הירושלמי של האגודה](#), או ליצור קשר במייל עם מרכזת המועדון בירושלים - [גלי אחיטוב](#), ולהצטרף לקבוצת הוואטס'אפ של המועדון.

כל האירועים של האגודה מופיעים בלוח האירועים (שפע אירועים מעניינים, הרצאות, סדנאות, מפגשים ועוד) לקבלת עדכונים שוטפים על מפגשי מועדון הקריאה ברחבי הארץ ניתן להצטרף לרשימת התפוצה או [בדף האגודה בפייסבוק](#).

Society information is available (in Hebrew) at the Society's site: <http://www.sf-f.org.il>

This month's roundup:

- More Yiddish-related SF material dedicated to my dear departed father, David Botwinik (ע"ה – o'h)
- Book review: "More Zion's Fiction" Part 5: Hila Benyovits-Hoffman's "Five Four Three Two One"

Our usual, interesting tidbits from the Web.

Readers reacted very well to Sheldon Teitelbaum's reprinted article in our last issue. We'd love to see more of his articles regarding SF.

– Your editor, Leybl Botwinik

**** Special bonus from our good friend George Phillies ****

[LB: George sent me a PDF (attached with this mailing) of 55 book reviews that readers will certainly find very interesting and useful in helping them discover enjoyable reading]

The N3F(*) Review of Books Incorporating Prose Bono
Professor George Phillies, D.Sc., Editor
May 2022

Fiction

- 2 ... A Long Time Until Now by Michael Z. Williamson ... Review by Trevor Denning
- 3 ... A Princess of Mars by Edgar Rice Burroughs ... Review by Caroline Furlong
- 5 ... A Wizard's Guide to Defensive Baking by T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon) ... Review by Tom Feller
- 6 ... Across the Green Grass Fields by Seanan McGuire ... Review by Perry Middlemiss
- 6 ... Alexis Carew series by J.A. Sutherland ... Review by Jim McCoy
- 8 ... Beat The Devils by Josh Weiss ... Review by Jason P. Hunt
- 9 ... Chaos on Catnet by Naomi Kritzer ... Review by Tom Feller
- 9 ... Dark Sojourns by Beth H. Adams ... Review by Heath Row
- 10 ... Doctor Who and the Deadly Assassin by Terrance Dicks ... Review by Heath Row
- 11 ... Drosselmeyer: Curse of the Rat King ... Review by Trevor Denning
- 13 ... The Einstein Intersection by Samuel R. Delaney ... Review by Perry Middlemiss
- 13 ... Escape From the Future by Paul Clayton ... Review by Michael Gallagher
- 16 ... Fireheart Tiger by Alette de Bodard ... Review by Perry Middlemiss
- 16 ... Five Hard and Crunchy SF Tales by Michèle Laframboise ... Review by Robert Runté
- 17 ... Foundation by Isaac Asimov ... Review by Heath Row
- 19 ... Foundation and Empire by Isaac Asimov ... Review by Heath Row
- 19 ... The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood ... Review by Heath Row
- 21 ... Jaguar Rising by Amanda S. Green ... Review by Pat Patterson
- 22 ... Light Chaser by Peter F. Hamilton and Gareth L. Powell ... Review by Perry Middlemiss
- 22 ... Light Unto Another World by Yakov Merkin ... Review by Caroline Furlong

- 24 ... Lord of Light by Roger Zelazny ... Review by Perry Middlemiss
 24 ... Magnetic Brain by Volsted Gridban ... Review by Heath Row
 25 ... Marymae and the Nightmare Man by A. M. Freeman ... Review by Caroline Furlong
 27 ... Mission: Interplanetary by A.E. van Vogt ... Review by Heath Row
 28 ... Monster Hunter International by Larry Correia ... Review by Declan Finn
 30 ... The Mummy of Monte Cristo ... Review by Trevor Denning
 32 ... My Luck by Mel Todd ... Review by Declan Finn
 34 ... The Necessity of Stars by E. Catherine Tobler ... Review by Perry Middlemiss
 34 ... A Psalm for the Wild-Built by Becky Chambers ... Review by Perry Middlemiss
 35 ... Responsibility of the Crown by G. Scott Huggins ... Review by Pat Patterson
 36 ... The Ruin of Kings by Jenn Lyons ... Review by Tom Feller
 36 ... Servants of War by Larry Correia and Steve Diamond ... Review by JE Tabor
 38 ... The Star Beast by Robert Heinlein ... Review by Chris Nuttall
 42 ... Thunder God of Mars: A Superhero Prose Novel ... Review by Trevor Denning
 43 ... We Dare: Semper Paratus: An Anthology of the Apocalypse edited by Jamie Ibson ... Review by Pat Patterson
 45 ... When Valor Must Hold Edited by Rob Howell and Chris Kennedy ... Review by Pat Patterson
 46 ... Year of the Unicorn by Andre Norton ... Review by Caroline Furlong

Non-Fiction

- 49 ... Fandom: Confidential by Ron Frantz ... Review by Heath Row
 50 ... My Memoirs of the Dark Shadows Conventions by Anthony Taylor ... Review by Heath Row
 51 ... The Politics of Fandom by Hannah Mueller ... Review by Heath Row

Prose Bono

- 53 ... Character Analysis: A Tale of Two People by Chris Nuttall
 54 ... Trimming Out the Story by Cedar Sanderson

FINIS ... 55

N3F^(*) - The National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F or NFFF) is one of the world's oldest science fiction fandom organizations. The organization was founded in April 1941[1] when all science fiction, horror, and fantasy literature was lumped into one category called "fantasy." The group actively encourages the development of writers, editors, and artists. (from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Fantasy_Fan_Federation) Website: <https://tnfff.org/>

More Yiddish-related SF material

Velvl Chernin's Yiddish SF book "Faktazye" (2022) – Part I

- Reviewed by Leybl Botwinik

Although we had Yoel Matveyev's review of the book in the past issue (CyberCozen May, 2022), I'd like to present some of my own observations and thoughts.

So, I finally hit a "science fiction" story, the 4th in the collection, in Velvl Chernin's new Yiddish SF book of his original short stories "Faktazye". What this means, is that the first 3 stories are actually forms of fantasy and don't live up to the premise of 'science' or 'speculation' that we expect in an "SF" story: no aliens, time-machines, space exploration, etc.; no parallel/multi-universes and no alternate histories.

That having been said, Chernin's 28-page long 2nd story concerns a very, very long-lived genie, and his 61-page long 3rd story touches on a historical account (a diary) of the holy land in the years 1840-1843 that sounds quite plausible and might be close to a parallel history, if not alternative history – though nothing major/earth-shaking seems to take place – It's just a fascinating account of life at the time.

Chernin, however, is very consistent in his presentation and contents, as he describes it in the preface to his book.

He says that:

- well known Jewish SF writers (e.g. Asimov, Lem) **did not** write in Yiddish (even though some of them knew enough to probably attempt it)
- and that, the stories in his book are likely more 'Jewish' than those collected in anthologies such as: "*Wandering Stars: An Anthology of Jewish Fantasy and Science Fiction edited by Jack Dunn*"
- and that, "Yiddish" is featured in his stories as a 'main character' whether as the language of communication, or via the various references (overt and covert) to Yiddish literature
- and that, there are numerous references throughout the stories from Jewish liturgic literature, including quotes from the Bible, the prayer books, etc.

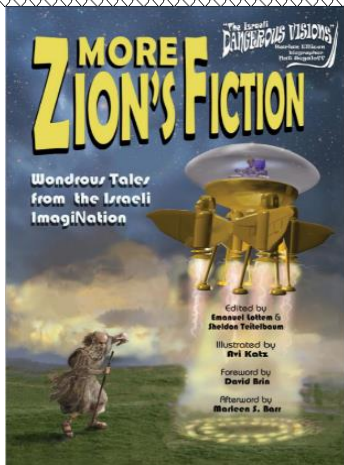
Now half-way through the 277-page book, I just finished reading his 4th story "*Chapter of the Journeys of Benjamin the Fifth* - פרק מסעות בנימין החמישי" – a space-travel story. It's about an 'Outrider' – for lack of a better term – whose current task is to seek out a nice planet for holding a Yiddish summer course. He visits the far-away planet Tseres, whose Jewish population has set up various shtetls [villages] named after the hometown birthplaces of various Yiddish literary greats, such as Peretz (from Zamesc) and Bialik (from Volozhin) – each sporting a museum of that famous personage.

The story has many references to the literates, and much tongue-in-cheek humour. Some of the ideas are very interesting. Some of the inventiveness vis-à-vis

technology and such is very refreshing. I must however state that, unfortunately, his style is rather heavy and not easy to get through. This 4th story could – in my opinion – have been shortened considerably and fine-tuned.

For example, there is an entire section covering a Jewish ritual that Jews practise once a month – the blessing of the Moon. Chernin tells us about how Rabbis on other planets – including on the Moon itself – deal with that issue. For example, on the Moon, they bless the Earth... and there are some examples from other planets' Rabbis. I believe that this could all have been cut out (and maybe used in some other story).

I do look forward to discovering more SF-ish examples in the remaining 6 stories.



MORE ZION'S FICTION – Review #05

Five Four Three Two One – by **Hila Benyovits-Hoffman**
(e-Book: p107-141) Translated by Rehavia Berman

Another great story. The premise is, that in the future of the 23rd century, overpopulation has forced the government to allow families to have a child only via a lottery. However, they also tried a different method in parallel – an experiment – to maintain genetic matter: Splice 5 DNAs into one fetus, such that once in each 23 hours the child will transform into one of the 5 humans. This 5-way being is dubbed a Hydra. It takes about 1 hour for the transformation to occur, because some of the genetic details cause the body to slightly shift into another shape, but one thing stays the same: in the case of the story's Hydra, the 2 boys and 3 girls that occupy the body, are all in a

<http://zionfiction.com/>

female body... with the related repercussions, in addition to all other issues of 'living' only once in 5 days, while the world around goes forward. – Thus, relationships with other people are also affected. The story covers one such family of siblings and both their personal and their common issues, and how they communicate by a logbook that contains messages from the previous day's sibling's experiences, etc. Fascinating idea!

Note: There is nothing inherently Jewish or Israeli about the story, other than the names of the people that are all common Israeli names like Avi, Orna, Doron, Yoel, etc.

Oh, and I love the artwork by Avi Katz:



The story also reminded me of the 2017 movie “*What happened to Monday?* [AKA *Seven Sisters*]” – from the point of view of overpopulation and allowing families only one child.

From Wikipedia:

“*The plot follows a family of identical septuplets (seven genetically identical girls) who live in a world where due to overpopulation each household is allowed only one child.*”.

Obviously very different stories, but there is still a kind of kinship in how governments may deal with overpopulation issues in the future...

Look forward to more reviews of “*More Zion’s Fiction*”

in our upcoming issues

Fun from the Web

- **How People From 1955 Imagined Technology of the Future**
<https://gizmodo.com/how-people-from-1955-imagined-technology-of-the-future-1848828377>
- **Why have aliens never visited Earth? Scientists have a disturbing answer**
<https://www.space.com/alien-civilizations-doomed-to-collapse>
- **4 hostile alien civilizations may lurk in the Milky Way, a new study suggests**
<https://www.space.com/malicious-alien-civilizations-odds>
- **The 3 biggest constellations will be on full display this June. Here's how to see them**
<https://www.space.com/big-constellations-hydra-virgo-ursa-major>
- **What's next for UFO studies after landmark congressional hearing?**
<https://www.space.com/future-ufo-research-after-congress-hearing>
- **The 'twin paradox' shows us what it really means for time to be relative**
<https://www.space.com/time-is-relative-twin-paradox>
- **The Coolest—and Most Frightening—Spacewalks in History**
<https://gizmodo.com/history-of-spacewalks-nasa-space-station-1849036189>

TV&MOVIES:

- The best sci-fi movies and TV shows to stream on Disney Plus in June
<https://www.space.com/disney-plus-best-space-scifi-streaming.html>
- Star Wars: The High Republic's Writers Look to Its Past—and Its Future
<https://gizmodo.com/star-wars-the-high-republic-phase-2-cavan-scott-charles-1848990412>
- 'Star Wars: The Bad Batch' charges back to Disney Plus for Season 2 in September
<https://www.space.com/star-wars-the-bad-batch-season-2-trailer>
- Watch the 1st trailer for 'Andor' on Disney Plus from Star Wars Celebration 2022!
<https://www.space.com/andor-star-wars-teaser-trailer-disney-plus>
- See the new trailer 'Star Wars Jedi: Survivor' coming in 2023
<https://www.space.com/star-wars-jedi-survivor-trailer>
- A once and future Mars: Finding the space history in 'For All Mankind' season 3
<https://www.space.com/for-all-mankind-season-3-space-history>
- 'For All Mankind' season 3 trailer sets up three-way space race to Mars
<https://www.space.com/for-all-mankind-season-3-trailer-apple-tv-plus>
- The Matrix movies, ranked worst to best
<https://www.space.com/the-matrix-movies-ranked-worst-to-best>
- Best Star Trek: The Original Series episodes
<https://www.space.com/best-star-trek-the-original-series-episodes>
- Enter an abandoned alien outpost in 'Night Sky' with this exclusive clip from Amazon Prime
<https://www.space.com/night-sky-exclusive-clip-amazon-prime-video>
- 'The Orville' Season 3 full trailer is here (June 2 debut on Hulu)
<https://www.space.com/the-orville-season-3-full-trailer-hulu-premiere-date>

GAMES

- Everything about Starfield (RPG): Release window, platforms, trailers, & more
<https://www.space.com/everything-we-know-about-starfield>



We'd love to hear your thoughts on the above topics and with your OK, we may publish them!

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