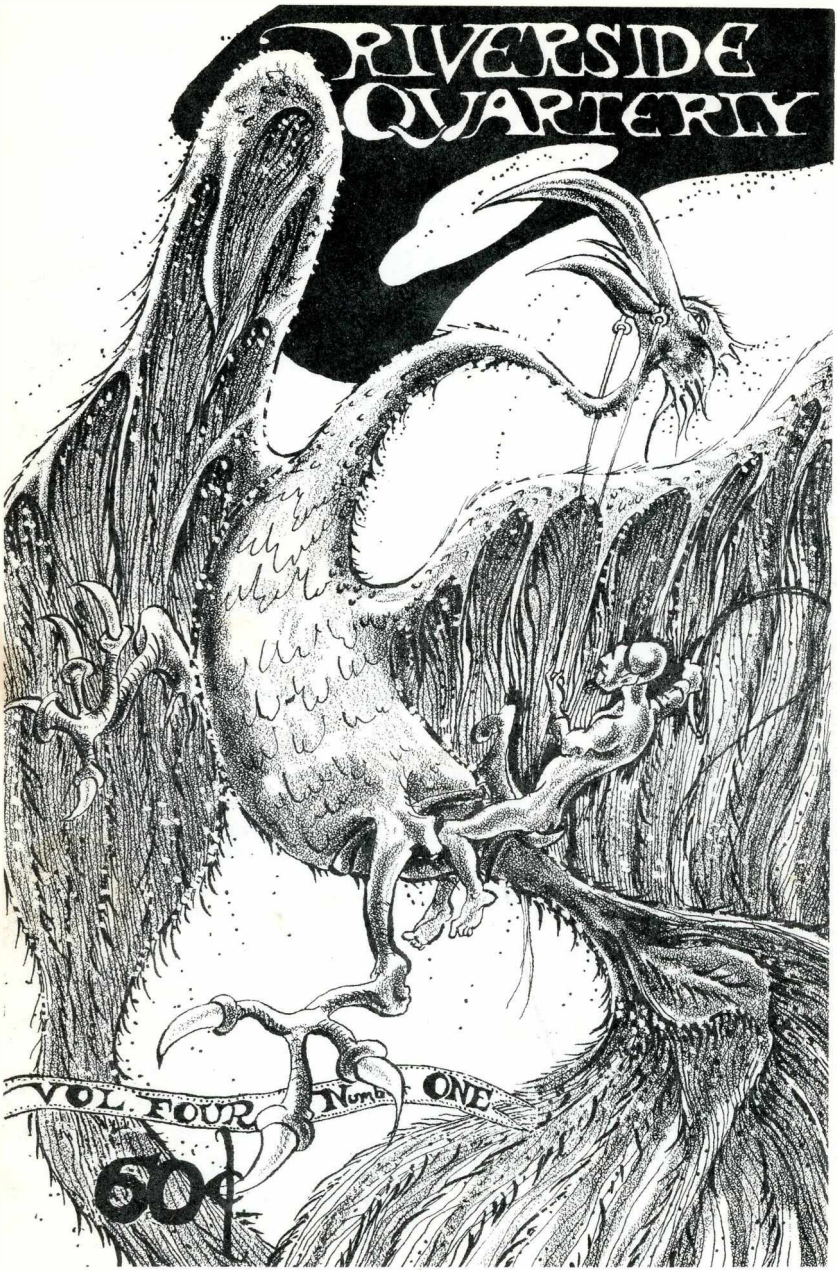
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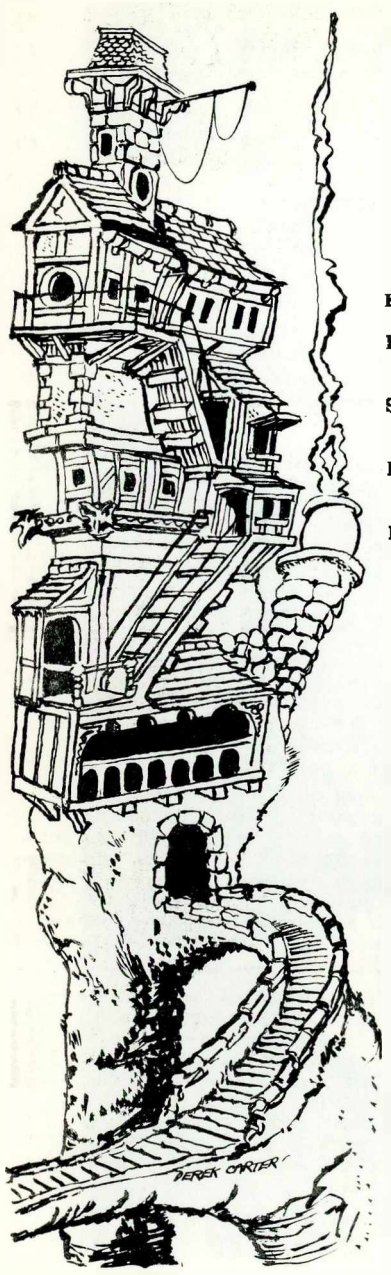

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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RQ MISCELLANY

THE WOOSTER EXPRESS

#1--From Middle Earth to New Jersey

A consistent long shot among U.S. fanzines is Tom Clareson's Extrapolation (Box 2515 Wooster College, Ohio 44691; $1.25/year), although its Dec. '68 issue, with Dick West's "Annotated Bibliography of Tolkien Criticism," is of interest primarily to LotR readers. Big Surprise this time was Mr. West's citation of RQ after his statement that fanzines, save for Ed Meskys' Niekas, would not be included--but possibly this listing resulted from my phone call to tell Mr. West I was sending the Yiddish Mafia after him. (For more information on this organisation, generally known as the ADL--Anti-Defecation League--write to John J. Pierce, Liason Officer, 275 McMane Ave., Berkeley Heights, New Jersey 07922.)

#2--From Insight into Nullity

The May '69 issue contains "About Five Thousand One Hundred and Seventy Five Words," by Samuel Delany, from which I quote about thirty, on complaints about "anti-heroes" in modern fiction: "Badly-written adventure fiction is our true anti-literature. Its protagonists are our real anti-heroes. They move through un-real worlds amidst all sorts of noise and...perceive nothing meaningful or meaningfully."

Much longer was the symposium, "S.F. and the New Mythology," concerning which the wisest comments, from the audience, were by Bob Silverberg. First there had been Fred Pohl on waste disposal, preceded by Isaac Asimov on moon-based explorers, preceded by Darko Suvin, who said that "Soviet s.f. is almost unknown in the U.S."--and whose talk illustrated why it ought to remain so. But finally there was Mr. Silverberg with his classic understatement about "the irrelevance of much that has been said ... here today."

In any case, the panel was useful in showing the advantage of written over spoken words, for the reader simply can skip the tedious irrelevancies of the panelists and go directly to the explication of why their speeches were "degrading to s.f. as literature." The issue as a whole also was valuable because it showed the possibilities of the Sam Delany literary type of approach by contrast to the vacuity that results from conceiving s.f. as "that branch of prose writing which deals with the perils of pollution and whose whole function is ..didactic, hortatory." Mr. Silverberg continued:

> The achievement of s.f. is something...more exciting than prediction alone. We all know this...except perhaps Dr. Asimov, who is...now given over to science writing entirely and [is] perhaps unaware of present literary currents. The rest of us.. are well aware of the larger issues, but you [addressing the other two panelists] haven't said anything about [them.] All you did was talk about the evils that our environment is preparing for us, or, in the case of Darko, about s.f. in... the socialist world--and how it functions as political commentary. There is more to s.f. than that.

To be fair, I must note that Dr. Asimov had been given to understand that the subject was "S.F. and Science." I do not know the excuses of the other panelists.

(continued on page 75)

KURD LASSWITZ:

A German Pioneer of Science Fiction

by

Franz Rottensteiner

#1 -- ON TWO PLANETS

On Two Planets (Auf zwei Planeten) was one of the best liked German science-fiction novels, selling seventy thousand copies between 1897, when it was first published, and 1930, the year of its last pre-war printing. Shortly after publication it was translated into Danish, Norwegian, Dutch, Swedish, and Czech; at the turn of the century it was probably the best known European novel of space fiction. (Curiously enough, it was never translated into English, and so had almost no direct impact on modern science fiction.)

Scientists applauded the novel, which, in Anthony Boucher's words, "probably had more influence upon factual science than any other work of science fiction" (F&SF, July 1955, 102). And Wiley Ley reports in his Rockets and Space Travel that in 1927 he met an elderly gentleman in Berlin who had learned German just so he could read Lasswitz's book.

Ironically, the best article on Lasswitz--despite some minor factual errors and a few misinterpretations--was written by an American and published in a British journal. It is Edwin Kretzman's "German Technological Utopias of the Pre-War Period" in Annals of Science (Oct. 1938). In two recent scholarly works, Herbert Schwonke's "From the Political Novel to Science Fiction" and Hans-Jurgen Krysmanski's The Utopian Method, both writers profess a liking for Lasswitz, mention that he is the German author closest to modern American science fiction, and then proceed to ignore him. Perhaps this is because German doctoral theses are concerned more with philosophical foundations than with evaluations of individual works.

Lasswitz's thousand page novel begins with three explorers, Josef Saltner, Hugo Torm, and Grunthe (who seems to lack a first name) reaching the North Pole in a balloon. But the Martians have arrived first, and the balloon is destroyed by an "abaric field," generated by the Martian polar station. Torm escapes across the ice, but his companions are captured and brought to Mars.

Later the Martians return to Earth, where their spaceship is fired on by a British man-of-war and two of their crew taken prisoner. This pair is eventually rescued, but the incident has produced factions on Mars. The Philo-Baten ("Ba" meaning "Earth") wish to treat humans as equals, but the anti-Baten consider them as mere animals, whose planet should be exploited for its raw materials.

The Martians again come to Earth, this time with an entire fleet, which destroys the British navy. The Turks, no longer fearing British sea power, massacre all foreigners in their country; this results in a European fleet appearing in the Dardanelles and shelling the Turkish capital. The Martians, shocked at all this violence, decide that humans are indeed savages and turn Western Europe into a protectorate.

Meanwhile, on Mars, the anti-Baten party expands, as does the Terrestrial League of Humankind, in which Saltner and Grunthe play a leading role. While acknowledging Martian cultural superiority, the League disagrees with the Martian education by force and thinks that mankind must develop without outside help.

However, the anti-Batens win, and the Mantians now extend their protectorate over Russia and the United States. Then the humans revolt and in a fleet of airships, copied from the Martian craft, attack the polar stations and the Martian artificial satellites hovering above them. The Martians, of course, could destroy the Earth by bombarding it from space, but genocide is repugnant to them. Eventually a peace treaty is signed and Earth becomes a world-state, with Martians and Terrestrials working closely together.

Thus reason wins on both planets.

The writing is plausible, with the role of individual people not being ridiculously exaggerated as in many later works of science fiction. Grunthe, Torm, and Saltner play important roles, but they are not the prime movers of state (whom we never see directly). But there are structural weaknesses. After a carefully detailed and convincing picture of Mars, Grunthe and Saltner leave the planet permanently. The last part of the novel then turns into a satire on contemporary social and political conditions on Earth, but while skilfully done it is a disappointment after our glimpse of the alien world. And the scenes of flight and destruction are hardly convincing: Lasswitz did not excel in description of physical actions.

The greatest weakness of the book is its characterisation: not only the morally superior Martians, but also the main human characters are so idealised that it is difficult to tell them apart. Also, Earth's final sudden change in attitude is not convincing: after witnessing the petty quarrels and selfishness of humans, we find it hard to believe that Terrestrial countries would so suddenly accept a world league of nations.

Nevertheless, this story of colonialism in reverse, during the age of imperialism and Manifest Destiny, represents an important advance.

Lasswitz wrote very little "technological" science fiction, his main concern being personal conduct rather than practical scientific applications. Nevertheless his scientific prophecies were astonishingly accurate.

Most striking is Lasswitz's anticipation of the space station, his satellite having the form of a wheel and serving, in the author's phrase, as a "railway station to Mars." Instead of rotating around Earth like our modern satellites, it is held immobile 6,356 kilometres above the pole, by big electromagnets powered by solar energy. Between the satellite and ground station vehicles are propelled by a field of artificial gravity (an "abaric" field).

Sam Moskowitz[2] has taken great pains to show that an American writer, Edward Everett Hale (1822-1909) has priority with his story "The Brick Moon," in Atlantic Monthly (Oct.-Dec. 1869). Hale describes a satellite made of bricks, which is planned as a navigational aid to ships; the satellite is accidentally launched while the labourers are still inside--and the story then shows how the workers survive in free space. But while this author does forecast the navigation satellite, there is no indication that he was thinking about space travel. Hence we can say that Lawwwitz was the first to embody in fictional form the idea of a satellite as a stopping platform en route to the planets.[3]

In his story Lasswitz accepts the conventional Martian canals, which are used to transport water from the poles. Mars is connected by rolling roadways, each of which consists of strips traveling at different velocities, with the greatest velocity at the middle. In addition, there is food synthesised from inorganic matter, photo-electric cells to open doors, and pills that remove the necessity of sleeping.

Lasswitz's Martians are thoroughgoing Kantians, who differentiate between personal inclination and duty, and never allow the first to interfere with the second. The most convincing character in the novel is Ell, son of a human mother and a Martian who had been stranded on Earth years before the invasion. Despite his love for Isma, Torm's wife, Ell does everything possible to rescue her husband (who has fled across the ice), thus showing the moral discipline of which Martians are capable.

The leading terrestrial characters are also Kantians. Grunthe, for example, would like to stay and see the wonders of Mars; but he considers it his duty to return to Earth--although he knows his story of the Martian invasion will not be believed.

Because of his Kantian outlook Lasswitz does not care about the organisation of society: he is interested only in the individual. Once the individual improves morally, believed Lasswitz, social improvement will be automatic. Mars is a pluralistic society; on this planet there are monarchies and republics, capitalism and socialism, with each citizen having the right to live under the system he likes best.

Naturally, the Martians find that conditions on Earth are quite different from this Kantian ideal, with terrestrials being "...engaged in a furious fight for living and enjoyment, with ethic and aesthetic ideals not clearly differentiated from theoretical statements..."

As explained by a German character, Grunthe, the Martians can train their superior weapons on human beings only because of human moral inferiority:

> ...no Martian is able to press the button of the nihilite apparatus if a human stands against him with a firm, moral will, a will that knows nothing but the desire to do what is good. But these Englishmen--and we are not any better --considered only their own interests, their specifically national advantages, not the dignity of humanity as a whole...

On Two Planets, then, is a fine though sometimes slow-moving adventure novel that tries to embody a philosophical notion in the action. We can only speculate whether H.G. Wells had read this story. Wells's cavorite is similar to our author's stellite; but his bacilli (and of course his Martians) are just the opposite of Lasswitz's, which merely spread a rather harmless Martian infection on Earth.

#2 -- PICTURES FROM THE FUTURE

Lasswitz's first collection of shorter stories, Pictures From the Future (Bilder aus der Zukunft) was published in 1878. The two novelettes in this volume differ from anything he wrote later --each having a melodramatic plot, a prevalence of technology, and frequent variations in tone from jest to sobriety. The first (a reprint of a story published seven years earlier, when the author was twenty three) was "To the Zero-Point of Being: A Story of the Year 2371."

Aromasia Duftemann Ozodes is a performer on the ododion, or smell piano, an instrument that gives off exquisite odours to the sound of music. Her fiance is Oxygen Warm-Blasius, one of a party of rationalists (Nuchterne) who think little of her art. Oxygen quarrels with the poet Magnet Reimert--Oberton (and with Aromasia) over the future status of art; Aromasia is so hurt by her lover's conduct that she and Magnet make fun of him in a written parody. For revenge, Oxygen changes some cylinders in Aromasia's ododion, so that when she begins to play, it gives off a horrid stench. The audience flees in panic, fire breaks out, and Aromasia burns to death. The repentant Oxygen flees in his space ship; on his departure Magnet writes a poem in which the lovers finally collide with a cosmic gas and thus assist in the formation of a new sun.

That Lasswitz did not take the story too seriously is suggested by its proper names and by various speeches, as when Magnet cries: "O great Aromasia, the most exalted woman ododist of the 24th century! The cells of my brain are vibrating for you; every fibre of my spine quivers for you! Just as the meadows long for the morning air...so the delicate membrances of my nose vibrate in harmony with the odours of your ododion!"

But for all his jesting Lasswitz had a more serious purpose: to show the conflict between reason and emotion or, more precisely, between reason alone and a blending of reason and emotion. Oxygen is a pure rationalist: his party claims "that only by the furthering of reason is progress...possible, that intellectual development...can free mankind from its passions and perfect its moral responses." He also believes that science will make art obsolete, with psychologists taking over the role of artists. "We will show how to stimulate the brain directly, so that it will experience the same emotions that you now...achieve so laboriously...by your art."

Magnet, on the other hand, believes that "...all this theoretical cognition is powerless against the elemental forces of the will to survive..."[5] Despite his love for science, he believes that emotional values should determine human actions.

The second story in this volume is "Against the Law of the World: A Story of the Year 3877." Its beginning is that of Huxley's Brave New World minus the test-tube babies. The director of a school is explaining to a visitor that the children enter at the age of five and leave at the age of nine, with their brains being stimulated by electric currents to make certain thought processes easier for them. Lasswitz does not think that this method will enable the children to acquire knowledge without studying:

> "It would be a wrong picture if you thought the brain would accumulate knowledge as a glass is filled with wine; rather, a kind of schema is developed which accords with certain processes of our consciousness, just as the dancer, the swimmer do preliminary exercises, after which the muscular movements become easier."

The whole idea is based upon Gustav Fechner's theory of psycho-physics: that for every psychological process there is a physiological process in the brain corresponding to it; therefore by stimulating certain parts of the brain, one can create the desired thoughts and emotions.

Lasswitz also anticipated Huxley's alpha, beta, and gamma types. Man is so complex that a division of work is necessary --and the scientist, Atom, speculates that this differentiation may become more pronounced in the future. In the words of two other characters in the story:

> "If I have understood Atom correctly, he is thinking that the next step in the evolution of man is one in which the various activities, the various tasks and the various organs which are now united in a single individual, will be distributed among various individuals..."
>
> "Very good," Proprion laughed, "you think there also will be special people for thinking, special people for feeling, special people for working, and so on?"

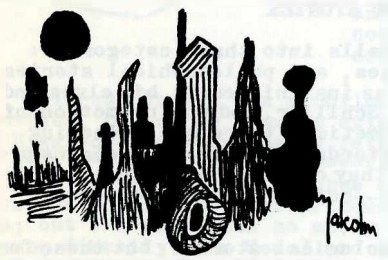
The application of this science of the brain also leads to development of the "brain-organ" (Gehirnorgel) that can convey the desired moods and feelings directly.[6] (Ödiodonics, however, has become obsolete by 3877, since most people have lost their sense of smell.)

Sinister applications of such a brain-organ (by thought-police for example) didn't occur to Lasswitz, whose primary interest was new art forms, such as a taste art in On Two Planets or a brain mirror, in the story of the same title, used to create a new art in which "the very soul of the artist paints."[7]

"Against the Law of the World" contains many other inventions: a substance called "diaphot" which confers on living things the refraction index of air, thus making them invisible, a computing machine for the mechanical solution of equations,[8] and underground tunnels connecting America and Europe. (These tunnels do not follow the Earth's curvature, but are perfectly straight, so that their mid-points are nearer the earth's centre than their ends. In these tunnels, cars are propelled by gravity through a vacuum.)

Lyrika, an artist on the brain organ, is in love with the botanist Clotylede. Atom, the villain (who naturally wishes Lyrika for himself) persuades the mathematician Functionata to subject the proposed marriage to a mathematical analysis; she finds that if Clotylede marries Lyrika he will die in exactly 6237 days from dissolution of his brain tissue. The analysis consists in tracing back the lovers' ancestors until a mutual progenitor can be found. In this case it is a man named Schulze, who lived in the nineteenth century and disappeared without a trace, with his disappearance being the ultimate reason why Clotyledo's marriage to Lyrika will cause his death.

Kretzman (op. cit., 423) says that this is a parody of the theory of evolution. Actually, it is a lampoon on the genealogical-historical method employed by the German nobility of that time. In his story "Autobiographical Studies"(in another collection) Lasswitz also makes fun of this method:



You begin before your birth... by considering yourself the product of a biological development you will be able to deduce your own personal attributes from those of your ancestors, and this the better the less you know about them. That is the secret of the genealogical-historical method...This point of view is of high ethical value: what we once received from our ancestors we return to them--thankfully. They have created us and we create them again. But we are their betters: they created us according to their nature; we create them as we please.

(One character in this story traces his ancestors back to the lowest sea-organism of the Laurentian period, our author showing at this point more humour than God usually bestows on any single German.)

To prevent her lover's death, Lyrika disappears from his life by stealing Atom's diaphot and becoming invisible. Atom suspects Lyrika of the theft and hides the rest of diaphot in a grotto far beneath the earth's surface. For diaphot wears off, and when Lyrika comes to get more, he intends to take her prisoner. But she eludes him, and there ensues a pursuit through an earth tunnel and across two continents.

At last Lyrika falls into the sea, from which she is saved by Clotyledo, who had come to inspect a coffin found there. The occupant of this coffin is none other than his ancestor, Mr. Schulze, who is then awakened from the suspended animation that had preserved him through the centuries. The obstacle to their marriage being removed, Clotyledo and Lyrika carry out their original nuptial plans; while Atom uses a tunnel that points toward Earth's centre as a space cannon, a la Jules Verne, to shoot himself into the sun.

Except for radar (which Hugo Gernsback in 1911 was in a much better position to predict than Lasswitz in 1878) most of the ideas from Ralph 124C41+ are already here in Lasswitz: the same tunnels, flying machines, and pleasure resorts; and the same abduction (or attempted abduction) of a beautiful maiden. Each villain also used an invisibility device, although the basic principles are different. (Lasswitz also anticipates the "sleep school" of Brave New World by by fifty years and Gernsback's hypnobioscope by thirty years.) There is no interplanetary background in Lasswitz's story, but this Gernsback might have derived from On Two Planets. It seems likely, then, that Gernsback, who spent his youth in Luxenbourg and could read German, derived most of his early ideas from Lasswitz.

Aside from Gernsback, however, there seems to have been no English-speaking author who was inspired by Pictures from the Future. The influence of this volume on German authors has also been small--a result, perhaps, of German science-fiction publishing being restricted to books and of the author's failure to have his works reprinted, except for a small second edition in 1879. Since his other books were reprinted in many editions, we conclude that Lasswitz didn't think very highly of these humourous early efforts.

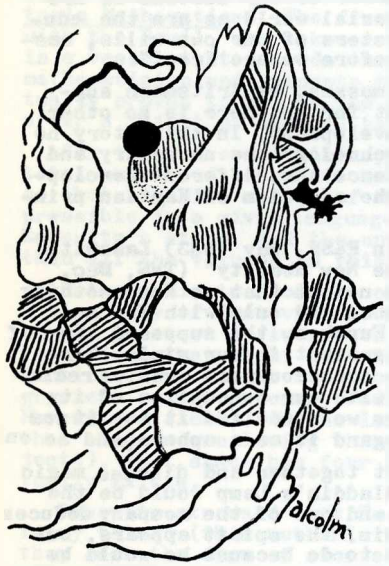
#3 -- THE SHORT STORIES

Lasswitz's shorter fiction[10] falls into three categories: fairy tales, technological stories, and philosophical stories. The first group can be dismissed as insignificant: his elves and fairies merely talk about Kant, Schiller, and the promotion of the German educational ideal. Sometimes there is a redeeming touch of satire, as in "Little Waterdrop," where two Germans profess a liking for nature because they can see the features of Bismark and Moltke in the landscape--but generally the stories are just sentimental.

More interesting are the technological stories; but these form only a minority and again are mere expositions of ideas that are not embodied in action. What little plot these stories possess is that of a conventional romance, without basic connexion to the problem. In "The Dream Maker" (Der Traumfabrikant), e.g., the owner of a dream factory loves the daughter of a politician who is conducting a campaign for the socialisation of such factories. A special dream induced in the father averts this danger and the dream manufacturer wins the girl in the process.

"The Home School" (Die Fernschule) depicts pupils of the future sitting at home before their television sets, with their heads connected to a psychograph which turns off the television when the majority become too sleepy to follow the lesson. Again, there is no story.

More important are the philosophical tales, which are witty, satirical, and full of ideas--being true speculative fiction in Judith Merril's sense. As indicated by the title, Soap Bubbles, of the first such collection, the stories are free plays of fancy, not subject to the law of gravity or any other law, created joyfully by the artist and destroyed again at will.



The title story (Auf der Seifenblase) describes Uncle Wendel's apparatus that transports people to soap bubbles, where life is like that on Earth, but speeded up ten billion times. The reader may recall that Fitz James O'Brien's The Diamond Lens mixed this same theme with myths of Eden and Hermaphroditus, with his love story given a scientific tinge by detailed references to microscopes. And Ray Cummings' Girl in the Golden Atom is essentially an adventury fantasy of subjugation and revolt, whose locale could just as easily have been another country or planet. Lasswitz's story, however, is a light-hearted parallel to the trial of Galileo. Glagli of the microscopic world dares to question the teachings of an ancient Saponian philosopher (the equivalent of Aristotle) and pronounces the revolutionary thesis that the world is hollow and filled with air. He has to defend himself before the "Academy of Thinking Men," who will decide "whether his ideas are to be permitted in the interests of the state and public order"; and our travellers barely escape being cooked in hot glycerine after they confirm Glagli's opinion.

"Princess Yesyes" is a philosophical fairy tale that asks the question, how do we know we exist? Princess Yesyes, in the kingdom of Higgledy-Piggledy, has a fairy godmother named Krakeleia, who is fabricator of all unnecessary questions and mistress of all "inventors of puzzles, revenue collectors, policemen, and metaphysicians." One day our princess asks the fairy who her mother was; but the fairy has no mother (like Pallas Athena she has sprung directly from Zeus) and for punishment sentences the princess to remain unmarried until she has found and answered the most useless question of all. The question is whether or not she exists and the answer, that she simply has to believe in her own existence. This is one of Lasswitz's most amusing stories, with many references to German philosophical pomposity.

Lasswitz is at his best when least serious; when earnest, he shows a deplorable tendency towards sentimentality. "The Diary of an Ant" might have been amusing had not the ants chosen to report the romance of a human couple. The two are forbidden to marry (probably because she is his social inferior), but he writes love poems to her (which are included in the text) and there is a happy, happy ending.

The utopian tale "Apoikis" presents the converse side of On Two Planets. Apoikis is a secluded island in the Atlantic inhabited by descendents of Socrates' friends. Not being obliged to gain mastery over nature, they have concentrated upon spiritual development. "We are not the slaves of our customs as are the savages, nor masters of the material world as are the educated nations of Europe; but are masters of our own wills, masters of all consciousness, and therefore we are free."

Perhaps Lasswitz distrusted the masses, as Kritzmann suggests; but I think that he knew that for us there is no other alternative except technological development. In this story he shows awareness that science and technology are necessary and possible only for a mass society. Hence the different developments on Apoikis and Mars, despite the adoption of Kantian principles by both societies.

In "Aladdin's Lamp" (reprinted in F&SF, May 1953) Lasswitz anticipates Charles L. Harness's "The New Reality" (TWS, Dec. 1950), a story based on the Kantian notion that we know nothing about the Ding an sich, but are acquainted only with the appearances presented to our senses. Further, the supposed laws of nature are just categories already present in our minds. Harness takes Kant literally: that our consciousness creates reality. In his story the world changes with our conception of it: the earth really was flat as long as we conceived it so; it was spherical ever since we began to regard it as a sphere, and so on.

In Lasswitz's story a company sit together and discuss magic implements, at last agreeing that Aladdin's Lamp would be the most desirable. A lamp is at hand, and one of the company deduces that it is indeed the lamp of Aladdin. The spirit appears, but is unable to do anything he is told to do because he would be violating some natural law. Finally, he cannot even lift up a pencil. But why was the spirit able to comply with Aladdin's wishes?

> "...at that time the laws of conservation of matter and energy were still unknown."
>
> "What! Surely you wouldn't maintain that the laws of nature were not working then?"
>
> "The natural laws," answered the spirit, "are nothing but the expression of scientific perception in a given period. In my transcendental consciousness, I am independent of these laws; but when working in time, in your time, I cannot do anything contrary to the laws that are the pillars of your culture."

Two other stories are lampoons on German metaphysicians. In "Psychotomy" (translated in F&SF, July 1955) a private teacher, Dr. Schulze, is given the personified categories, some Kantian pure reason and other philosophical paraphernalia. These are handed to him accompanied by needling remarks: "Here in this red vase is freedom. I have only this small sample, for I could find no more...in the whole of Europe"; "Here is humanity; it is cheap--but is demanded only by Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals."

Two fine mathematical fantasies have been translated into English by Willy Ley: "When the Devil took the Professor" (F&SF, Jan. 1957) and "In the Universal Library" (Clifton Fadiman, ed., Fantasia Mathematica). The first of these is the familiar bargain with the Devil, who takes a professor on a tour of the universe in a vessel that exceeds the speed of light. The professor is a mathematician and suspects that the universe is curved, as it actually proves to be. So the voyagers circumnavigate the universe after a flight of several billion light-years.11

"In the Universal Library"[12] is based on the idea that the total number of permutations of finitely many symbols is limited, so that a finite number of volumes could contain everything expressible in a given language--including the amusing nonsense of Lasswitz's story. And the universe wouldn't be big enough to contain all the volumes in this library.

Between his two volumes of short stories, Lasswitz published a biography of Gustav Theodor Fechner, who next to Kant was the single greatest influence on him. Fechner wrote humourous "articles" that might be called precursors of modern science fiction: "Proof that the Moon Consists of Iodine" (1821), "Panegyricus on Contemporary Medicine and Science" (1822), and "Four Paradoxes" (1846). In the last of these, for example, he "proves" that shadows are living things (whose projections are solid objects), that space has four dimensions, and that witchcraft actually exists.

Lasswitz stressed that Fechner's essays are not "scientific fairy tales" (this author's term for science fiction), since they lack the form of stories and have no living persons (an unfortunate deficiency in Lasswitz's own fiction).

A quotation from "Mirax," which is pure Fechner in method, will show Lasswitz's indebtedness. Mirax's "experimental metaphysics" is based on sentences collected from proverbs.

> ...he applied these sentences to any...field. For instance, he proved that the sun was inhabited by beings who eat meteors. For, you must strike while the iron is hot, and since spectral analysis shows there is iron vapour in the sun, there must be entities in the sun who strike the iron. And since a magic table is a fine thing, we may assume that the solar inhabitants have food falling from the sky. Now, meteors fall from the sky and consist mostly of iron--therefore these beings like to eat meteors.

Realities (Wirklichkeiten, 1900), Lasswitz's first major collection of essays, is devoted mostly to a popularisation of Kant, but one essay, "On Dreams of the Future," is of special interest to us.

Early in the essay he dismisses static utopias (as Wells was to do in A Modern Utopia) because "dissatisfaction and hope" are the motivating forces of human life. He stresses that our efforts to improve human life are not wasted, although they are perpetual. For evil never can disappear from this world, since then our will for progress also would disappear. Religion can make us disregard the conditions of this world; but only by mastering these conditions can we make our life on earth any better. Religion and morality are necessary for progress, but sufficient conditions are supplied only by human reason. Here we see the effect of Kant in Lasswitz's insistence that progress be achieved by means proper to this "reality."

Toward the end, Lasswitz defends the "scientific fairy tale" that is to result from the "ethical power of technology." (Of course, our author didn't conceive the evil to which technology was to be applied.) Once its idealising effects are established, science can provide the subject-matter of fiction--and this new literary form will express the writer's own reactions to scientific knowledge: "It is our task to find a personal form for the new feeling about nature." Characteristically, Lasswitz didn't discuss how this relationship is to be expressed--by popularizing science (as Gernsback was to do) or by transforming, as it were, science into poetry.[13]

In any case, Lasswitz's is the first explicit justification for science fiction as we presently conceive it.

His next major work was Homchen (1902), a Darwinian novel printed along with some short stories in a curiously titled volume, Never and Ever (Nie und immer). Homchen is a marsupial, an ancestor of man, who is braver than the other animals and also more intelligent, even discovering the use of fire. (Homchen is a mutant, as we would say now.) But genius is out of place in this era--the Marsupials dreading fire so much that they do not use it--and Homchen, misunderstood by everyone, lives the rest of his life alone. A successful genius, as a cynic once remarked, is somebody who is ahead of his time, but not too far ahead. Homchen is so far advanced, however, that his fellow marsupials lose sight of him; and his feelings of superiority serve to alienate him still further.

This is a fairy tale (the animals being endowed with human speech, as is customary in such stories), but a charming one despite all its philosophising.

The stories of Lasswitz's middle period, starting with Soap Bubbles and ending with Never and Ever, are the most rewarding; his later novels, although ranked highest by himself and some of his contemporaries, possess today only the limited interest of period pieces. Aspira (1906), a cloud metamorphosised into a human being, shows the influence of Gustav Fechner, who believed that all living things are endowed with souls and later attributed souls even to planets and stars. Star Dew (Sternentau, 1909), Lasswitz's last work[15] concerns intelligent flowers, which drift in from a moon of Neptune and then depart after observing the war-like character of humans. Like Aspira, this novel is based on Fechner, has little characterisation, and contains endless discussions of Fechner and Kant.

#4 -- SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Lasswitz's deficiencies are several: his lack of characterisation, his sentimentality, i.e., lack of feeling, and his strong didactic emphasis. However, he was didactic not about science but about ethics. His technique of presenting technology was close to that of modern science fiction. In Pictures from the Future scientific marvels are part of the characters' everyday world; nobody wonders about them. In On Two Planets, after some initial wonder by humans, technology is accepted as a matter of course. For Lasswitz, technology is a means, not an end, its final justification being the ethical improvement it necessarily brings about.

But despite his two utopian stories Lasswitz had no interest in society as a whole. He believed that universal happiness would ensue if each individual just followed the teachings of Kant and Schiller. Thus the utopians of Apolkis see "the happiness of a people...not in a large mass...of consciousness, but in an intensive...concentration of consciousness in every single individual." Marx and Engels are cited nowhere in his works, and contemporary social movements are disliked and misunderstood.[16]

In any case, Lasswitz failed to realise in action his philosophical intentions: his perfect characters merely tell us at great length about their ethical principles. But fiction that contains only characters who are morally perfect, or nearly so, is not moral: it falsifies life; it is untrue, and what is untrue can never be moral. The moralist succeeds by exhibiting difficulties, by increasing the potency of life, not by simplifying and castrating it. Chastity in eunuchs is no virtue. Lasswitz's humans are never really tempted, and the high moral principles of his Martians fail them when they experience their first real challenge in several hundred thousand years: they behave just like human imperialists. To a sensitive reader these results are far from edifying.

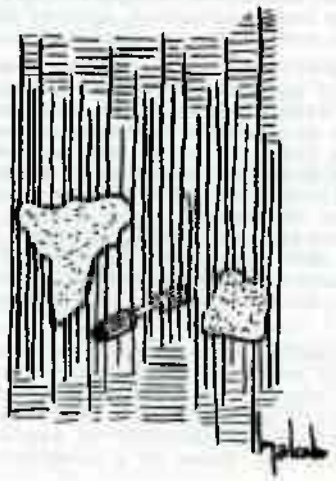
The particular quality of a utopian tale resides mainly in its ideas, which can hold our intellectual interest, not in its characterisation--since utopian individuals, because they are so perfect, are also totally boring. Hence Lasswitz's virtues, his clarity of presentation and lucidity of style, are essentially those of an essayist, not those of a novelist.

Nevertheless we must acknowledge Lasswitz's basic honesty,[17] and we are entitled to make allowance for the time in which his stories were written. However his satirical short stories deserve unqualified praise, being a close approach to certain types of contemporary Anglo-American speculative fiction.

Even in Germany, Lasswitz never attained the popularity of Wells or Verne in their own countries. Wells, of course, had superior imagination and social insight; while Verne, although not the scientific prophet he is reputed to be (his excerpts from French encyclopedias and textbooks usually becoming obsolete a few years after publication), could write exciting adventure stories, which Lasswitz could not.

But it was chiefly non-literary factors that minimised Lasswitz's influence in his own country. After World War I German science fiction became more and more nationalistic,[18] the "new" Germany, especially after Hitler's ascent, having little use for the pacifistic morality of Lasswitz. And after World War II almost all science fiction written in Germany was a poor imitation of American and British space-opera.

That Lasswitz did not exert his proper influence, therefore, is a result of external circumstances. In America, stories much inferior to his have helped to give science fiction its present orientation.



FOOTNOTES

1) Herbert Schwonke, Vom Staatsroman zur Science Fiction (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke Verlag, 1957); Hans-Jurgen Krysmanski, Die utopische Methode (Koln & Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1963).

2) Explorers of the Infinite (New York: World Publishing Co., 1963), 88-105.

3) Although Lasswitz knew English, it is highly improbable that he ever encountered Hale's short story. And it is still more unlikely that Lasswitz knew of Ziolkowski's "Dreams of the Earth and the Sky," 1895 (reprinted in The Call of the Cosmos, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House) in which this author proposed the building of an artificial moon as a way to facilitate space travel.

4) Lasswitz is free from nationalism or German imperialism: although his main characters are German, he clearly indicates that they are in no way superior to the Englishmen of his book. Kretzman (op. cit., 427) omits the phrase "...and we are not any better" in the above passage and interprets it as an example of national prejudice: "It becomes evident that the Martians are really a glorified German race and have the same imperialistic tendencies of that nation."

5) Lasswitz's "will" is not that emphasised by Nietzsche, but simply the urge to survive, which reason is powerless to govern without some basic "ideal." Nietzsche's The Birth of Tragedy and Unzeitgemasse Betrachtungen were written in 1872 and 1873-6, respectively, and his Thus Spake Zarathustra in 1884-5, whereas the first story from Bilder aus der Zukunft (cited by W.H.G. Armytage, RQ II, 234) was printed by the Schlesische Zeitung in 1871. Hence Nietzsche's influence on Lasswitz is non-existent.

6) Compare the brain organ to the instrument used by Grosvenor in A.E. van Vogt's Voyage of the Space Beagle.

7) Cf. Jack Vance's "The Enchanted Princess" (Orbit, Dec. 1954).

8) Another aspect of the same problem appears in Lasswitz's short story "In the Universal Library."

9) I was surprised to learn from Bruce H. Franklin's Future Perfect (Oxford University Press, 1966) that excerpts from the book were printed in the June 1890 issue of The Overland Monthly.

10) Lasswitz's first collection of short stories was Soap Bubbles (Seifenblasen, 1890), and this was followed by Never and Ever (Nie und immer), which also included the novel Homchen, and the posthumous volume Things Felt and Known (Empfundenes und Erkanntes, 1920). This second book was called Dream Crystals (Traumkristalle) when it was published later apart from Homchen.

FOOTNOTES (continued)

11) Lasswitz was mathematics professor at the Gymnasium Ernestinium in Gotha from 1878 until 1908; while familiar with the work of Gauss, Riemann, and Lofatschefsky in non-Euclidean spaces he believed they had no physical reality. In his Souls and Objectives (Seelen und Ziele, 1908) he explicitly denied that physics would ever be forced to adopt a non-Euclidean theory of space. The main reason for his denial was doubtless his unwillingness to correct Kant's theory of Euclidean space as a form of perception.

12) As Willy Ley explains in his postscript, this idea--like that of the computer--goes back to the Spanish mathematician, Raimundus Lullus (1235-1315). Lasswitz, in turn, inspired Jorge Luis Borges' much superior story, "The Library of Babel."

13) Lasswitz states that "I wouldn't even have touched the aesthetic question if it hadn't been claimed that tales of a technological future are by their very nature poetically useless (Poetisch unbrauchbar) and non-literary"(keine Dichtung).

14) Fechner believed that a nervous system wasn't necessary for the development of consciousness and in 1848 he wrote Nanna, or the Spiritual Life of Plants (Nanna oder des Seelenleben der Pflanzen). (In Norse mythology, Nanna was the wife of Baldur, the god of light and spring.) In his Zend Avesta--"Zend Avest" being the Hindu phrase for "living word"--Fechner extended his theory by attributing souls to the earth and other celestial bodies.

15) The short stories in the posthumous Things Felt and Known are all slight, being mostly treatments of problems that this author had considered before. In "Those Without Souls" ("Die Unbeseelten") Fechner is presented from the "other side," with violets speculating whether or not men have souls; and in the fairy tale Frauenaugen we learn that women's eyes are so bright because they are fallen stars.

16) E.G., see (p. 10) the attitude toward Socialism expressed in "The Dream Maker."

17) For example, the Martians of Auf zwei Planeten are entirely humanoid. Lasswitz explains that it is a "necessary condition for any poetic effect that we can participate in the feelings of the beings depicted. This is wholly impossible if we assume creatures with bodies of incadescent hydrogen or intelligent bacilli procreating and amusing themselves in liquid air. Such beings have to be equipped with quite other senses; they would have emotions that we could never feel; empathy between them and us would be impossible" (Things Felt and Thought, 169).

18) Hans Dominik, the most successful German science fiction writer to-date, exemplifies this. Each of his books revolves around a single invention : a new fuel, a means to achieve invisibility, an incredibly strong metal, etc. Around this invention he spins a conventional tale of espionage and intrigue, usually culminating in a great war, either between Germany and America, America and Japan, or the White race against the Yellow race, with the former always winning.

SCHADENFREUDE

by

Odean Cusack

The toughest part of being on a conquered planet is waiting for the evacuation ships. In their leisure the victors would come and take the populace of Earth somewhere among the stars. Thoughts of escape were ludicrous, resistance useless, and we, the defeated, were scattered across the countryside like dust. There was no place to go, and the only thing left for us to do was wait.

John and I took leave of our friends and made our way to the small town of Rio del Lorca for the interim. Somehow in that sun-drenched little village, the stigma of defeat seemed less painful and each agonizing unknown tomorrow melted into the background of a hot blistering today. The inhabitants of Rio del Lorca trudged through their daily rituals, performing the mundane activities that had always formed their existence. Children still trotted pigs through the narrow dirt streets; afternoons still bowed in soundless sombulent homage to the scorching Mexican sun. It was a relief to be here and to find the most pressing matter to be the acquisition of enough American cigarettes to last you through the night.

Although forgetfulness came easily to me, John found adjustments far more difficult. His right arm had been crushed in one of the final attacks somewhere in the Northwest, and the memory of it still haunted him through the long insect-filled Mexican nights. Dead silence on a cool summer night, and then the skies were black and the heavens glowed and resounded in a single blast; then it was over. No struggle--just shattering of all defenses, weapons unknown. Conquest was all the more horrible for its simplicity. John relived the moment many times. He had been brought to my medical depot from one of the frontal posts in shock and hysteria; and now, two months later, he still woke screaming at the unknown and the unseen.

We took to sleeping days and spending our nights walking the streets of Rio del Lorca. The days were hot and weary and burdened with humidity; they were far more conducive to sleep than the black living nights. John was always alert and watchful for every living creature; he believed the conquerors would come sometime after the retreat of the sun and sweep the people of Earth away in their sleep. He wanted to be awake to face whatever obscene visage they possessed. As for myself, it mattered little; they would come in their own time, and if I was awake or asleep, what difference could it possibly make?

It was on one of those soul-flagellating nights that John and I decided to go to the Tent. We found two dark-eyed child women in the shadows of one of the civilian emergency centres, and for a string of beads and a few bars of chocolate, they were more than willing to grace our company for an evening. The girls were vacantly pretty and spoke no English; within five years their looks would coarsen and they would become replicas of the shrewish mamas who dragged their scurvy children through the garbage dumps by the village's edge. Still, this was not a time of excellence, and John and I were piteous beaten creatures wallowing in the humility of our defeat. For the time the girls would offer a lovely respite from the old Mexican, Manuel, who had rented us our rooms, the only inhabitant of Rio del Lorca with whom we had any real contact. Most of the people looked upon us as shadows in the background of their existence; we were there but not to be acknowledged as if that conscious thought of our humanity would bring to mind the conquerors and their ensuing inhumanity. Manuel, however, saw only the logic of the American dollar. We offered him twice the going rate for his decayed little room and he was happy to provide us with shelter and limited companionship. "Americans are good business," he said in his faltering English, and there was too little business now as it was.

The disintegration of economy was probably the single most important factor behind the existence of the Tent. Once an entertainment centre for troops, this huge canvas array had, since the conquest, become the meeting place for the war's casualties and beggars. Much of the land was devastated, food was scarce, and luxury items like cigarettes and candy were almost non-existent. The maimed and poverty ridden of the village came to the Tent and performed for meager offerings from the crowd, which was usually composed of the more fortunate who still maintained a somewhat comfortable existence. Sometimes it was merely a few crumbs of bread or some fruit, but occasionally a still comparatively well-to-do landowner would arrogantly toss a few pesos on the stage. I had never gone to the Tent, but Manuel said that he had been there once and it was a ludicrous drama of pathos and despair. Those that were beaten and humbled in the conquest would sit and gloat and once more reassemble their shattered egos. John and I had bought the girls and ourselves some tequila to provide nourishment through the long night. We needed a prelude and the Tent seemed to suffice if only for its singularity.

The Tent was was silhouetted against the night like a gaudy semi-dismantled pyramid. Its bleak canvas lines were accentuated by rows of tiny bulb lights and brightly floating streamers of crepe that hung from its half-opened peak to its stark squat bottom. The Mexicans had redressed the old entertainment centre in new clothes, and nowhere else in Rio del Lorca could one see more readily the blending of the traditional pagen ancestry with the present rigour of modern piety; for the Tent itself assumed the appearance of an Aztec Christmas tree, shaped and decorated like that universal memorium to Christ yet opening to an ornamental sacrificial stage on which victims would await the primitive knife of the high priest.

John and I and the girls waited in line for entrance to the Tent, and I could see above the dark heads before me that the proprietor himself had donned the traditional bright coloured Aztec costume. In keeping with the total incongruency he bore a plain gold cross around his neck. The floor was dirt, no more, and we sat in rickety bamboo chairs from the old service establishment. Before us stood the stage. Although ornately sculptered, it was clean and uncluttered and trimmed by an old tapestry draped across the back as a rear curtain. Rows of candles burned against the tapestry, forming images of an almost living mural. There was no need for introductions; the performance would begin as soon as all in attendance were admitted. Clapping his hands twice, the proprietor signalled for the onset of the show, and there was silence.

The first entertainer was a lame beggar familiar to the streets of Rio del Lorca. I later learned from Manuel that he was a regular here at the Tent. He hobbled upon the stage and began a pantomine dance with no accompaniment and less grace. He hopped backward and forward, swaying his gnarled cane in off-rhythm to his lurching movements. Occasionally he would fall awkwardly to the ground. His painful attempts to rise brought cheers and laughter to the crowd; a few crumbs hit the stage, an apple, a peso. The beggar wanted to continue, but the crowd was bored; they had seen him too often and wished a new diversion. As he sashayed from the platform, they yelled and clapped. The girls were laughing heartily, and I noticed to my horror that John also was smiling and weakly pounding his hand against his knee. The Germans have a word for it, I thought, "schadenfreude," the delight one takes in another's misfortune; and that was the unspoken attraction of the Tent.

The next entertainer was a coarse heavyset female. She may have been twenty-five or fifty; it was impossible to tell. At this precise moment she seemed only a pathetic caricature of what had once been a woman, a cartoon sketch of a gross female you roar at with laughter yet never really expect to find in the flesh. She lugged a crude homemade guitar to the stage, and close inspection revealed that the guitar had only three strings. She squatted on a narrow stool, holding the instrument taut between her fleshy legs, and then she began to play.

At the start of the song, which I recognised as La Paloma, I noticed that while she played badly out of tune, her instrumentation was true to the rhythm I had come to expect from folk renditions of these songs. Notes were missed at intervals, and in their place were knuckled smacks against the belly of the guitar. Once she may have been a fairly decent artist; but the age of the remaining strings was not in her favor, and the melody line of the old folk ballad was barely recognisable in the desafinado rendition we heard. Her introduction complete, she opened her mouth to begin the verse, but no gentle words broke the air in the Tent that night. Instead came muffled gaping sounds, the language of the damned. The woman had no tongue.

The crowd, which had been politely giggling up until now, broke into hysterical laughter and applause. They cheered and whistled and tossed bread and fruit upon the stage. One exhilarant participant tossed a hunk of meat directly into the guitar on her lap. They roared wildly as she strained to form the words of her song. Pesos began to fall at her feet. I closed my eyes for a moment, trying desperately to stop the flood of nausea that seemed to encompass me. John had given each of the girls a peso to throw and he threw several himself. He seemed as much enveloped in the contagion of the Tent as anyone there. Could the war have done that much to him? Perhaps his own self-pity exoluded any for anyone else. Perhaps I too would have reacted that way had I lost a limb.

After the crowd had quieted, a blind man took the stage holding a handful of tiny crystals in his fist. He walked with ease, but with reluctance. Seeing four children huddled toward the back of the stage, I imagined that his reason for coming was more for them than for himself. He seemed proud yet, amidst this drama of pathos and contempt, and his manner was firm and self-confident. I wondered if his blindness was congenital and not a result of the war at all. When he fully opened his fists toward the audience, I lost all interest in John and the girls and diverted my complete attention to the strange performance that was about to take place.

The man held silico-diobe crystals in his hand. These multi-coloured crystals were first found on the Yucuban peninsula and defied classification as mineral or organic. They seemed to be composed of a silicon compound yet they possessed characteristics usually associated with living organisms. They changed colours to adapt to their environment, and they possessed movement. At night they glowed, and thus it was believed that they contained a trace of phosphorus. A more detailed study of their structure and behavior had been scheduled, but that was before the invasion. Ordinarily their movement seemed merely a result of behavioral tropisms, but there were stories told that some men could make them move independently of any other external stimulus. A friend once told me he had seen such a performance in an old isolated village. Perhaps the master of the crystals possessed a subchannel level of telepathy that allowed him to tune in to the crystals. At any rate, I was told that it was a wondrous sight, a religious revelation of intense beauty. I believed the man on the stage now to be such a master, and I watched closely as the crystals began to move.

He stood there, hands outstretched and palms upward, and slowly the crystals began to rise from his hands and float before us. They paraded, many coloured dancing lights through a rhythmic processional. They needed no music; the waves of their own motion brought a subliminal melody to everyone present. They floated, they danced, they splashed through the colours of the spectrum, and they began to form shapes. They formed a multi-hued bird of paradise in flight above the head of the man who stood proudly on the stage with vacant eyes. They clumped together to form a bouquet in his hand. They dashed vividly around his form in quick-change silhouettes, and I thought how like the dawn of creation would be if seen through a kalideoscopic lens. For their finale they grouped behind his body, forming a giant shimmering golden cross along its entire length.

The crowd was silent; not one giggle or snicker had broken the melody of the dancing lights. I was awed: the man was no beggar. In spite of his blindness or perhaps because of it, he was a master of the living dancing crystals. How tragic that such a man should have to parade his wares here among an assembly of sadists and perverts. Yet, to feed the children, one must do as he must, and the brilliant performance should almost certainly have earned him enough food to last till the evacuation.

The crowd still sat hushed, but then the unexpected happened. Instead of throwing a multitude of pesos and foodstufs, the crowd bombarded him with stones and dirt. They spat, jeered, and called out vile names to the master of the dancing lights. They stoned and booed him till he turned and left the stage. John too had been booing loudly though he threw nothing, and for that I was grateful.

When we left the Tent that evening, I caught sight of the master of the dancing lights crouched in the shadows of a dead tree. His children were by his side and his crystals were securely hidden in a small cardboard box. He was too good, I thought, and excellence has no place here in this shabby battered planet where we, the defeated, need another's shame and disgrace to allow us to forget our own. But sometimes there is a man who should be an object of pity but rises above this misfortune to become an object of envy, and how uncharitable we are to those who in their self-worth rise above us and thus make us so acutely aware of our own humility. What word describes those feelings such a man rouses within us? I wandered to the master and emptied my pockets in his lap; some chocolate, some candy, a pack of cigarettes, and a few pesos. Not much, but enough I prayed to last him till the evacuation. I walked back to John, who hadn't missed me at all. He was high on tequila and frolicked gaily with the two girls. It seemed for the first time since our arrival he had forgotten about the evacuation. I could think of nothing else. I only hoped it would be soon, very soon.

H. G. WELLS, CRITIC OF PROGRESS

Chapter Five:
WELLS AND THE GREAT DEBATE

by Jack Williamson

(Eastern New Mexico University)

In the glow of success, with his old tensions eased, Wells changed from critic to promoter. The First Men in the Moon had ended a cycle. With A Modern Utopia (1905), Wells launched into the efforts at public education and social reform that consumed the rest of his life. In effect, he changed sides in the great debate over the value of science and the future of man which, I believe, has always been the central theme of science fiction.

The quarrel is possible, I think, because different men reach different solutions of the basic conflict, visible in Wells himself, between self and society. These differences can be traced back for centuries, perhaps even to the cultural clash between the pyramid-builders of Egypt and the wandering Indo-Europeans whose enduring monument was their language.

In Egypt the individual was crushed into a social pyramid as rigid as its image in stone, overshadowed by a frightful pantheon of monster-headed gods. Homer's roving Odysseus is the contrasting human image of the free individual among the Indo-Europeans, the companion of Athene rather than the slave of Thoth.

Our own culture has inherited traits from both. The Jewish nation grew up in awe of Egypt, reflected in its own theocratic pyramid. The pessimism of the Hebrew prophets casts a gloomy shadow over the mediaeval church, over Swift, over the early Wells and his anti-utopian followers.

Plato, trusting human philosopher-kings to rule his ideal republic, is the optimistic heir of Odysseus. The Renaissance revives the Greek faith in man to animate Bacon's New Atlantis (1624), Bellamy's Looking Backward (1888), and most of the later work of Wells.

Changing from the Egyptian outlook to the Greek, Wells was less inconsistent than he may seem. The early fiction had resolved his own conflicts, setting him free for another task: to guide men toward a better world, through those same hazards to progress that he had already so fully explored. Unfortunately, his shift of position has been misunderstood, confusing most of his critics and obscuring the worth of his best work.

Twentieth-century history has been hard on the bright reputation he established in his middle years as the prophet of utopia. All the experiments in social reform following World War I were undertaken with a Greek belief in the competence of the rational individual to rebuild his own society, but too many of the experiments ended with the establishment of oppressive social pyramids that seemed to justify the Egyptian image of man.

Identified with these utopian debacles, Wells has been damned. Recent critics, however, have come to see that he left a double wave of influence, pessimistic as well as optimistic. W. Warren Wagar's H.G. Wells and the World State (New Haven, 1961) is the outstanding review of his later utopian phase. In a more recent work, The Future as Nightmare: H.G. Wells and the Anti-Utopians (New York, 1967), Mark Hillegas extends Bergonzi's study of the early work to cover a whole Egyptian genre that sprang from Wells's youthful gloom.

Eugene Zamiatin is a main link in this pessimistic chain. A Russian revolutionary who admired Wells and even wrote a book about him, Zamiatin had been utopian enough to participate in the Soviet experiment. Disillusioned by its outcome, he borrowed methods and ideas from Wells for We, his tragi-comic satire on the utopian state (discussed by Hillegas, op. cit., 99-109). The same images and even the same plot details were borrowed again, as Hillegas shows, by Aldous Huxley and George Orwell for their own more famous anti-utopias, Brave New World and 1984. A whole school of recent science fiction (the "new wave") has followed them in turn, echoing the early Wells.

Thus the debate goes on, with no conclusion likely. Internalised in Wells, the conflict shaped his early fiction. It is still universal, repeated in every division of modern society and in the experience of every normal human being. At the individual level, it is the clash between the primitive self and the world: the tension revealed by Freud that forms individual character. At the group level, it is reflected everywhere, most strikingly, perhaps, in the social schism that Snow calls "the conflict of the two cultures."

Julian Huxley, in the Romanes lecture delivered in 1943, on the fiftieth anniversary of his grandfather's "Evolution and Ethics," has traced the ethical development of the individual from the infantile conflict found by Freud. He concludes that, although

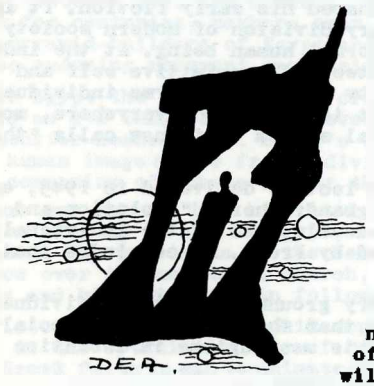
> it is clear on evolutionary grounds that the individual is in a real sense higher than the State or the social organism...the individual is meaningless in isolation [from society] . [1]

He is reconsidering the same primal conflict that Wells has illuminated in The Invisible Man and "The Country of the Blind."

At the social level, the conflict that vitalises the early fiction is just as general — and just as far from any final solution. In The First Men in the Moon, Wells analyses a climactic issue of our age. Growing more and more complex, technology requires continually more and more division of labour and specialisation, more and more social discipline. Individuals all over the world are still in rebellion against such seemingly essential control. The end is not in sight, but Wells's image of the bottled Selenite broods over us all.

Wells's own place in the conflict between the "two cultures" invites a little more attention, because that aspect of the great debate is a significant symbol of his long struggle against himself. From his youth, the old quarrel between science and tradition was going on around him. He must have been impressed by Swift's satire on uncontrolled reason and misapplied science in Gulliver's voyages. His own teacher, T.H. Huxley, had challenged tradition with the lecture "Science and Culture" in 1881, and Matthew Arnold had replied in 1882 with his Rede Lecture at Cambridge, "Science and Literature." The early fiction records the same conflict in Wells himself, with the culture of science never entirely victorious, not even when he was writing his most hopeful utopias.

Following Arnold and Huxley, Wells and George Gissing picked up the great debate.[2] The two men were alike in many ways: both had broken with religion and turned to socialism, both had known sex frustration and unhappy marriage, both had tried teaching and turned to literature. Yet, in their final attitudes toward life and art, they differed profoundly. Gissing scornfully declined the sort of journalistic opportunity that Wells grasped so eagerly, and he was destroyed by the same sort of misfortune in health, love, and marriage that shaped Wells's success. A literary intellectual, Gissing writes in The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft (1903):



> I hate and fear "science" because of my conviction that for long to come, if not forever, it will be the remorseless enemy of mankind. I see it destroying all simplicity and gentleness of life, all the beauty of the world; I see it restoring barbarism under a mask of civilization; I see it darkening men's minds and hardening their hearts; I see it bringing a time of vast conflicts which will pale into insignificance "the thousand wars of old," and as likely as not, will whelm all the laborious advances of mankind in blood-drenched chaos. (New York, 1961, 169-70)

The two first met late in 1896, the year Wells published The Island of Dr. Moreau. With Gissing as a guide, Wells and his wife toured Rome in 1898. Wells went to visit the dying Gissing in the Pyrenees in 1903. By that date, Wells had passed the climax of his own psychological conflict, and had already turned to new literary genres with Love and Mr. Lewisham (1900) and Anticipations (1901). In his autobiography, he writes of Gissing from a viewpoint in the culture of science:

> At the back of my mind I thought him horribly mis-educated and he hardly troubled to hide from me his opinion that I was absolutely illiterate. Each of us had his secret amusement in the other's company. He knew the Greek epics and plays to a level of frequent quotation but I think he took his classical philosophers as read and their finality for granted; he assumed that modern science and thought were merely degenerate recapitulations of their lofty and inaccessible wisdom...He thought that a classical scholar need only turn over a few books to master all that scientific work and modern philosophy had made of the world, and it did not disillusion him in the least that he had no mastery of himself or any living fact in existence.
>
> Through Gissing I was confirmed in my suspicion that this orthodox classical training which was once so powerful an antiseptic against Egyptian dogma and natural superstition...has become a vast collection of monumental masonry, a pale cemetery in a twilight, through which new conceptions hurry apologetically on their way to town, finding neither home nor sustenance there...it has ceased to be a field of education and become a proper hunting ground for the archeologist and social psychologist. (Exp. 485-6)

The lives of both Wells and Gissing illuminate the deeper and more private struggle of self against society, of which this public debate is a symbolic reflection. The rebel spirit of the individualist was strong in both men; neither conformed easily to social compulsions. Wells, however, perhaps because he had formed a more accurate image of reality, was able to adapt himself more successfully than did Gissing, who remained the unregenerate individual to the end of his life, living at best on terms of uneasy truce with the world. Wells got on with people. He kept the affections of his parents and brothers. He was able to end his unfortunate first marriage without much bitterness, and to conduct his extramarital affairs without losing his second wife. He got on with his work in much the same way. As Gettman puts it, "Wells did not have to come to terms with journalism: he positively welcomed it." He writes in the autobiography how he learned from a book of Barrie's to lower his aim "--and hit" (Exp. 306-8). To the literary intellectual, who is likely to be an unreconstructed individualist, this willingness is read as lack of artistic integrity. It accounts for the disagreement with Henry James, and perhaps largely for the long eclipse of Wells's literary reputation.

Wells must have come far toward the resolution of his own conflict before he began to write. The forces involved can only be inferred, but the fragmentary traces in the early fiction seem to reveal stages in the evolution of a social mind. In the creation of an invading Martian or a predacious Invisible Man or a machine-like Caver, Wells is not so much revealing his problems of the moment as finding symbolic expression for the simpler and deeper and older conflicts of his private past. Such a reading of the early fiction shows selfish individualism finding expression and reconciliation, leaving Wells a mature social man.

A double irony is involved. On the one hand, using the early fiction to discharge the buried emotions in conflict with his role in society, Wells was able to find in the ritual of social conformity an individual freedom of thought and behavior that the uncompromising Gissing never enjoyed. On the other hand, however, because, as Yeats puts it, a man's quarrels with himself are the stuff of poetry, his resolution of his inner conflicts shut off the main source of his literary power. The ending of the conflict left him at least unbound by the egocentric literary aspirations of Gissing, free to devote the rest of his life to his long campaigns to advance the progress of his fellow men. The social man, with all his searching criticism of progress behind him, Wells became the voice of his time for the culture of science.

His personal decision, however, was not the end of the great debate--nor can it end, for this is not the sort of problem that mere discussion can solve. Rather, the issue serves as an intellectual sieve, which separates conflicting attitudes toward progress. To those whose values are absolute, even unconsciously, what was best in Homeric Greece is still the best. To those who accept the relativity of culture, what is best is what best fits each new generation for the struggle for survival. The first group would honour the same commandments forever. The second can understand that "Thou shalt kill" has become the essential ethical commandment of the Morlocks in their symbiotic life with the Eloi.

Sir Charles Snow has now assumed the role of the later Wells, speaking for the culture of science. F.R. Leavis and others have attacked him, with none of Matthew Arnold's friendly restraint. Lionel Trilling, on the side of literature, has attempted to question "the whole concept of culture."[3]

Support for that concept, however, and especially for the pivotal idea of cultural relativity, comes from a theory of culture advanced by the anthropologist Edward T. Hall. Working with the aid of George L. Trager, the linguist, Hall treats culture as "a form of communication"[4]. It is communicated on three levels: formal, informal, and technical.

The formal aspects of culture are extremely resistant to change, the informal aspects more flexible, the technical aspects often open to change. Hall presents a theory of progress from formal belief to informal adaptation to technical analysis. No more than Wells, however, does he discover any cultural absolutes. "Man alters experience by living it. There is no experience independent of culture against which culture can be measured" (ibid., 170).

The acceleration of change is the feature of this cultural relativity for which the strictly literary intellectual is most painfully unprepared. The world is not only changing, but the rate of change is increasing. In the past, when one kind of flaked stone tool might remain in use for a few thousand years, this fact of nature scarcely mattered. Today, when automation every year leaves hundreds of industrial skills obsolete and millions unemployed, when the population explosion is bursting the old fabric of society, when the very existence of mankind is threatened by weapons unknown twenty years ago, the sort of mind that deliberately ignores the scientific notion of acceleration seems both socially dangerous and intellectually absurd.

Although Hall's theory adds no new facts, it does suggest that the "conflict of the two cultures" might more accurately be regarded as the discontinuity between the formal and technical levels of one culture. The purely literary scholar, necessarily concentrating his attention upon the formal modes of the past, tends naturally to accept the formal aspects of his own culture. The physical scientist, engaged in the technical analysis of facts revealed by technical processes, is often forced to challenge the formal part of culture. Since technical behavior may initiate change, the scientist usually feels that he is taking part in progress. Since change threatens tradition, the literary scholar tends to disapprove of progress and to condemn its Wellsian prophets.

Such generalizations must be used, of course, with caution because the typical scientist and the typical literary intellectual do not exist. Each individual scholar is a unique human being, functioning at all three cultural levels. Yet such an analysis may help to account for the motives behind the great debate. The predicament of the literary intellectual is that his pre-scientific image of society is inaccurate, so that his efforts to adjust to it can never be entirely successful. Failing to see that change is normal and that values are therefore relative, he attaches himself to a static image of society and seeks his standards in the past. When inevitable processes begin to alter the transient institutions to which he is attached, he feels that his individual existence is in danger. Lacking the relativistic orientation that might have enabled him to adopt successfully to his changing environment, he has no choice except to react in terms of emotional frustration. Thus Wells may have been more successful than Gissing because he had a more accurate idea of the nature of progress.

All his life Wells broke the formal patterns of behavior, in favour of the informal and the technical. This accounts for such facts of his personal life as his irregular education, his vocational adventures, and his extra-marital escapades, and for such features of his career as his disagreement with Henry James, his impatience with the short story as a literary type, and his efforts to invent a new form for the novel. But the freedom to indulge that tendency had been labouriously earned, in the long and bitter struggle recorded in the early fiction.

Wells's own conflict of the scientific against the literary attitudes was a war of many battles, yet the outcome is foreshadowed as early as The Time Machine. In the unfinished early versions, he is writing almost entirely as the literary intellectual, with Hawthorne as his model (Exp., 254). The scientist in this version, Nebogipfel, is a kind of demon; the science is a sinister black magic, used neither to do practical good nor to increase pure knowledge. The Time Traveller in the final version is diametrically different: affable and humane. He is disposed to aid the human-like Eloi, and he uses his wonderful machine to obtain new knowledge.

"The Cone" is another surviving fragment which shows an earlier stage of Wells's conflict. Horrocks, the ironmaster, is the image of scientific technology. Lacking poetry and imagination, he finds beauty in machinery, in his blast furnaces, "full of an incessant turmoil of flames and seething molten iron." The adulterer, Raut, is the literary and aesthetic intellectual. Horrocks wins the struggle between them, but only through a symbolic act of self-destructive violence. The story suggests that Wells was obsessed by the same conflict, and that at this early period he could see no solution that would not destroy his self-identity.

In a real sense, the early fiction is an imaginative laboratory in which Wells is testing the idea of progress--which functions as a symbol for the scientific bulture in conflict with the traditional literary culture, and usually also as a more ambiguous symbol at a less public level of meaning, often in the earliest stories standing for the defiant revolt of the primal self against society, but sometimes in the later stories standing for the altruistic love that binds the self into social union. His reagents are the isolated qualities of the human mind: pure fear, pure hatred, pure selfishness, pure ambition, pure intelligence, even pure benevolence. The tests are severe to the point of destruction, yet somehow the idea survives.

Considered in this way, the early fiction reveals a deeper consistency beneath the surface contradiction of Wells's whole work. These imaginative tests had proved to him that progress is a precarious struggle for survival in the face of external and internal dangers, and that " the implacable law of life" has always been "adapt or perish." As he watched time running out, he grew impatient and discouraged; yet the pessimist of the early fiction is distinguishable both in the desperate optimist of the middle years and the darker pessimist of The Mind at the End of its Tether.

The first of these imaginative tests of progress, The Time Machine (1895) shows that possible future human advancement is limited not only by the nature of the cosmos but by a self-destructive mechanism inherent in progress itself. It also reveals the principle of cultural relativity, with its uncomfortable consequences that the successful adaptation of the future is likely to arouse the moral or aesthetic revulsion of the present.

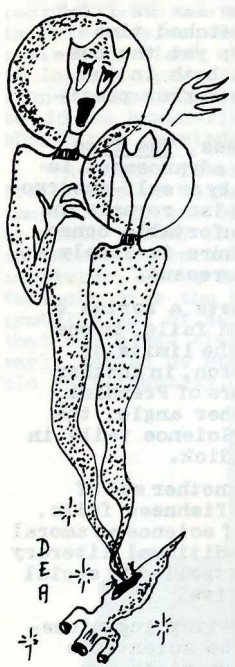
In The Island of Dr. Moreau (1896) Wells tests a series of forces as causes of progress. Natural selection fails, in one symbolic interpretation of Moreau's search for the limits of plasticity in living matter. So does human reason, in another interpretation. Human benevolence, in the figure of Prendick, fails in a more destructive way. Seen from another angle, the novel is a test of both science and humanism. Science fails in the symbol of Moreau, as does humanism in Prendick.

In The Invisible Man (1897) Wells tests yet another set of possible sources of progress. Griffin's pure selfishness fails. So does his pure intellect. Griffin is a symbol of science as amoral power, pitted against satiric symbols of the traditional literary culture. The test shows that pure science, uncontrolled by social tradition, is both destructive and self-destructive.

In The War of the Worlds (1898) Wells is testing ingeniously purified samples of science and humanism. The scientific culture is that of the Martian invaders; the humanists are their terrestrial victims. Stripped of humane ethics and emotions, the culture of science is pure horror. The Martians live like vampires on the injected blood of men. The artilleryman , a human symbol of the scientific culture, is shallowly optimistic, absurdly pretentious, and obviously doomed. But the counter symbol, the curate, is no better for his membership in the formal culture of the literary intellect.

Finally, in The First Men in the Moon (1901), Wells tests pure intelligence, emotionless and highly specialised, as a source of progress. Cavor is a computing machine, scarcely disguised with his human mannerisms. The world in the moon is the pure scientific culture, ultimately evolved. The Grand Lunar is the ultimate scientific intellectual. The pure scientific culture is pure nightmare.

Taken together, these novels constitute a striking critique of pure reason. They examine a set of symbols in which intellect is detached from emotion and morality: Nebogipfel, Moreau, the Invisible Man, the Martians, Ostrog, Cavor, and the Grand Lunar. The worlds dominated by these symbols are ugly caricatures of the culture of science. The common theme of these stories is that reason, unrestrained by traditional ethics or by humane feelings, can guide progress only in the direction of Hell.



When one comes to summing up Wells's achievements, this criticism of the idea of progress demands first place. A pupil of Huxley in the Darwinian school, he sees mankind as another biological species subject to the laws of evolution. He defines progress as successful adaptive change to meet the conditions of survival. He explores the external limits set upon the human future by the nature of the cosmos, and the internal limits set by the nature of man. Aware that adaptation is always relative to environment, he remembers that ethical ideals are often irrelevant to the evolutionary process and sometimes in conflict with evolutionary reality.

As a literary artist, in the fiction written before he had renounced the means of art, he is also admirable. The inner conflicts that vitalize his early writing arise from the universal ambiguities of life, and the symbolism reveals his own struggle to cope with complex and ironic reality. The emotion is genuine, the detail telling, the workmanship sometimes distinguished.

As a humanist, he is sympathetically aware of the divided nature of man, of all the conflicting demands of the self and society. His profound sense of the potential dignity and greatness of mankind is balanced by an equal knowledge of human limitations. Again and again, he points out the gulf between human nature and human aspiration. Enlightened reason brings the same kind of disaster to the world of Mr. Fotheringay and the island of Dr. Moreau.

As a social prophet, Wells is due more honour than he commonly receives. Although "the shape of things to come is still unclear," as Wagar writes,

> Wells' prophetic career is a kind of bridge, a bridge of ideas, between the perspectives of nineteenth-century Western civilization and the coming world society.
>
> (op. cit., 276)

At a time when the nuclear technologists have offered humanity the alternatives of unity or extinction, when an exploding world population is infected everywhere with uncriticised ideas of progress, when every graph of human change is curving upward toward an impossible vertical rate, the social prophecies in the early fiction call for a new consideration.

As a writer of science fiction -- which involves being scientist and humanist, social prophet and critic of ideas, literary artist and popular romancer -- Wells has not been surpassed.

FOOTNOTES

1) "Evolutionary Ethics," Touchstone for Ethics (New York, 1947), 138-9.

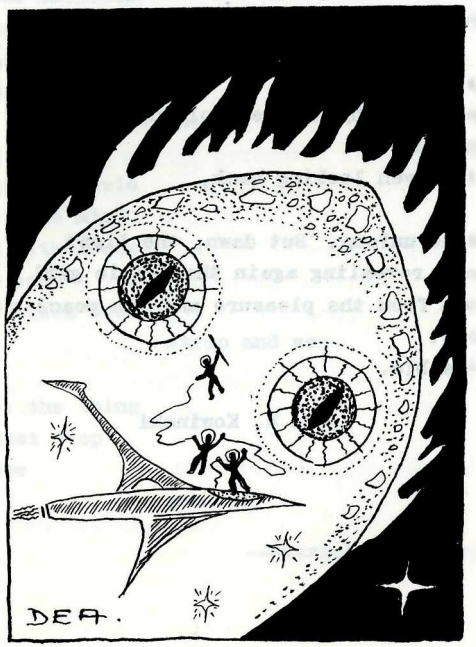
2) See Royal A. Gettmann, George Gissing and H.G. Wells: Their Friendship and Correspondence, passim; Experiment in Autobiography, 481-93.

3) "Science, Literature, and Culture," Commentary (June, 1962), 461-77.

4) The Silent Language (New York, 1963), 37.

5) The Fate of Man (New York, 1939), 247.

6) See Jack Williamson, "A Study of the Sense of Prophecy in Modern Science Fiction" (unpublished Master's thesis, ENMU, 1957), passim.



DAY BREAKING DAY

Then, one by one, I lifted up her veils.
In the lane, waving my arms. Across the plain,
where I notified the cock. In the city,
she fled among the steeples and the domes;
and running like a beggar on the marble quays,
I chased her.
Arthur Rimbaud

Dawn, the sun is always coming up
on you, amazing the newness.
I am hardly aware of this moment,
just arriving from sleep.
My first splash into the morning of others
leaves me dazed and desperate.
It is usually midafternoon
before I can remember yesterday
and say, oh yes, I had it all figured out.

I had the solutions.
It would be minute by minute, solving
one by going on
to the next. Even looking back,

I would see no unison. But dawn, the light
on your face, revealing again the little girl
not yet grown from the pleasure and the peace of night
made me forget
what was possible.

--W. R. Kowinski

IN COUNTLESS SOURCES

He saw her
strip outstrip
all else of value
in his eyes
she danced

to void what had been
he with power
used abused
to cancel the performance
had been done
upon a stage

does it follow
that the audience
unready as he claims
is equally unready
for the show of life
another day

the tapping heels
bruised the mind
of him with power
and he sees
in countless sources
strip and sex

world's the thing
he cannot stop
the show
goes on

--Patricia Ann Morris

PATTERN

Tonight there is a sky
bisected
by a thinning contrail: severed
sky.

Crescent moon glimmers palely
like a shattered
pearl in water:
broken moon.

Near the moon is one small star
whose radiance is lost: dim star.

I watch
and stand
beneath a tree
in shadows flickered by the wind: in splintered dark.

I feel desire
for some other perfect world:
recurrent wish.

Fragmentary imperfection
means for me
half
death.

Patricia Ann Morris

AT AN INSTALLATION,
THE COURT MUSICIAN,

Old Scarlatti at his harpsichord,
observed, Dedications--
in fact, all celebrations--
are formal things, stylized
occasions for pride and plumage,
and why not? Ceremonies
should have bold wings.
What's the peacock's tail for?
Auspicious events in ancient times
were founded or floundered,
confirmed or denied
by the passage or entrails of birds,
whose patterns in flight
and feathery colours,
gold against the sky,
were the shapes of history,
like these wiry tones
twanging as I twist them
out of old dances into differences,
sounding-links deep as yesterday,
unfathomable as tomorrow--
as my almost countless sonatas
vibrate in the never still air.

--Frederick H. Candelaria

THE INN OF THE WORLD

When it is one A.M. in Peking,
two in Tokyo, & whee!
three in Sydney--

it is noon in New York
the day before, & you are
turning to me slit-eyed, soft

as cherry blossom--
already fifty
places at once!

--Gary Gildner

FOR R. R., WHO CONFUSED HIS CHILDREN'S NAMES

the given
is one of a series.

The sun and moon
name each child.

The child
names himself.

There is no moment in time
but hears a new name.

Even death's
is not the last.

Call them
everything.

--Philip Dacey

POEM

There is lightning on the edge of the water
thay are filling the cans tonight.
I'm not writing because I'm dropped
so I'm driving
In our relationship
we multiply like steel
(It's not hard
to get turned on
in Dallas, Chris says
But I laugh
kicking him in the night)
Conversations go like
send me the poems
tell me how it feels
forget tape
forget breakage
I don't care where you are
I ripped my jeans
but I got here, first, I think
Though I killed myself outting corners
"Dope" you mumbled "Dope"
I'm afraid I'll always move
by revolving at night
and flatter myself
by saying: this is all significant
my measuring rod
is in an empty milk bottle
filled with the warped version
of your sonnet texts. Hello.

--Michael Shain

FROM A LETTER

Dear Father: concerning my exile
and further rewards, little can be said
that was not screamed across the dinner table
all through earlier years. My actions
are not yours, as my life was once the
arrival of your son in early October,
eighteen years ago. Since then
the Schuykill River has become to me in ways
another river, where nightly sailors
vomit at seeing the polluted shine,
and warriors without reason climb
into their polished ships and sail
where babies burn for liberty and monks revolt,
yet here, our neighbors throw insults across
the streets, where dark faces
mourn the death of summer's lace.
Father, all last night I heard these sirens
amid the tranquil violence I feel,
and thought at last my life would rest
within the outcome of the law already broken,
and I would not need to speak again
to alabaster men and women, caught in a kind of
security in silence derived from fear,
who listened without hearing, judged
before the words, however spoken,
ever began to sound.

--Michael Shain

IN THE CEMETERY

"Peter Warren is dead,"
they said, laughing or crying;
I couldn't tell which;
they were too far away,
and I was
behind a stone.

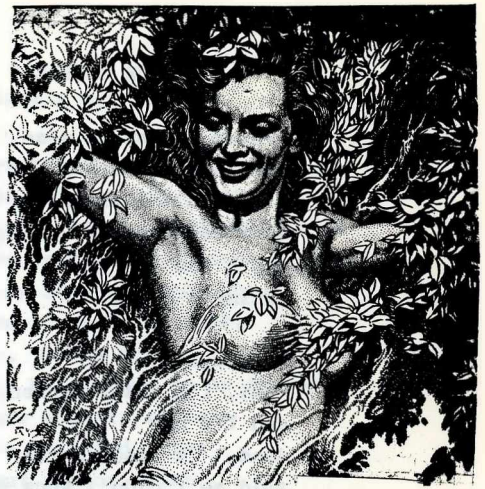
I thought,
"But, I'm Peter Warren,
and I'm not
dead." A black angel
told me I didn't know what
I was talking about.

They were about
to lower the casket
when I went up,
screaming,
made them
open it,
and, sure enough,
it was me.
But it was 2 dimensional,
a drawing I'd made
of me. They were burying a drawing.
And just then
a big guy in a plaid shirt
hit me
on the head
with a shovel.

--Peter Warren

PHILIP JOSE FARMER'S "THE LOVERS"

by Leland Sapiro



Editor's note:
This first article is an "updated" version of a review originally printed in the University of Saskatchewan Kol Hillel, 1965. The Lovers first appeared in the August 1952 Startling Stories (from which Virgil Finlay's illustrations are taken) while the enlarged book version was issued in 1961. Those who have read Mr. Farmer's story should omit this review and go directly to the Afterword; those who haven't should regret that this aspect of their education has been neglected.

For Non-Jewish Readers:

Talmud refers to a set of Rabbinical interpretations, on Mosaic law, completed during the first six centuries of the Christian Era. Talmudic works are classified as Mishnah, a set of religious-legal decisions compiled by Rabbi Judah in third century Palestine, and Gemara, or further expositions of Mishnah.

Following the Apocalyptic War (probably sometime in the twenty first century) there are about a million human survivors --who live in Israel, the islands of Hawaii and Iceland, and other scattered localities--and during the next several centuries they repopulate the earth. Citizens of the Haijac Union (descended from the Hawaiian and Icelandic settlers) occupy the Western Hemisphere and northern Europe, while the Israeli Republic includes the Mediterranean countries and Asia Minor. There is also a no-man's-land in Europe, claimed by both Haijac and Israeli states, which bound it on the north and south; but neither side wishes to take aggressive action that might instigate still another war.

Nevertheless, the Haijac Union still follows, in an altered sense, the Jewish tradition. The Archurielites, wearers of the Iamech, rulers of the State-and-Church, affect beards and robes in the style of Orthodox rabbis; while Hebrew, although read only by savants, has been infused (along with Hawaiian) into everyday speech--as attested by the shalom aloha form of greeting and the abba designation for elderly males.

Also, personal conduct is regulated by a book called the Western Talmud, which, I regret to say, is no more related to Mishnah than is The Fisherman's Bible to the Old Testament. Written by a single individual, a messianic figure named Isaac Sigmen, "the Forerunner," the Western Talmud is an occult mixture of twentieth century pseudo-science and New Testament mythology--complete with a Judas-Satan figure called "the Backrunner."

The moral teachings in this book are derived from the most rigourous aspects of Christian asceticism. Natural bodily functions like eating are regarded by Isaac Sigmen as disgusting--with meals in the Haijac Union being consumed under a linen hood so as to conceal the act from onlookers--and physical love, "the bestial act," is conceived as a wicked necessity, something which (to quote Moral Lecture AT-16) "the Cosmic Observer has not yet eliminated in man's evolutionary development."[2]

But despite its moral inhibitions the Haijac Union is scientifically prolific, with space-travel a practised accomplishment; and in fulfilment of a Forerunner prediction, Haijac interstellar explorers have found another planet--Ozagen, forty light-years from Earth--suitable for human habitation. That this planet is already occupied matters not at all to the Haijac rulers, who give the customary religious sanction to their murderous activities. "Project Ozagenocide," then, is to result in the extermination of all native inhabitants; but before executing their plan, the terrestrial visitors live among the Ozagen residents, ostensibly in friendship, to learn their language and study their technology.

The natives, called Wogs--and their planet, "Oz-again"--because of their resemblance to Frank Baum's Professor Wogglebug, are approximately human in size and shape, although they are related more to the insect than the simian family. (On their planet, the author explains, there had also existed a second race of creatures "remarkably resembling human beings"--a "quarrelsome, greedy, pernicious breed," whose obnoxious behavior had necessitated their extermination.)

The story is narrated from the viewpoint of a terrestrial linguist, Hal Yarrow,[3] whose duty is to compile a dictionary for the language of Siddo, the dominant continent on the planet. While living among these creatures, Yarrow has various mimetic experiences that are grotesque, terrifying, and ultimately tragic.

At the start of the sequence Yarrow is living secretly with an (apparently) human female, Jeannette, whom he had met on Ozagen. Jeannette explains that her father was from a group of Frenchmen who, seeing their country squeezed in by Haijac and Israeli states, "had left in six spaceships to find another Gaul rotating about some far-off star." (And Yarrow accepts this explanation without further thought.)

One night, Yarrow, accompanied by Fobo, his Wog neighbor and friend, sets out to buy an alcoholic drink for Jeannette; and in a Siddo tavern he is introduced to a kesarubu, or tavern beetle, which manufactures alcohol by fermentation of sugar in its stomach. Periodically, the creature is fed a highly sugared meal and periodically it regurgitates the finished product.

> "These creatures are a superb example of parasitical mimicry. Though quasi-insectal, they look much like us. They live among us and earn their board and room by furnishing us with a cheap and smooth alcoholic drink. You noticed its enormous belly, shib? It is there that they so rapidly manufacture the alcohol and so easily upchuck it. Simple and natural yes?"

But after leaving the tavern Yarrow undergoes a less amusing experience (see illustration below), and is obliged to recall Fobo's warning spoken earlier that evening:

> "The insects of my planet have...specialized far beyond those of your world...You know of the parasites and mimics that infest ant colonies? The beetles that look like ants and free-load off the ants because of that resemblance? We have things analogous to those, but they prey off us. Things that hide in sewers or basements or in hollow trees--and creep around the city at night."

The hideous insectal face was pointed at him

Yarrow is uninjured by this particular encounter, but there are unpleasant facts about mimicry still to be learned. His life with Jeannette had meant a giving-up of the puritanical morality inculcated since childhood--but the final renunciation had been joyfully complete. This idyllic existence, however, ends quickly; for Yarrow's altered patterns of behavior--his refusal (on Jeannette's request) to grow a beard, his consumption of twice the normal amount of groceries, etc.--has been noted by his superiors and studied by Haijac psychologists, who make the obvious inference. And when his partner becomes pregnant Yarrow is obliged to reveal his secret to the Wogs themselves--and, in particular, to Fobo, who tells him with whom and with what he has been residing:

> "The lalitha are the highest example of mimetic parasitism known. Also, they are unique...in that all are female.
> "...the lalitha was Nature's most amazing experiment in parasitism and parallel evolution. As man metamorphosed into higher forms, so the lalitha kept pace with him. All female, mind you, depending upon the male of another phylum for the continuance of the species...
> "It is astonishing the way they became integrated into the prehuman societies...Only when homo sapiens developed did their troubles begin...So they resorted to artifice, and disguised themselves as human women. A thing not hard to do --unless they became pregnant.
> "In which case they died."

Nevertheless, the tale concludes happily enough, with the visiting Earthmen--except for Yarrow himself--being destroyed and the Wog civilisation thereby preserved. This aspect of the story is handled with typical skill. Earlier, the author had been careful to show that the Wogs were in the important sense "men," i.e., sentient and sensitive beings--and just before the destruction of the ship from Earth this insight is achieved by Yarrow himself, who (along with the reader) immediately stops identifying himself with the terrestrial cause: "He was no longer an Earthman, or, at least, not a Haijac."

Now, a "factual" objection to Mr. Farmer's Haijac society is that its other-worldly ethical system cannot be inferred from Rabbinic Judaism -- so it may be instructive to give an historic and then a "literary" argument.

Recall, first, that there once existed a Jewish monastic sect, the Essenes, whose rules for chastity and frugality corresponded to the behavior enjoined in the Haijac Union. This sect received public attention as the suspected perpetrators of the Dead Sea Scrolls--although the Scrolls are now attributed by informed opinion to a group of political extremists, the Sacarii ("Dagger Men") who rebelled against Rome in the first century.

Featured in the Scrolls are a so-called "Teacher of Righteousness," presumably leader of the extremists, and his enemy, the "Wicked Priest," evidently the representative of "official" Judaism, who was sent to "swallow him up" on the Day of Atonement --and I will guess that these two are the prototypes for Mr. Farmer's "Forerunner" and "Backrunner." (Since the Scrolls were discovered in 1947 and The Lovers not published until 1951, this conjecture is at least consistent.°)

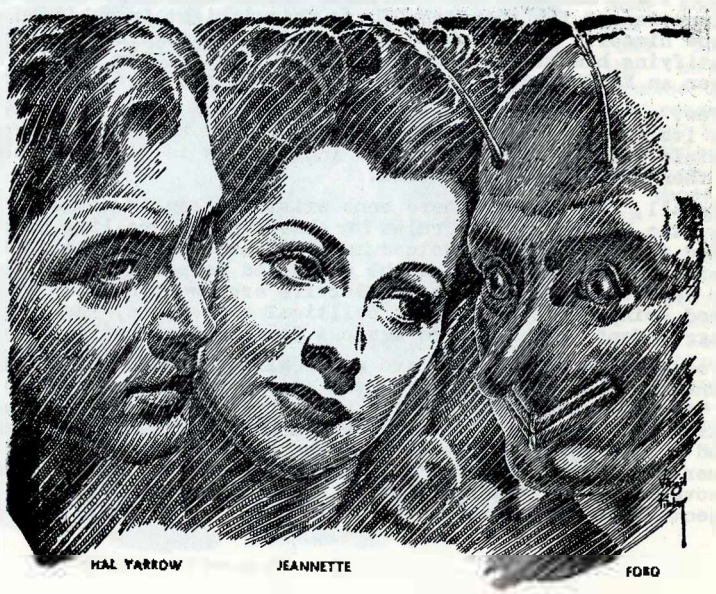
Of course, there is still the argument from naive realism: that Mr. Farmer has used not contemporary but first century Judaism--or, rather, a minor segment of it--as basis for his story. An answer depends on the literary sophistication of the reader; here I'll assume the maximum and just say that such factual use of sources is irrelevant.

In any case, we notice that Mr. Farmer's central theme is mimicry and that the mimicry observed on Siddo is in a sense duplicated on Earth. Just as the Kesarubu and the giant night bugs are distorted images of the dominant life-form on one planet --and the lalitha, of the extinct life-form--so the Haijac Union is a hallucinatory image of its great enemy, the Israeli Republic. There exists, one can say, a correspondence between biological mimicry on one planet and sociological mimicry on the other.

True, we receive only indirect information about this relationship on Earth. Thus when Yarrow is asked, "Do the Israeli... hide their faces when they eat?" he has to answer no--and he has to justify his answer by noting that before the coming of the Forerunner, his people, too, " ate naked and unashamed." Again, relative to Jeannette's supposed addiction to alcohol we are told that "...alcoholics in the Haijac Union were not cured but sent to H. Therefore, no...therapies had been worked out for addicts."

So we learn that inhabitants of the Israeli Republic are not burdened with a neurotic sense of shame, and we infer (or at least hope) that alcoholics there are sent to a location more pleasant than "H." From such information, then, via hints and allusions scattered through the story, we surmise that the Israeli society is not "based on fear and ignorance and superstition" as is its western counterpart.

In short, the Haijac Union bears the same relationship to the Israeli Republic that the parasitical mimics on Siddo bear to their prey--and the vivid expression of this similarity is what constitutes the novel's success.



FOOTNOTES

1) The one ambiguity in this novel is the status of the unseen but omnipresent Isaac Sigmen: whether he plays the same role as the Messiah in Christianity or Mohammed in the religion of Islam. From oaths and prayers in the Haijac Union -- "Sigmen help me," "Sigmen bless," etc. -- one might infer that he is both Prophet and Lord, but from other references to "God" or "the Cosmic Observer," where Sigmen is not mentioned, one suspects (correctly, according to the author) that Sigmen and his Maker are regarded as two separate beings.

2) Compare with the anti-sexuality in Olaf Stapledon's Last and First Men, with its emphasis on "total spiritual development." Sigmen's views are exactly those of the Last Men, who conceive the dissemination of human sperm as a painful fact of human existence but nevertheless as "a supreme religious duty."

3) Noteworthy are this author's references to the fearsomely complicated Siddo syntax and the difficulties encountered by any terrestrial who tries to learn it. Such linguistic awareness, duplicated since only by Jack Vance, is uncommon among s.f. writers. As J.R.R. Tolkien says,

> ...the problems of communication between alien beings in different worlds...are apt to be perfunctorily and unconvincingly treated.

(Quoted by Daphne Castell, "The Realms of Tolkien," Carandaith, vol. 1, no. 2 (1969), p. 13; Paul Novitski, ed., 1690 E. 26th Ave., Eugene, Oregon 97403; four issues for $1.)

The interviewer remarks, "Remembering the number of 'translator machines,' 'communication helmets' and telepathic races to be encountered in sf, I heartily agree."

4) "The idea that sexual desire is something sinful and deserves punishment is entirely foreign to ancient Israel " (Standard Bible Encyclopedia, II (1006), quoted by Theodor Reik, Myth and Guilt, 113).

5) See Cecil Roth, "New Light on the Dead Sea Scrolls," Commentary, June 1964.

6) The conjecture was consistent but, as Mr. Farmer tells me, not correct.

AFTERWORD

by Michel Desimon

Translated by Fred Patten

For those who had read The Lovers only as science fiction, it also might be interesting to consider this novel in the light of the Hebrew texts that determine its structure. From this viewpoint the story acquires an unexpected symbolic value, while still retaining its originality as science fiction.

Our far-seeing author goes back to the oldest Semitic traditions, the development of his story corresponding to the myths of man's genesis. To our knowledge, no American critic has noticed this aspect of the book, which is based on Jewish tradition, in particular, the theme of Lilith. In the maze of texts Lilith is far from easy to define and identify, the allusions to her being obscure and confused. Both knowledge and sagacity were required to find in this labyrinth all the occasional citations of Lilith and to fit them together in a coherent way.

In the first part of the novel, with its blend of Semitic traditions, the author portrays a puritanical society. Violently anti-sexual, it is an outre caricature of the Judeo-Christian civilisation--and even of the Islamic, where some women are veiled to this day. His society is based on the teachings of the Forerunner, author of the Western Talmud, a title that leaves little to be said if we remember that the Talmud is the authoritative Jewish code of laws.

In this society, an indictment of the basic morality of our own, women are chaste, austere, and moralistic. With respect to the vulgar "real" world, the female archetype that lives in the psychosis of the sinner is named Mary, an obvious Christian allusion. Without discussing such picturesque terms as the "Prophet River" or the "Gabriel Rocket," we would like to point out a most revealing person: the "Sandalphon" Macneff, Head of the "Sturch" or Church-State.

In that Jewish mystical doctrine known as the Cabbalah, "Sandalphon" designates the darkest part of the shadow, as opposed to "Metraton," the state of light.[1] Thus the story begins in the realm of Sandalphon, personification of darkness. Metraton will appear later in the guise of Fobo, i.e., Phoebus, the light of Apollo, who must illuminate the drama of how the lalitha are generated.

It is useless to dwell on the oppression of men under the dominion of the Sturch. But an observation is helpful about one slight detail: the mirror in the unmentionable.[2] Despite the stricture against looking at oneself in the glass any longer than necessary, Hal Yarrow lingers beyond a decent period--a single transgression, but one that foreshadows the rest of the story. For the Zohar, the most important Cabbalistic book, states that a man who looks at himself too often in the mirror rouses the spirit Sagatoupha, which will lead Lilith, the mother of demons, to him.

In his references to the mystical texts the author gives an erotic aspect to his novel, with its second part evoking a feminine being, the lalitha Jeannette, whose virtues are exactly opposite to those of his Judaic society. More than just a symbol, she is a "lilin," or "daughter of Lilith."[3] Fobo explains that the lalitha is a "mimetic parasite," which had integrated with humanity since prehistoric times and had followed an evolution parallel to it. Compare with the testimony in the Zohar that "In the fall from above, a female exists who is the most terrible of all the evil spirits. She bears the name of Lilith and she was the first presented to Adam."

Despite the mortality of other demons, Lilith and her daughters will live until the world is cleansed of impure spirits--and Farmer's lalitha also enjoys a lifespan that is indefinitely prolonged. And just as Isaiah[4] describes Lilith wandering in the ruins of Edom, so Farmer's lalitha is introduced to us at night, in the midst of ruins.

Like Lilith, Jeannette has not the sense of sin attached to Eve (the author's Mary), her terrestrial counterpart. Jeannette's love remains free and pure, and she wishes to free Hal from his complexes. She also asks him to make love in the light of a lamp; indeed she cannot experience orgasm unless the light is on. This detail brings us again to the Zohar: "The evil spirits venture out together and tour the world in hopes of surprising someone who, while nude, is engaged in conjugal relations by lamplight, since the children thereby generated are ultimately possessed by the demonic female, Lilith, who kills them" (I-14b).

But maternity itself is fatal to Farmer's lalitha, so to prevent it she takes alcohol furnished by a primitive insect -- just as the Sumerian lilitu, sacred courtesan of the mother goddess Inini, fulfils her ritual obligation by taking a special drink to avoid procreation. The Hebrews, combining Chaldean sacred prostitution with Dionysian mysteries, transform lilitu into "the wife of Samael the serpent" or "the Woman of Whoredom," who accosts travellers at crossroads and offers them drink. "When a fool approaches her, she[5] seizes him, embraces him, and pours poisoned wine into him."

It is normal, then, that the lalitha craves alcohol, since she is derived from sacred orgies and primitive theologies. Giving spontaneously of her entire self, she is drunkenness and primordial love, hunted by the new patriarchal movement that values only the task of procreation.

The reader might ask how Lilith, traditionally sterile, could have descendants, like the lalitha. But while Lilith cannot give birth to human children, a prerogative of Eve alone, she is[6] still the mother of demons, incubi, and succubi. Rabbi Simeon accuses Adam of having experienced guilty pleasure by his cohabitation with Lilith (Zohar I, 151-159a), and Rabbi Hiya comments: "For one hundred and thirty years two female demons united with Adam and with them he engendered children that were demons (Zohar III, 76a-b).

Of this singular sexuality Farmer gives an extraordinary transposition: the photo-kinetic nerves unique to the lalitha come from the retina, spread to the brain and then, following the spinal column, come out in the uterus--an uterus not at all resembling that of a human woman. The "photokinetic nerve" is therefore directly related to orgasm--a reminder of the rabbinical legend reported by Rene de Gourmont, in which Lilith has her brain displaced from her gonads:

> The new figure rapidly takes the desired shape. With a certain satisfaction the Creator's fingers mould the breasts and the hips. He moulds and remakes them, using more and more clay. Consequently He runs short when He begins on the head. After a moment of hesitation, He takes a handful of clay from the stomach. The result is a great cavity, but the clay from the belly produces the head which the woman previously lacked. The Creator blows breath into the nostrils and says: "Arise. Thou art Lilith."
>
> Lilith: A Play, John Heard, trans., 33 (Boston, 1946)

To our knowledge, no previous author has examined Lilith's physiology so thoroughly. In Farmer's biological fantasy a special hormone calcifies the skin to make the pregnant lalitha into a matricidal tomb. Allusions here are a bit risky, but we note that "the original skin of Adam consisted of fingernail."[7] More specifically, Rabbi Simeon identifies Adam's detached rib with the primordial Lilith and says that the Creator "..detached the rib, which is the image of rigidity, and replaced it with flesh, the image of clemency..." (Zohar III, 142b-143a).

So before the rib was separated from our primitive ancestor he had an outer shell. In his anthropoidal evolution the separation of this rib (the primitive female) was a noteworthy step: he lost his horny carapace to become a being of human flesh. Lilith, when separated, did not follow this evolution, but assumed her rudimentary characteristics. (Before being introduced to Adam, she was mate of Leviathan, the great serpent-dragon, a confirmation of her quasi-saurian origin.)

The lalitha, descendant of Lilith, lays eggs like the reptiles, even becoming her own shell, and like her ancestor she dies in the act of giving birth. And so the theme of Lilith is retraced to the fall of her first lover. Adam himself is definitely separated from Lilith, who for mankind, as for Hal Yarrow, represents the sorrow of the first lost love. Such is the destiny of Lilith, cast out by the world into the empire of demons, that hell of which Dante read over the vestibule: "I was raised here by divine omnipotence and ultimate intelligence to be the first love"--the instrument of separation and loss whereby one loses all hope.

FOOTNOTES

1) Sandalphon, "the angel of prayer" (to quote Longfellow's poem about him) is among the tallest in the celestial hierarchy--his head, according to the Talmud, reaching clear up to Heaven. Metatron, his twin brother, is the angel of light, it being he--under the alias Michael--who provided the pillar of fire that guided the Hebrews' desert wanderings. When not listening to prayers or furnishing illumination, the two brothers fight Samael ("Satan"), Lord of Evil. (See Gustav Davidson, A Dictionary of Angels, New York, 1966.)

2) Fred Patten (in a letter) observes that the word unmentionable is used deliberately in the book version to emphasise the puritanical nature of the Haijac society, where any explicit denotation of bodily functions is considered indecent.

FOOTNOTES (continued)

3) Lilith is derived from the Hebrew lail ("night"), which in turn originates from the Sumerian lil ("spirit") and the still more ancient succubus lilitu, in Chaldean.

4) "She, Lilith, the spectre of the night, established her home and found her bed of rest" (Isaiah, XXXIV: 14).

5) This is from Sitre Torah ("Secrets of the Torah"), another of the twenty one "chapters" that constitute the Zohar.

6) Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai of the second century was the reputed author of the Zohar, but modern critics attribute its compilation to Moses de Leon of Granada, a thirteenth century Cabbalistic writer, who first circulated it.

7) Sepher Ha Bahir 34-1. This is another Cabbalistic work, with the influence of the Zohar apparent "from their synonymous titles; both Zohar and Bahir mean 'bright'" (Universal Jewish Encyclopedia).

Editor's note: I took various liberties with Mr. Patten's translation to make it less literal and more literary and I was obliged to rewrite (and sometimes eliminate) Mr. Desimon's original footnotes, which in several instances were just senseless.

(Thus our critic gives two inconsistent definitions, neither correct, of Cabbalah, and after saying that the Torah includes the Babylonian and Palistinian Talmuds--which were not completed until the sixth century--tells us that the Torah was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai.)

Mr. Desimon's confused notions of Jewish religious and magical texts leads me to doubt the validity of his references to the cabbalistic Zohar and Sepher Ha Bahir, but approaching deadlines forced me to print them without verification. For the sake of honesty, therefore, I can only say: I hoped you enjoyed the essay, but don't take too seriously any of its scholarly references.

THE SEASONAL FAN

by

Jim Harmon

THE CREEPING HORROR

As Richard Nixon's first year in office marches on, we are entering a period of horror.

The horror story in all its forms is making a resurgence. The newest fiction magazine out following Man's first orbit of the Moon is Covent 13. The comic books knew a period of rebirth and publicity in which the super-heroes came back, but they are fading, being replaced by horror comics, some almost unbelievably lurid and tasteless. The daily TV show, Dark Shadows, has a more dedicated corps of followers than Star Trek (and with even less apparent reason).

Our tastes seem to have passed through a period of shining heroes into darkness. A little knowledge of psychology can be a dangerous thing but I would attribute one strong cause of all this to the assassination of Bobby Kennedy.

Whatever he may have really been, Bobby Kennedy was a symbol of hope and change to many young people. Perhaps not to the really "in" young people who preferred Gene McCarthy or Eldridge Cleaver, but to the typical youngsters of the leadership group. This was the beginning of disillusionment that saw us offered a "choice" between Slick Dick and Porky Pig.

Popular taste, like so many things, is on the basis of a more or less inevitable cycle, but there has to be something to key off even a predestined change.

We have passed through a period that by my calculations -- obviously not infallible -- should have produced a great classic hero of the stature of Tarzan or Sherlock Holmes. There was an opening for the job, but not enough talent to fill it. There were revivals -- reprints of Doc Savage which were remarkably successful in sales, new editions of Tarzan and of Burroughs' work in general, the reappearence of Captain America in the comics, and a renewed interest in Batman. The only new character of any significance at all -- and of course a rather limited significance considering the built-in limitations of the medium -- was the comics' Spider-Man.

There was an opening for a new, idealistic hero in literature. Up from the depths represented by Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer, we passed through the era of the moral neuter, James Bond, into--what actually turned out to be a vacuum. There were reprints aplenty of old heroes and even a few new hack novels of The Shadow and Nick Carter. Perhaps the closest we came to a new folk hero was the Hobbit. But, intentionally or not, the Hobbit is a tragic figure, rather than a heroic one. He is flawed--flawed by a childish innocence that can not truly understand evil or cope with it.

So we go from hero to anti-hero -- and the ultimate anti-hero is the Monster. The "classic" monster -- Karloff's Frankenstein Monster or King Kong -- is touched with compassion, and is almost justified to himself, like some lonely sniper on a rooftop. However, there are even more monsters who have no sympathy working for them, and who have just as many dedicated followers. Does anyone think Bela Lugosi's Dracula did anything but relish the evil he was committing? Perhaps it is not the new movie-makers' mistake in failing to give their monsters some element with which we can sympathise. Perhaps the modern audience does not need an excuse for the monster creating destruction. Perhaps the power to do his will is excuse enough. There seem to be no more reluctant monsters.

Certainly the monsters that people the new horrow stories need no excuses for their acts, in the main. Creating horror is their trade, and they practise it. Through the starkly black and white pages of Creepy and Vampirella comics-type magazines they prowl, creating death and destruction so that a pun may be cracked at the end. The text short-stories of the genre, even if printed on super-slick paper and purchased at a dollar a word, carry the same comic strip homilies.

The world of monsters and horror is not a place of hope and light.

It has been my personal experience that everybody I have ever met, obsessed with horror stories and especially horror movies to the exclusion of all else was in need of some kind of psychiatric help (if only that psychiatric help ever worked, which seems doubtful).

Almost any reader of fantasy or science fiction, or any fan of movies, likes some special horror stories. But those exclusively obsessed with them are a sick bunch. Markedly enough, all such people seem to be cursed with kleptomania. They will steal your eye-teeth, given a chance. I've found that science fiction fans can usually -- more often than not, by far -- be trusted with the loan of valuable magazines, books, artwork. Nothing is safe from the roving hands of a simon-pure monster fan. Theirs is a deep admiration for the creature who can supernaturally break the laws of man and nature, and they do their best to emulate that creature on a moral plane.

There is a second, entirely different reason for the resurgence of the horror story, to my mind.

The horror story is almost always a story.

"Story" has almost become lost in science fiction, the movies, comics, everywhere. J.G. Ballard has twisted "story" --or plot, if you prefer--into strange new shapes that mean something only to him and a select few. Samuel R. Delany and Roger Zelazny have virtually abandoned plot for a succession of usually well-wrought, sometimes poetic scenes. As for the movies, apparently they need not any longer even make sense (as a whole) so long as there are good scenes to temporarily divert the audience. All of this may well be due to our drug culture. Sometimes drugs send the mind roving, but more often (at least it has been my experience) they trap the mind in one spot and leave it unable to adequately remember the past or to extrapolate the future. Most moviegoers do not use drugs, but many of the movie-makers do. Aside from a leadership corps, audiences are sheep. They take what is handed them to an appalling extent.

In comic books, there was a turn from tight-plotting into another direction. The old horror comics of the early fifties--the E.C. Group and their competitors--were very tight-plotted and atmospheric in tone. When that genius of the comics field, Stan Lee, accomplished the unsuccessful first revival (some fifteen years ago) of Captain America, Human Torch, Sub-Mariner, he tried to use the same tight-plotting from the horror comics he was also editing. These super-hero stories had punch endings, bits of irony, all that. It was an unsuccessful grafting of two distinct forms.

For the second revival in the sixties, Lee concentrated the writing on characterization. Everybody knew the comics had to get better in some way to survive, but no one was quite sure in what way. Stan Lee found the way. His characters talked differently from one another, thought differently, acted differently. But plot was sacrificed to characterization and the comics stories became little but one long fist fight--but admittedly a fight between two recognisably dissimilar opponents.

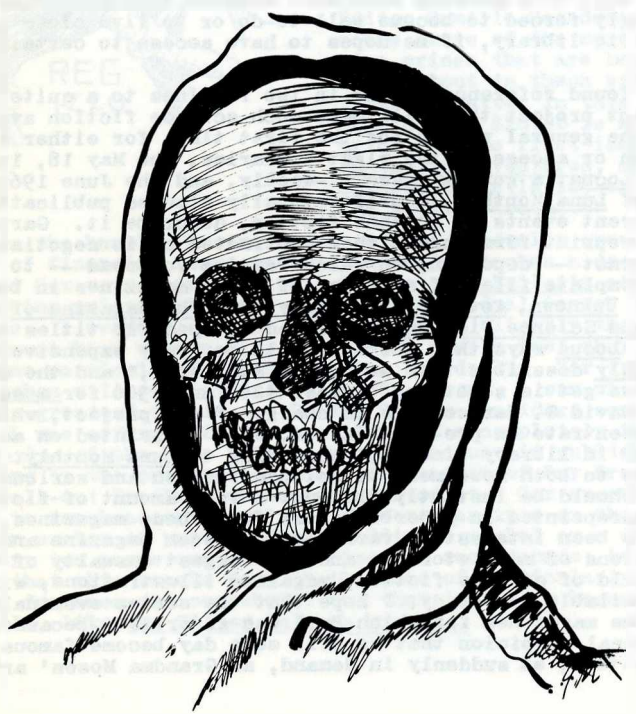
The fights came to be continued from issue to issue, in seemingly endless serials. From the tightly plotted stories of the fifties--some told in as few as three pages--

The fights came to be continued from issue to issue, in seemingly endless serials. From the tightly plotted stories of the fifties--some told in as few as three pages-- the Marvel line had come to stories that wandered over ten or twelve issues.

Once again, Marvel (and other publishers) are issuing horror comics, with stories told in six or eight pages. There has been an announcement of a discontinuation of serialized stories. The plot is coming back into the comic books.

I think the plot may come back into science fiction. I believe what the reader wants--what he has always wanted--is a good story, well told.

Some--not all, by any means--of the writers current in science fiction who were incapable of telling anything well have camouflaged the fact by not telling any story at all. I don't believe non-representational art will ever become a mass product. There aren't enough experts to separate real art from mere lunatic confusion.



OPERE CITATO

by

Harry Warner, Jr.

Something that runs through a lot of recent fanzines has struck me as quite significant and a trifle frightening. I've already commented on the amount of money that goes into some of the most elaborate current fanzines, but this is a different manifestation of the same fact that fandom could involve a lot of money, if a person has strong enough interest in the wrong things. Some of the most expensive and highest quality fanzines are already out of the financial reach of most fans who might want to put out a competing fanzine of similar luxury. In just the same way, it's growing ever more obvious that the reader is increasingly forced to become well-to-do or to live close to a large public library, if he hopes to have access to certain rarities.

I've found reference so far in two fanzines to a quite significant project that will make much science fiction available to the general public for the first time, for either a high price or access to the right libraries. The May 18, 1969, issue of Locus, a general news bi-weekly, and the June 1969 edition of Luna Monthly, a professionally slanted publication about current events in science fiction, describe it. Garrett Press, a reprint firm, has either contracted or is negotiating on a contract -- depending on which fanzine you read -- to reprint complete files of a number of major magazines in bound volumes. Unknown, Astounding, Galaxy, and The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction are listed as specific titles in prospect. Locus says that the sets will be "very expensive," Luna Monthly describes them as "quite expensive," and the only estimate we get is something between $200 and $300 for a set of Unknown. David G. Hartwell is in charge of the project, which "will concentrate on pre-1960 issues, will be printed on acid-free paper in library binding," according to Luna Monthly. The importance to both newcomers to science fiction and serious students should be instantly obvious: a vast amount of fiction remains unreprinted in paperback form from these magazines, there have been interesting variations between magazine and book versions of many stories, and the biggest casualty of time in the world of science fiction, magazine illustrations, will become available for study. I hope that the series eventually covers some magazines for which Paul was an artist, because of my irrational suspicion that he will some day become famous as a primitive, as suddenly in demand, as Grandma Moses' art became.

The May issue of The Fantasy Collector gives indications of how inadequate "inflation" is to describe some of the price trends in fantasy materials. This publication specialises in advertisements. One of the best-known dealers, who undoubtedly knows what the traffic will bear, asks $1,000 for the 1923 and 1924 issues of Weird Tales, bound in two volumes. Another group of 25 volumes, some of them representing the inferior issues of the 1940's, can be had for $875. Another dealer is asking more than $1 apiece for most of the incredibly bad World War Two issues of Amazing Stories and $3 to $4 for individual issues of Weird Tales from the mid-1930's. Editor Camille Cazedessus, Jr., seems aware of the more excessive prices that are being muttered about in these strange times. A letter in this issue asks him if $28.80 is a proper price for the first issue of Fantastic Adventures, and Cazedessus tells its writer the obvious truth.

Even the humble fanzine seems to have gradually grown into a sort of financial respectability when it reaches a decent age. Ed Cox writes in the April Collector's Bulletin about the growing prices asked and paid for individual issues or collections. I suspect that he underestimates slightly the sums that change hand when really interested people feel they must have some particular fan publications: he doubts, for instance, that Hyphen will consistently bring $1 a copy, a sum which Willis's greatest fan in the United States considers conservative. I was offered $25 for one issue of a completely forgotten fanzine of the late 1930's, simply because it published something by the pre-professional incarnation of Ray Bradbury, and an all-out Bradbury enthusiast wanted it. Cox suggests an effort to reach accepted values for most fanzines on the basis of their number of pages and age, adding a nickel or a dime for every ten pages and another dime for each decade; but he admits that this breaks down in the case of particularly important fanzines and one-shot items that instantly became very desirable, like Who Killed Science Fiction?

Despite the sense of security or the frustration that these fanzines bring, depending on whether or not the reader lacks a big collection in the attic, they are all desirable. Both Locus and Luna Monthly provide complementary information and opinion on fan and professional happenings. The Fantasy Collector makes fine reading even if you aren't interested in buying anything (like the fellow who wants to trade The Circus of Dr. Lao for Raggedy Ann Comics). Collector's Bulletin is not as luxurious or neat in appearance and method of reproduction, but those whose eyes are not allergic to purple dittoing will find an enormous assortment of facts about writers, stories, and magazines in every issue.

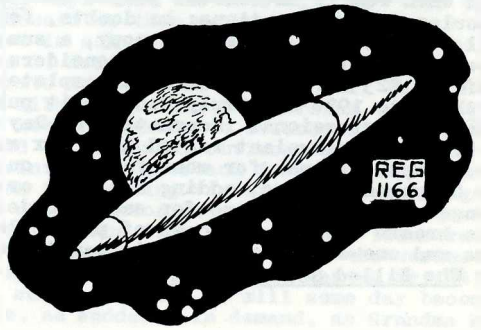
Locus: Charlie and Marsha Brown, 2078 Anthony Ave., Bronx, New York 10457; bi-weekly, six issues for $1.

Luna Monthly: Frank and Ann Dietz, 655 Orchard St., Oradell, New Jersey 07649; monthly, 25¢ per copy or $3 per year.

The Fantasy Collector: Camille Cazedessus, Jr., Box 550, Evergreen, Colorado 80439; monthly, $1 per year in the U.S., $2 per year elsewhere.

The Collector's Bulletin: Ned Brooks, 713 Paul St., Newport News, Virginia 23605; no price listed, published for members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, who receive it free.

Editor's note: Ned Brooks sells no subscriptions to his magazine, which is sent only to contributors and N3F members. Anybody who contemplates the second alternative should send $3 to Stan Woolston, 12832 Westlake St., Garden Grove, California 92640.



Selected Letters

824 S. Burnside Avenue
Los Angeles, Calif. 90036

Dear Leland:

I loved both Tarzan articles in [recent RQ's] and plan to use them as sources if I get a contract for a book about Tarzan (similar in plan to Baring-Gould's Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street). Keep the Tarzan articles going, if possible. They're illuminating and stimulating. Clarkson N. Potter, Baring-Gould's publishers, turned down my Tarzan project, by the way, because they said that there couldn't be enough scholarly or speculative articles about Tarzan to justify such a book. They're wrong, of course, but I can't convince them otherwise.

I agreed whole-heartedly with most of Jim Harmon's article. But several statements of his need correcting.

First, I did not regard my views as dumfoundingly radical when I gave the Baycon speech. Most of the ideas have been around a long time. What was new, or radical, if anything was, was the statement that we'd better start reconstructing our economy NOW or we'll die soon in our own garbage. Physical and psychic garbage. Also, man, ignorant though he still is, does have the knowledge and materials to create an economy of abundance. And he now has some idea of how to develop the potentiality for good in the very young. And some idea of how to create an environment where the full potentiality of the human being can be developed, if that human being so wishes it. (See the stimulating Ecstasy and Education, for one thing.) I did like, and agreed with, his comments on the "gun clubs." It's obvious that my speech not only aroused the reactionaries, which is to be expected, but revealed also that a number who were regarded as liberals are, actually, fossilized. And scared of the idea of change.

Jim Harmon may be right about fandom, but I believe in giving it a chance. We'll see what happens when my first document about REAP is printed and distributed...I've been handicapped by lack of time so far...Moreover, I'm slowly and carefully working out the first statement and spending much time in researching economics, psychology, education, finance, sociology, etc. But if I get a good response to the first document, or even a slightly encouraging response, then...I'll go it as a full time fiction writer. And have, I hope, more time to spare in developing REAP.

[...Relative to] Harlan Ellison...I remember being present at the Midwestcon many years ago when Harlan dropped a sack of water on Jim's head from Jim's hotel-window. Jim charged, like Roosevelt up San Juan Hill, up the steps, found the door to his room locked...I remember Jim knocking the door down with his fists a la Doc Savage's buddy Renny. I also remember the cops carrying Jim off, and the hat being passed around to pay for a new door and to keep Jim out of the hoosegow... Those were the days! We had exciting conventions then. Things happened to make the blood race. Wooden doors and iron men then.

...Personally, the Harlan Ellison I know is not one to be worshipped (what man is?). But he's certainly one to be loved, and if I were to recite his deeds of charity and compassion, and they are many, it would embarrass him. Especially since he did these with no thought of repayment. So I'll stand up for Harlan.. any day, admitting at the same time that he has faults and weaknesses (as who hasn't?).

Jim's last line is excellent. With his permission, I'll quote it in the REAP document.

Best,
Philip Jose Farmer

About this incident I recall Bill Blackbeard's suggestion that pieces from the Door be sold as relics (like slivers from the True Cross), souvenirs of those grand old days when, as P. Schuyler Miller might say, Conan could have lived again. But I'm happy to report that Jim and Harlan have patched up their differences, so there'll be no further news of trouble between them.

1224 Ingledene Drive
Oakville, Ontario

Dear Leland,

I enjoyed Henighan's "Tarzan and Rima, the Myth and the Message" His approach is fresh and original, and suggested a reason for the popularity of the apeman which I had not thought of before...I have not read Green Mansions, but now I am...much tempted to search it out.

"Again, urban entrapment seems to have triggered the creation of a poetic figure who in most ways negates the artificial on behalf of a reasserted naturalism." Now that you mention it, this seems painfully obvious in many of ERB's books. Perhaps the contrast between rural and city living is most striking in his adventure-romances. In particular I refer to The Mucker, The Girl from Hollywood and The Efficiency Expert. In all we see the clean-cut living of the country, but in the same books we see the decadence of the oppressive city and rural areas. Burroughs himself seemed to prefer living in the country, but unlike Hudson, he did something about it. (I.E., after punching cows, ranching, mining for gold and god knows what else he spent several years in Chicago, bouncing from one job to another. Upon discovering that his fantastic yarns could support him, he moved out of the city and was not urbanized again until the war.)

"Hudson's message is clear: something of the essence of this perfect union of mental and physical qualities has been lost forever; man cannot return to complete union with nature." Man, was that guy right...Just look at camping for instance! I love the way most people "rough it" in the woods these days--tents the size of a small cottage, gas stoves, enough canned food to feed an army, an icebox full of frozen steaks...

As far as "Though snobbery certainly plays a part in accounting for Tarzan's superiority..." goes, rubbish! I believe Burroughs made Tarzan a Lord for the women-folk. Leave us face it dad, no matter what nationality or class you are in, if you met and talked to a Lord or Baron or millionaire, your neighbours would be hearing about it for weeks. It adds to the element of irony found throughout Tarzan of the Apes and subsequent novels. It introduces complications and advantages as the apeman moves through "civilization." But all in all, even if Tarzan were titleless, he would be superior nevertheless...

"Apes" by the way was written for money, and not as popular literature. It was a fantastic dream written down on the backs of old letters and scraps of paper, and the author felt it was too incredible to even sell, let alone become popular literature. Therefore Henighan's statement that "The fact that Tarzan of the Apes was written as popular literature, while Hudson's book only became popular..." is based on a false premise.

Finally, I would tend to disagree with Henighan's appraisal of Tarzan as a Character...it would be a heartless person indeed who did not appreciate the suffering the mighty apeman must have gone through when he discovered the charred remains of what he thought was his wife in Tarzan the Untamed. No, real suffering does...exist in the fantasy world of Tarzan...

All in all though, despite a few minor points on which I disagree, I found "Tarzan and Rima" a very enjoyable article with new insights into the continuing theme of Lord Greystoke.

Sincerely,
Philip Currie

Of course, this search for the primitive explains many things before and after Tarzan--e.g., the Elizabethans' fascination with the American Indian and our present run of Sword & Sorcery novels. // I think Tarzan's title of nobility was used to express his physical superiority, a memory, we might say, of the archaic age when nobles were the only people with leisure to practise the arts of war.

---

216 West 78th Street
New York, NY 10024

Dear Mr. Sapire:

Thank you for sending me a copy of RIVERSIDE...I'd heard well of the magazine and was pleased to see what strikes me as an extremely literate publication, better, perhaps, than the field as presently constituted deserves.

The Borel article is interesting but fails to be, for me, a satisfactory reply to Pierce for several reasons: it does not attack Pierce on the issue of his irrelevance which is the only meaningful aspect of his article, it fails to take into account the disastrous and increasing polarization of the field and it similarly fails to note that Mr. Pierce has, at least, the tacit encouragement and approval of the editor of Analog, John W. Campbell who, having created the field seems to have dedicated himself at least the past decade to trying to destroy it; presumably because he wishes to leave things as he found them... we are all in debt enormously to Campbell but he is personally responsible for most of the trouble the field is now in (which is not to say that the field is only in trouble; it's in health too but the two intermingle) and communications like Pierce's, although certainly irrelevant as aforementioned, can hardly be said to be constructive...

Sincerely,
Barry N. Malzberg

I thought Mr. Pierce's entire article was irrelevant, in the sense that it merely expressed the same critical cliches that have prevailed since the trials of Flaubert and Baudelaire. // Although condoning Second Foundation activities, Mr. Campbell at least is not responsible for its kiddie crusade (see next page) to stop the New Writing.

Merry Hell Road
Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12603

Dear Leland:

I enjoyed Yogi Borel's article. Regarding J.J. Pierce and this whole "Second Foundation" movement (did you know that they're publishing a journal now?) the thing that has most astounded me is the simple fact that anybody takes them seriously! When Moskowitz published Pierce's original essay I got a good laugh out of it and expected that everybody else would laugh too and that would be the end of the matter.

Instead, some of the people he's attacked have reacted with remarkable viger—Spinrad, of course, is most obvious—while the number who have flocked to his banner is appalling...(How would that be for the name of a magazine: Appalling Science Fiction?)

I react to Pierce on two levels. First is the substance of his position: that the old SF romances of Doc Smith, ERBurroughs, Hamilton & Williamson and the whole rest of that crew, are the one true tradition in SF and the modern realistic school is e*v*i*l and perverted. This of course is a lot of bosh, but if Pierce and his disciples want to believe it I'm sure that's their right and they're welcome to it.

But the second level—their children's crusade to crush the new school of SF writing and restore the pristine purity of the old orthodoxy—my lord, have I fallen into a Kafka nightmare? This kind of literary thought police is straight out of Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia, Tojo's Japan or Torquemada's Spain.

We talk of SF's liberal mindedness and the welcome which it gives to new ideas, and then we find people like Pierce marching around wanting to burn the books whose contents they dislike, and blacklist their authors (if not worse)...

It's...hard to believe one's eyes and ears at a time like this.

Dick Lupoff

Let's just hope that the announcement on page three indicates that Mr. Pierce is now diverting his energies into more useful activities.

---

271 Portobello Road
London W.11, England

Dear Leland Sapire,

Thank you for sending me Riverside Quarterly. I have been familiar with it for some time, but this is the first occasion you have asked me to comment on it. I find it very difficult to do so.

My reason is that your approach is cerebral, where I tend to be emotional; you use logic where I rely on intuition...Consequently I cannot comment on your review of New Worlds, beyond saying that you may well be right. I see your point, that the fiction often is reminiscent of dream reveries, but I do not agree that "Entropy" by Pynchon is a failure because of its lack of connexion with reality...To me, any piece of fiction is only a success or failure in so far as it pleases or disappoints the individual reader. To me, "Entropy" is a success: I found it evocative and enjoyable. It may not have very great relevance to what I do after I get up in the morning and before I go to sleep at night. On the other hand, I could, so to speak, apply the scenes in the story to myself and my own experiences; so it is not that much a 'reverie.' More, I would have thought, a distortion.

I think perhaps you are too ready to class such distortions of reality as non-realities. There again, I suspect I am either arguing at cross-purposes, or unwittingly am in accordance with you; because I certainly didn't catch all the allusions of your article, and did not follow all the levels of argument involved.

As for J.J. Pierce, you almost put me on his side... [Yours] is the sort of critique which reveals nothing about the material under review, and, I felt, was just an opportunity for yourself to show off your greater powers of insight and literary appreciation compared to poor, dumb old Pierce.

This is all very well, but rather pointless in that the heavy machinery of literary analysis has been brought clanking into action against a foe whose arguments could be refuted by almost anyone who possesses a sense of proportion and a sense of humour. Unfortunately, I feel these two qualities are qualities you must lack; if you had a sense of proportion you wouldn't have been so laborious about poor Mr. Pierce, and if you had more sense of humour, you would either have made the article more lightweight and entertaining, dealing with such amusing subject matter, or you would have not bothered to deal with it at all.

I hope I am not being offensive, but I do feel this needs to be said. My reaction to your very cerebral approach is, I'm afraid, instinctively antagonistic, just as I am suspicious of trendy young journalists who write lengthy studies of beat music as an art form. Music is to be listened to and fiction is to be read and enjoyed; given a choice between a story written by a writer who works instinctively and intuitively (as many of the early sf writers did), and a story written with conscious literary purpose using great control and technique, I will always choose the former. This is of course a matter of taste. On the other hand, readers are too often made to feel (as Mr. Pierce has obviously been made to feel) that settling for the first kind of story is settling for a lower-grade, kid's-stuff product, while the intellectuals are all up there reading the important fiction.

People like Mr. Pierce would be far less shrill in their self-defence and counter-attacks if people like yourself were less supercilious. Your condescending attitude is just designed to make the so-called average sf reader feel defensive, scared and angry; and so the fight goes on. This is all rather sad, because ideally I would like to see readers broadening their tastes to enjoy both ends of the spectrum. The kind of new-wave [vs.] old-wave fighting that goes on fosters an entrenchment policy where readers retreat into one or other of the labels and the magnitude of difference between the two sides is exaggerated.

...I am sorry if this is an unsatisfactory letter of comment; it is certainly an emotionally-coloured reaction...I feel many sympathies with sf readers who like 'a good yarn,' not only because I used to be one of them myself, nor just because I still find it enjoyable to write that kind of thing, in addition to more serious work. The 'good yarn' has qualities which to me are more valuable than those of fiction which, for want of a better label, I call 'cerebral fiction.' Bearing in mind this outlook, it is hardly surprising that I find Riverside Quarterly not really my kind of magazine.

Sincerely
Charles Platt

I think Mr. Platt underestimates himself, since his own NW reviews are (in the non-pejorative sense) "cerebral."// The term "literary analysis" hardly applies to Yogi's essay, which (aside from its remarks on Ballard) contained nothing not familiar to a freshman English student. We would have preferred to ignore the Different article, but felt obliged to answer because of its wide circulation.// When our correspondent differentiates between just "good yarns" and his "more serious work" does he not presuppose a distinction between "kid's stuff" and "important" fiction?

---

2 Fisherman's Retreat
St. Peter Street
Marlow, Bucks., England

Dear Leland,

As for the Yogi Borel piece, I enjoyed it for an unexpected reason: it gave me a new insight into Ballard's catastrophe novels, and in Ballard's case I need all the insights I can get from anywhere--my state of mind while reading any given JGB work is usually one of baffled fascination. Your points against Pierce are generally well taken, and it's perhaps just as well that your tone is rather gentle; his fulmination is so vulnerable from so many sides that it would have been easy to chop it into oatsmeat, an experience from which he'd be less likely to learn anything.

...while I do not regard New Worlds with anything like the awe you do ("literally the only adult magazine in its field"), I think the New Thing a viable experiment (or rather, that it contains some); in any event, only a man completely ignorant of the history of small artistic movements would suppose it even possible, let alone desirable, to push the clock back as Pierce is attempting to do. Even from his myopic point of view it would have been better to have been patient; in due course what's valuable in the New Thing will be absorbed, the rest rejected, and that will be that. The controversy about it, as Brian Aldiss has observed, is chiefly a product of press-agentry, to which Pierce is unwittingly contributing...

Elsewhere in this issue, I was struck by the similarity between the views of Jim Harmon and those of the Pierce/SaM school, even down to the language (e.g., the imputation of sexual psychopathy to the opposition). Even back in the days of PITFCS "Publications of the Institute for Twenty First Century Studies" Harmon was explaining away his sales record by a conspiracy theory which now seems to have found a new focus in SFWA, just like Pierce's . Both are transparent nonsense; SFWA is nothing more than a working union of virtually every working writer in the business, old and new, and its only major vice is its timidity. It finds it difficult to muster enough agreement to produce clear majorities for Nebula awards; the chances of its adopting any single literary or political orientation are nil. The rebuttals to Farmer in the FORUM were there, after all, because the magazine had previously published his speech.

Regards,
Jim Blish

I'm glad that Mr. Blish perceived the article's purpose to be didactic rather than defamatory, but to judge from Mr.Pierce's reply (next page) such effort was wasted.

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275 McMane Avenue
Berkeley Heights
New Jersey 07922

Dear Sirs:

I was rather amused to see the analysis of my Different manifesto by Yogi Borel (or is it Yogi Bear?) that appeared in Vol. 3, No. 4 of your publication.

Well, at least his footnotes about my running "virtually a catalogue of critical cliches" attribute those cliches to the proper sources, so we know Mr. Borel doesn't like de Camp, Anderson, Heinlein and Campbell either. But few New Wavicles do, so this isn't surprising.

Mr. Borel hopes to startle me by pointing out there was pessimistic writing of old too, such as in Poe and Dostoyevsky. But since I was already aware of this, the impact of his revelation was dulled. I would answer, first, that in the old days, pessimism and such were not regarded as the only worthy basis of fiction, whereas today you can't get taken seriously unless you write fiction exclusively on the theme that man is filthy and insignificant. Secondly, Poe and Dostoyevsky wrote what they did interestingly, and even they did not believe only in the primacy of evil. Beside them, Ellison and Ballard are pygmies.

Our friend Mr. Borel is also disturbed at my classifying Ballard as a catatonic. Well, his characters do want to become crystals and such. The "galaxy-wide process" is only something invented by Ballard to justify this. And whether it's a cosmic process or seeking out a "group identity," the principle is the same. In 1937, I'm sure the old story he mentions is an exception--at least for science fiction, as opposed to weird fiction (which seems in many ways to anticipate the New Thing). As for Stranger in a Strange Land, it rather turned me off. But I'm not sure how serious Heinlein was about it--and I know Heinlein dislikes Ballard.

But Mr. Borel is not content with irrelevant criticism of what I did say. He goes ahead to use the fact I criticized Kornbluth for attacking "Doc" Smith as proving I consider Smith "the apostle of Romanticism," a phrase I never used. Then he quotes some critic to the effect that epics like Smith's aren't great literature because they don't have complex characters. Well, I never said Smith was an apostle of anything, or great literature, or that his characters were complex. He's fun to read, and I see no reason to beat-up on him as some do just because he's a safe target.

But I consider Roger Zelazny far more an "apostle of romanticism," and an example of good characterization and literary quality--and even "rational nobility," a phrase Mr. Borel neglects attributing to Algis Budrys, who was my source for it. I also like such modern "apostles" as Ursula LeGuin, Bob Shaw, Larry Niven and Fred Saberhagen.

As for definitions of Romanticism, I know there are many (see C.S. Lewis' Introduction to Pilgrim's Regress); the only reason I used one by Ayn Rand was because it was conveniently broad enough to include everything based on plot and dramatic conflict (which I like) as opposed to that based on the mindless workings of Fate. But I'm not a follower of hers, and Mr. Borel fails to mention that the only context in which I labeled her standards "exacting" had to do with classifying Heinlein as a Romanticist, whereas many critics seem to consider him a realist. (And the only place I cited Smith for "human interest" was in a paragraph using the phrase to indicate Smith's "Lensman" epic was a "human interest" story as opposed to a "gadget story.")

Mr. Borel seems to think I don't know about the schools that have succeeded Naturalism. Well, I do--I even mentioned them in my essay. I never called Ballard a naturalist; he's a surrealist (or at least, his adulators claim he is). However, whatever category the New Thing writers fit into, they share a certain attitude towards humanity and towards the universe, and it is this I oppose. Ellison's "The Prowler in the City" and Ballard's "The Drowned Giant" may be in different schools, theoretically. But there's really very little difference between them. And I'm not interested in Ballard's "uterine childhood"; I think the real world is more fun. If you want an amniotic utopia, you can have it--and you're welcome to it, for all I care.

Symbolism? Well, I guess that by his analysis, Mr. Borel wishes to symbolize the fact that he is smarter than the average Borel. But he fails, unfortunately. Looking back over my manifesto, I can see that it is flawed, but not for the reasons he states. I would advise him to read Lester del Rey's "Art or Artiness?" in the Fall 1968 Famous Science Fiction. He could probably come up with some inane comments about that, too.

Yours for the Second Foundation

John J. Pierce

Yogi's reply:

I don't think my argument was quite grasped by Mr. Pierce, who denies wanting a regression to childhood and yet wishes s.f. to return to its infant days of the 1930's. Mr. Pierce invokes an omniscient Authority (here, Lester del Rey) to give arguments he can't give himself and also uses other familiar rhetorical devices to prevent rational discourse--as when he introduces things that are irrelevant or attributes to the opposition beliefs that it never held.

(An example of the first: the phrase "rational nobility," which I "neglect attributing to Algis Budrys"--as if its origin made any difference. An example of the second: my alleged dislike of de Camp, Anderson, Heinlein, and Campbell. Incidentally, Mr. Pierce can't know what a cliche is if he thinks these authors can be "sources" for them.)

So I'll just take a few of Mr. Pierce's statements in (reverse) order and note that:

i) Human interest can't exist in a series that contains no human beings,

ii) Anybody who equates Romanticism with dramatic conflict (or with storytelling, as in Pierce's letter for L'Ange Jacque, Winter '69) can know nothing of either.

Also, Mr. Pierce hasn't read Sophocles if he thinks that the workings of Fate lack dramatic interest or E.A. Poe if he thinks this author didn't conceive evil as an end in itself. Finally, he hasn't done his homework (i.e., looked up the references given in the text) if he thinks mystic unification was an exception in the older s.f. Mr. Pierce's refusal to learn is especially apparent here.

2160 Cornwall
Regina, Saskatchewan

Dear Leland,

The last RQ I have is vol 3 #3...My comments...are on that one.

When I get back to Toronto I found CJRT, the FM station of Ryerson Polytechnic Institute broadcasting The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings every night Monday to Friday for a half hour, read by Bill Cadmus. Anyway, he did Smeagol just marvelously.

I missed The Hobbit, which I had read anyway, but I noticed more than before (when I read it) how consistently reactionary The Lord of the Rings is. The superstitious or ESP-type notions about what (e.g., proximity of Nazgul) can cause what (e.g., terror, decay) are not merely examples of superstition or magic but of a whole consistent, anti-scientific way of thinking. They are dragged in at every opportunity.

Technology is portrayed as evil (i.e., perversion of good, if you like). The reader will recall only that it produces air pollution and kills plants. It is indulged in only by Saruman, and to a lesser extent Sauron, who is guilty of a little mining.

The values are feudalist. Also, each Age of Middle Earth is worse than the one before--you will recognize this as another reactionary idea. The reliance on word-magic need hardly be mentioned.

Technology is totally defeated in the story, although nothing else is. One can only hope that Sauron will revive it again, but nobody in the story hopes this. There is no inkling of either scientific or social progress, even when a new age begins.

At the very end of the issue it seems that you're trying to imply that s.f. should not be judged by different standards from "mainstream" fiction. I claim that each work of art ought to be evaluated by its own standards--i.e., one has to figure out criteria by which to evaluate it, preferring those which it suggests itself.

Just as one cannot ordinarily apply the same standards
--to a piece of music as to a novel,
--to a funny short story as to The Lord of the Rings,
--to capitalism as to socialism,
--to abstract art as to representational art,
one cannot ordinarily apply the same standards
--to a detective story as to an H.P. Lovecraft story,
to "mainstream" fiction as to science fiction.

Perhaps by applying general semantics we can arrive at a language of agreement. A certain objectification of 'standards' seems to have taken place, as if it represented one solid thing. Your standards should certainly have components, and maybe some of these apply to all literature, but if some do not, then you will need what we should call several standards. Two sets with a few members different are not the same set.

There will be different standards for different kinds of science fiction--and I do not say that there are kinds of s.f., for each reader does his own classification, I hope, if he does any. Furthermore, one should not classify a story as s.f. merely because one finds it in a s.f. magazine or anthology...

Each work carries its own co-ordinate system, which it communicates to the observer by means whose effectiveness depends upon the observer's experience.

Incidentally, the relativity of standards is a common theme in s.f. That's why I like a lot of it. Social progress depends upon people's adopting new standards of evaluation.

So I find you guilty of spreading reactionary propaganda!

Kerry McCutchon

Our correspondent surmises too much from LotR's feudalistic background, which, as Dainis Bisenieks says, "is simply the proper setting for a heroic romance." He adds that the story is "conservative" not in the sense of "reactionary" but "...in the sense embodied in the word conservation" (Tolkien Journal, II, 4), the purpose of Gandalf & Co. being to conserve whatever is best from their peace-time world. Tolkien derides not science itself in the Ring story, but only the dehumanising effects of the Industrial Revolution. Since the author's own neighborhood provided models for much of LotR, I'd assume that Saruman's mill and the foundries of Mordor were patterned after the noisome factories of 19th century England.

Strangely enough, the notion of a work's "own standards" apply not to the work itself, but only to a group of works--as when we say that a Sousa band march can't be judged by the same criteria as a Beethoven symphony. But within a group, standards do exist--as when we say Bela Bartok was a first-rate composer and Jan Sibelius was not. There are literary standards--and as Jim Blish reminds us, one of the critic's jobs is to point out where and how such requirements of minimal competence are not being met. As noted before, if s.f. were somehow distinct from "mainstream" then so many Eminent Victorians couldn't have written what we now classify as science fiction.

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3 Las Palomas
Orinda, California 94563

Dear Lee,

...the Harmon thing didn't insult me or anybody else. An insult has to have semantic content, whether the statement it makes be true or false; this had none. It wasn't even offensive, the way the yelping of the neighbor's dog often is, since after all it didn't fill the atmosphere.

I am a little distressed on Phil Farmer's account, he being a gentleman and therefore doubtless embarrassed by seeing his name in such a context.

For the record, the dispute in SFWA Forum was not over his speech as such but over the propriety of its being circulated--without his foreknowledge, I believe--by an organisation to whose stated purposes its subject matter was not directly relevant. It was quite an amicable argument and, when it appeared that a majority favored such material being circulated, we in opposition yielded without hard feelings. Also for the record, I'm a dedicated conservationist myself, who simply doesn't happen to think that Phil's proposals are very practical. We remain on excellent personal terms and cooperate as actively as our geographical separation allows within the rather broad area of agreement between us.

As for Heinlein and me and various others being reactionaries, well, that was one of Hitler's favorite swear words too. Why don't some of these overheated lefties look around at the world that all our children will have to inherit, and see just what it is we're reacting against?

Regards,

Poul Anderson

Not being fully acquainted with the SFWA dispute, I shall just classify Mr. Anderson as a Gandalfian type conservationist and leave further discussion for the epistle that immediately follows.

4365 Declaration Drive
Indianapolis, Indiana 46227

Dear Leland:

Comments on the current RQ: I really liked Tom Henighan's article. Criticism that is both imaginative and sensible is hard to find. (And he didn't try to excuse or defend Burroughs' style.) His remark in the last paragraph about readers making up "perfect" Tarzans and Rimas without regard for the original texts might be the key to Star Trek fandom, too. A future in which the races and nations of the Earth have learned to live together peacefully has powerful appeal at present. Viewers were attracted to the format and character types so strongly, they could expand the ST universe undisturbed by idiotic episodes of the show. And certainly the fans' imaginations proved superior to the producers' in the long run. (My ST dreams are distinctly better-plotted than many of this season's scripts!) But one thing we noticed at the Marcon was the widespread feeling of relief that ST had been canceled. Old friends of ST have come to feel like old friends of Aaron Burr.

Jim Harmon's cruel snipe at Poul Anderson cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. See me sprint Britomart-like to the defense. But does it do much good to point out one more time that Anderson's political views stress maximum personal ititiative and minimum government control? That his utopias are often sober anarchies or benevolent feudal societies? That he writes over and over of tragedy in triumph and the terrible burden of individual responsibility? That he displays great compassion and respect for ordinary men and women? Can it be that Anderson's critics have never really read his work?

...May I say a few words in my own defense? Your alert correspondents have seized upon the flaw in "Some Religious Aspects of LotR." My attempt to save a preconceived thesis even after reading The Road Goes Ever On apparently didn't work. I should have bowed to the inevitable and rewritten. But won't everyone agree: (1) there is no worship of the One in Middle Earth and (2) there is no cultic Religion, Religion with a capital "R" in Middle Earth? If those who were unhappy with the RQ essays can wait for the Proceedings of last fall's Tolkien Conference to be published, they will find that my contribution discusses at length the role of religion (small "r") in Middle Earth. Its peoples are well aware of the sacred and revere certain persons, places, things, and times. This paper also discusses the nature and functions of the wizards in more detail.

But the crucial question, is Sam's invocation of Elbereth a real prayer? She can hear these cries for help, but can she intervene? (Aren't the Valar pursuing a non-intervention policy like C.S. Lewis' edils and the heavenly forces in Black Easter? I still maintain the only benefit Sam will receive is from the power inherent in her name. The ancient technique of banishing demons with the Sign of the Cross didn't require actual Divine intervention to succeed. The power of the Sign worked ex opere operanto. Religious motifs in LotR are extremely delicate--Frodo isn't a Christ figure in the same explicit way Lewis' Aslan is.

Cordially, Sandra Miesel

Religion in LotR I leave to those better qualified than I. // Despite Poul Anderson's personal kindness toward me I must oppose the preceding argument, whose stress on "maximum personal initiative" reminds me of Alexei Panshin's statement on Robert Heinlein, that "his characters ask no one to...obey them except from choice." The critic goes on to say that Mr. Heinlein is not an authoritarian but an elitist, whose main character's right to rule is argued "on the basis of competence." As Devil's Advocate I'd have to argue that even in Mr. Anderson's benevolent fendal societies there is total freedom only for the supremely capable top dog, just as there is maximum freedom only for the benevolent ruler of Mr. Heinlein's Double Star. (In purely literary terms, Poul Anderson makes out better, since his stories lack the "preachiness" our critic finds in Heinlein's later works and because he doesn't extend his elitism to man as a species.) But in another area, such elitism is manifested through the advocacy by both authors of the Viet Nam war--a tacit assumption of the U.S.'s "right" to tell the Viet Nam people what is best for them (even if they don't like it) and to kill them if they don't accept its choice. This, I take it, is the kind of thing Mr. Harmon was objecting to.

7205 Barlow Court
Baltimore, Maryland 21207

Dear Mr. Sapiro,

...I'd like to voice a disagreement with James Hockenhull's "A Science-Fiction Song" (p. 297). I don't believe it is more than partially pertinent. The three examples of science fiction given by Hockenhull are all of them from the pages of the pulp magazines. The stereotypes presented are, true, still prevalent today, but remember, one of the almost overpowering desires of many of the most influential writers is to break away from this..."Next issue's guaranteed to give your money's worth in thrills." This is not the aim of any magazine but IF, and perhaps Amazing and Fantastic, though Ted White seems to be doing his damnedest to try and make the magazines somewhat respectable. I think it's a healthy sign that although...sf readers continually show their preference for IF by giving it Hugos, no other magazine is going action/adventure. Rather, they are moving away from it...

I think if Mr. Hockenhull wanted to complain that too much pulp adventure was still being published, he might have a case. But I don't think his thesis of science fiction being too pulpish is valid, particularly when the people who care are trying to correct what has gone before...

Best wishes, Jeffrey D. Smith

The reply is left to Mr. Hockenhull himself.

Box 464
Lyons, Colorado 80540

Dear Mr. Smith;

Leland Sapiro has forwarded to me a copy of your letter (to him) of April 24. Being halfway into my second double martini (it's been one of those days) I thought I might reply to your comments on my "Science-Fiction Song."

The song is neither "complaint" nor "thesis." It is a song. It has music. It is meant to be sung. It is meant to be funny. Face it, all that pulp stuff did exist (and somehow hooked a lot of us into reading SF), still exists, and is what most non-SF readers think it's all about. Part of the genesis of the song was my purchase of a small reflecting telescope, my awe over what I saw through it, and the paltriness of most SF writing in comparison (hence the last verse).

There is plenty wrong with science-fiction (or sinus-friction) but it is not that.

Going over my notes I found that the original title of the piece was "Volume 1, no. 1," if that's any help.

I find more and more that my desire for wonder, awe, enlightenment is being nobly met by mainstream writing (Heller, Barth, Asturias, Pynchon, Brautigan, Gass, etc.) partly because they are doing it through form and content (not just subject matter). Science fiction impresses me as being the verbal equivalent of illustration (e.g., Ballard's adulation of Salvador Dali, the ultimate illustrator).

The art work that accompanies SF is abominable! (Fantasy & Science Fiction should be given some sort of award for not using art work.)

The "Science-Fiction Song" was used as the opening theme in a post-SF sight-sound event entitled "The Space Opera, or Parachutes, Dumbells and Meat" done in collaboration with the West-Coast funk artist Wm. T. Wiley, and performed in Boulder, Colo. last summer. It had nothing to do with "dimpled, blonde space-captains."

I disagree with your opinion of 2001. To me, it was an updated, oversized Destination Moon with a regulation-size-and-weight light show thrown in for all the psychedullards in the audience.

I would write you more about this when I'm sober, but when I'm sober it doesn't mean that much.

Sincerely,
James Hockenhull

The customs office permitting, I am sending down to Mr. Hockenhull a fifth of good Canadian whiskey in order that he write us more letters.

Space-time limitations allow me just partial quotation from late arrivals. First, William Linden's remark on Viet Nam and "Psi" phenomena:

> I am surprised at confliot between Boardman and Campbell (in alphabetical order). I would have expected Campbell's paranoia regarding the Scientific Establishment to appeal to Boardman's similar paranoia regarding the Political Establishment...// Campbell does not style himself a scientist." He continually writes on the dfference between what he characterizes as the Scientist attitude and the Engineer attitude, and clearly identifies with the latter. Likewise, he "styles" the dowsing Marines as engineers and not "scientists." // Dr. Boardman seems to think that "Hired killers can not possibly be Scientists, therefore U.S. Marines must be wrong in thinking that dowsing works." This is no more logical than "John Smith is an Evil Man, therefore he must be wrong if he says two and two make four." ----------

I'm obliged to admit that U.S. insanity in Viet Nam does not, by itself, scientifically invalidate the Marines' use of dowsing rods. ----------

More on Viet Nam from Vern Bennett:

> I appreciated your comments to John Boardman in the last HQ. My next-to-the-youngest brother just got shipped over there...[but]- the idea that he might have to kill someone hardly puts him into the class of "hired killers." Recently married, he had the choice of going to prison or Viet Nam...He is in a "recon" outfit, which, bluntly, means he's bait. There...were just 24 men in his whole company. They're taken out and dropped off from helicopters. Then the hired killers get to tromp through the jungle until they're ambushed, then call in support. He's been ambushed twice already, and two of the 24 hit the deck on land mines when attacked ...If lucky, he faces 11 more months of this frivolity. He candidly admits that he's scared, wishes somehow he didn't have to be there, and that some of the clean-cut American Boys are pretty brutal. But hired killers? Even at $800 a month, mercenary outfits have trouble filling their ranks (thank God). I guess it boils down to the fact that rules and regulations are more effective than cash in putting someone in the grisly business of war. ----------

From Viet Nam we return once more to "Psi" via William Temple's comments on scrambled eggs.

> Your rebuttal of my letter in HQ III, 4 said "Anybody who thinks past and future (cause and effect)are interchangeable is invited to unscramble an egg or put it back into its shell." Oddly, I once saw an egg dropped and smashed and then reconstituted. The event was filmed and then projected in reverse. Ever seen those divers undiving back to the springboard, defying the iron laws of gravity? // Suppose, for example, the sensations and impressions we call "Life" were electromagnetically recorded on film...and the same were run backwards. The cenoeption of entropy would be shown to be artificial...//

> Read, if you can get it, the Science Correspondent's article in the British highbrow Sunday newspaper, The Observer, for April 13th, 1969. It's headed: Baffled physicists facing collapse of Nature. CAN EVENTS RUN BACKWARDS THROUGH TIME? // It's a long, detailed article, tough to summarise. I've space only for morsels you can chew on.// In short, recent and current experiments with atom smashers at Oxford, Cornell, Princeton, Berkeley, and Pennsylvania Universities are tending to show (quote from physicist) "We don't understand electromagnetism at all."// "If one part of CPT goes, something else has to go or the whole lot does. If CP is wrong (which it is) then to keep CPT right, T must be wrong too...// Yet CPT is very fundamental. If it falls, then the whole idea of causality in the subatomic world--the fact that causes happen before their effects--may have to be given up." ----------

The egg movie does not disprove the unidirection of time, but verifies it: If I see a movie of an egg being unscrambled and put back into its shell, then I know the film is being run backwards. // All physical concepts, "entropy" among them, are "artificial," i.e., man-made. Some are "true" in the sense of corresponding to experimental results (or common sense observation) on how things happen.// Our correspondent doesn't have the right idea on the CPT (conjugation, parity, time-reversal) experiments because he relies not on articles written by scientists, but on those by newspaper reporters. In nuclear physics, e.g., the invariance under time-reversal meant that:

> ...any nuclear reaction of the form "A plus B yields C plus D" was found to proceed at the same rate as the inverse reaction "C plus D yields A plus B," where initial and final states have been interchanged. This was a successful test of time reversal invariance in the strong or nuclear interactions.
>
> (J.H. Christenson, "Time Reversal," Science Journal, August 1965, pp. 55-6)

As Dr. Christenson shows, such "time reversal invariance" does not always hold for "weak interactions." However, none of this implies the "collapse of nature" or the existence of events "running backwards through time" or any of the other things imagined in Mr. Temple's Highbrow Newspaper. Indeed, one might just as well argue that Dr. Christenson actually foresaw Mr. Temple's letter when he wrote (p.52, same article), "Obviously, the direction of flow of time cannot actually be reversed." ----------

Bringing us back to scientific rationality is Joanne Burger, who owns tapes of the NET (National Educational Television) show on "H.G. Wells, Man of Science" that she'd be happy to copy for interested HQ readers.

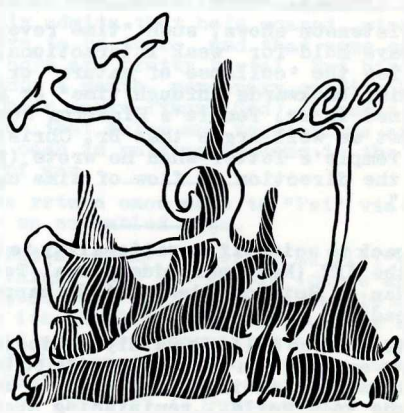
> The NET show on Wells is mainly a biographical show which places its emphasis on Wells's desire to be known as a scientist (at least that is what I got out of...it) and it uses people who knew Wells...reminiscing about his work..and life.

Although finding the New Wave "unreadable," Joanne requests tolerance in a field large enough to contain both Old and New --so I'll just redo the argument in "Hegelian" language by saying that both "speculative" and "traditional" extremes are necessary to insure a literary synthesis somewhere in the middle.

Finally, a portion of a late late letter from James Gunn:

> I found the Yogi Borel article expressing very aptly some thoughts that I have had about the so-called "new wave," although I don't share[his] enthusiasm completely. I think the new wave writers are bringing some excellent writing and some mainstream techniques to the field, but I'm not sure what field. Science fiction has developed through naturalism, although there have been some examples of romanticism. Now it is venturing into what you call symbolism or might be called subjectivism. I think the outcry comes from those who think that subjectivism is not compatible with science, common sense, or what we have chosen to call science fiction in the past. But it helps us think about it to recognize the similarities to traditions of writing.

In a sentence, the chief ADL complaint about the New Wave is that it offers no correspondence to the usual notion of "story" as something with plot and recognisable victorian stereotypes. Such an objection reminds me of romantic traditionalists like Joseph Wood Krutch, who argue that science, by destroying man's illusions (e.g., that he is centre of the universe), makes poetry and "romance" impossible.



THE NEW CAPTAIN GEORGE'S WHIZZBANG

Disciples of "The Seasonal Fan" will enjoy Whizzbang (full title above), with its Jim Harmon column. Named after "Captain George's" gag and gossip magazine of the 20's, Whizzbang could only be degraded by a comparison to shoddy "nostalgia" publications now sold --so I'll just say that its first three issues included Don Daynard's illustrated reminiscences of Horror and Western movies, capsule biographies of "Comics and their Creators," and Derek Carter's hilarious evocations of Edwardian Canada. The current issue contains, e.g., a Jim Harmon Old Western interview, a Virgil Finlay portfolio, and an eye-witness account of the Great Lake Ontario Balloon Race. I'd recommend ordering back issues with any subscription, which is $3 (ten issues) from Memory Lane Publications, 594 Markham St., Toronto-5, Ontario.

Note: Antique-Audio addicts should also send a dollar (refundable on first purchase) to the Jim Harmon Radio Heroes Society (Box 38612, Hollywood 90038) for a catalogue of taped Old Radio shows. Since a $7 (regular price) tape runs two hours and lasts a lifetime, this, penny-for-penny, is the best bargain of all.

GOD SAVE THE KING!

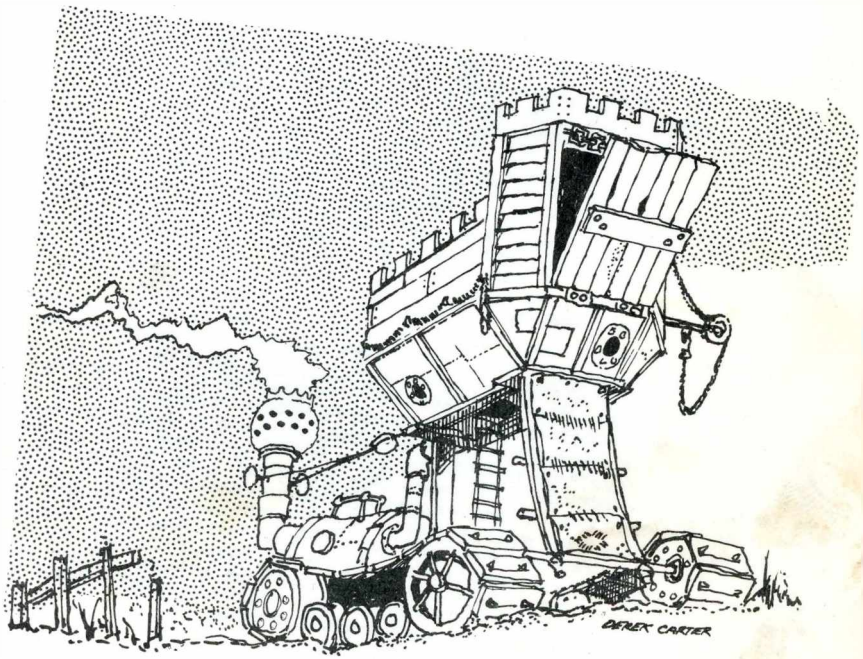
With several exceptions, early RQ's were typed on a West German Olympia portable and the last few issues on a Smith-Corona electric. Despite a Jew's reluctance to shout Deutschland uber alles, I must say my dealings with Olympia were uniformly pleasant--by contrast to relationships with Smith-Corona, who refused to honour their own guarantee on grounds that it was "no good in Canada." I know not if this abjuration reflects the contempt of a U.S. company for Canada or merely Smith-Corona's contempt for everybody; but Lovecraftians who accept the first interpretation (and who recall Canada's bonds to the Mother Country) will regard S.C.'s behavior as an insult to Magna Carta, Guy Fawkes, and the Privy Council--and so will have no more to do with this organisation. However, Lovecraftians who accept the second interpretation will act just as always, since such antiquarians still write with a quill pen and will have naught to do with typewriters or other mechanical objects.

THE THIRD GENERATION

Many RQ readers have seen announcements concerning David Gerold's forthcoming anthology of speculative fiction, so I repeat only the basic data--that anybody with one prior sale may submit an MS and that preferred length is under 15,000 words. This is not to be construed as an invitation to twelve year olds to submit their versions of "Tarzan on Mars," nor is it a request for dilettantes to "try a hand at writing"--but an effort to display the best from newer writers who are "published" but not "known." Send entries to 13615 Debby St., Van Nuys, Calif.91401 before 15 September.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Fantasy scholars should send 50¢ to Fred Lerner (Hamilton College Library, Clinton, N.Y. 13323) for his Annotated Checklist of S.F. Bibliographical Works. A (partial) sample entry: "Lovecraft, H.P. Supernatural Horror in Literature...a narrative history of the genre, tracing its origins to the beginnings of Western literature, & emphasising the development of the Gothic novel..." I trust that other fans will not duplicate Mr. Lerner's project and thus oblige me to list a Bibliography of Bibliographies of Bibliographies.


DEREK CARTER