
# RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY

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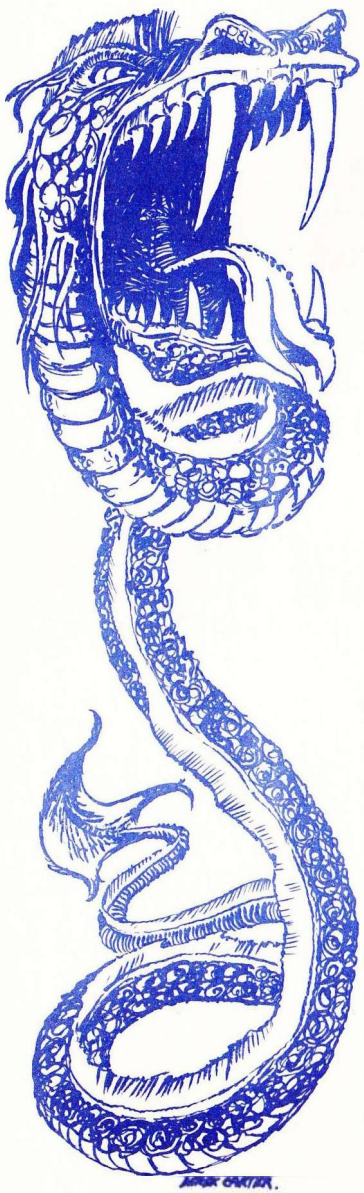

RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY

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# RQ MISCELLANY



## BALLARD BIBLIOPHILES

If your curiosity is roused by "Homo Hydrogenesis" this issue--or if you've a previous interest in French Symbolism and Jim Ballard's latter-day extension thereof--you'll profit by consulting the last few issues of Pete Weston's Speculation (31 Piewall Ave, Masshouse Lane, Birmingham-30, UK; 3 copies 7/6d or $1 USA). The current number even contains some non-Baudelarian correspondence from Mr. Ballard himself.

## INEXCUSABLE OMISSIONS--FIRST SERIES

Last time (p.73) I forgot to list the address--55 Bluebonnet Court, Lake Jackson, Texas 77566--of Joanne Burger, who offers the N.E.T. tapes, "H.G. Wells, Man of Science." I also failed to say that Michel Desimon's article (pp. 48-51) was taken from the double edition of Philip Jose Farmer's Les Amants Etrangers and L'Univers A L'Envers (The Lovers and Inside Outside), Club du Livre Anticipation, Paris, 1968. So far, contact with Mr. Desimon has been impossible--which is just as well, since in addition to the omission just cited I mis-spelled his name twice and possibly committed another sin too unspeakable to mention here.

## THE WORST OF FANDOM

A new fan-activity, culminating at the St. Louis convention, was the Hall of Infamy poll, fantasy equivalent to the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Men. Voted fourth was your present editor, who a month previously had mailed fifty notes to inform selected readers that the RQ had won the Hugo award for Best Fanzine. Those who (by my guess) had voted for the opposition received messages like, "Sorry ya' finked out to the Establishment but we beat 'em anyway," while Friends of the RQ were simply told, "We beat those Establishment bastards" or (in the case of an Alabama fan), "We beat those yankee Establishment bastards."

Bleats of anguish soon re-echoed from Beverly Hills to New England, with various fans writing directly to Chairman Ray Fisher, to inquire how the information had leaked out, and Charlie Brown, in the 23 Aug. Locus, complaining about "idiotic letters": "We've tried to ignore them but...they can't be. A report next issue. Watch for this special feature." I'm honoured to be featured in a recondite journal such as Locus, but since Charlie wasn't among the original Fifty, his complaint that he "tried to ignore them" was purely rhetorical.

Third in the poll* was our collective host, the Chase-Plaza hotel, which disapproved of the Saturday-night Rock concert (and the untidiness of its Hippie-type audience) and several hours later tried to stop the convention movie show because of a city ordinance that prohibits public enjoyment on Sundays. Although C-P's actions are not to be condoned, they reflected just the 19th century mores of the American Midwest, not any special malice of hotel personnel.

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*This result (plus the next two) was learned via a postcard from Bruce Pelz, who conducted the poll, and thus supersedes that announced in issue #32 of Bruce's own newsletter, De Profundis.

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(continued on page 154)

# CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE:
## Poul Anderson's View of Man

## by

Sandra Miesel

Poul Anderson is a remarkably skilled creator of authentic physical and historical enviroments. These enviroments not only serve as stage sets behind rational actors, they play roles in the dramas as well. Anderson's concern-- unlike that of the New Writers-- is the interaction of consciousness with the real universe. If this interaction is expressed in the formula "challenge and response" then Anderson's views can be summarized thus: (1) man needs challenge, (2) man must respond to challenge, (3) man must accept responsibility for his response.

Men need challenge if they are to remain human.

> No people live long, who offer their young men naught but fatness and security.
>
> ("We Have Fed Our Sea" 1958)

So essential is challenge on both racial and individual scales that an artificial one can serve as effectively as a real one. For example, a non-existent criminal wrecks a dictatorship in "Sam Hall" (1953); contrived political pressure changes society in "Robin Hood's Barn" (1959) and "Inside Earth" (1951). As the hero of the last story explains:

> "Valgolia /Terra's foe/ is the great and lonely enemy, the self-appointed Devil, since none of us can be angels. It is the source of challenge and adversity such as has always driven intelligence onward and upward, in spite of itself."

Again and again the author stresses space exploration as the great challenge of the future. This would be a safety valve and a psychological stimulus for the entire species just as



Frederick Jackson Turner thought the western frontier had been for Americans. Anderson feels "our enterprise beyond the sky will keep alive that sense of bravery... and achievement without which man would hardly be himself." (Is There Life on Other Worlds? 1963, 189) As explained in "Marque and Reprisal" (1965):

> "That's why we've got to move into space.... Room. A chance to get out of this horrible huddle on Earth, walk free, be our own men, try out new ways to live, work, think, create, wonder."

Dispersal into space would also insure survival of the human species if Earth were destroyed.[1] "The Children of Fortune" (1961), "The Day After Doomsday" (1961), "Epilogue" (1962), and "To Outlive Eternity" (1967) are based on this premise.

Perpetuation of the race guarantees a kind of immortality-- the only really certain kind.

> The house and the blood... are holy. Men die and women weep, but while the kindred live our names are remembered.
>
> ("The Man Who Came Early" 1956)

But "there can be too great a price for survival" ("Turning Point" 1963). It is by no means the ultimate value.

> Li-Tsung of Krasna would have told him to live at all costs, sacrifice all the others, to save himself for his planet and the Fellowship. But there were limits.... Some things were more important than survival. Than even the survival of a cause.
>
> It came to Sverdlov thst this was another way a man might serve his planet: just by being the right kind of man, maybe a better way than planning the extinction of people who happened to live somewhere else.
>
> ("We Have Fed Our Sea")

As the hero of "The Mills of the Gods" (1961) reminds us:

> "Honor wasn't enough. Survival wasn't enough. You had to be kind as well."

Mere prolongation of life, whether of the species or the individual is a futile goal in itself, as the immortal men in "The Star Beast" (1950) painfully realize.

> Death is the longest voyage of all. Without death there is no evolution, no real meaning to life, the ultimate adventure has been snatched away.

The quality of life is all that matters. Anderson's interest is in how well, how creatively, how intensely people live. Men require the stimulation of constant challenge to attain individual excellence. A technologically perfect world devoid of challenge would be soul-destroying.

In "Quioxte and the Windmill" (1950) complete automation has robbed ordinary people of the opportunity to create and to feel useful, resulting in mass ennui. The same craving for meaningful work is reiterated in "What Shall It Profit?" (1956). Material satiety produces mindless hedonism, apathy, and ultimately, decadence in "The Star Beast" and "Conversation in Arcady" (1963). A totally planned society causes evolutionary reversal in "The High Ones" (1958) since absence of challenge obviates the necessity for intelligence.

Actually, technological anti-utopias are far more common in Anderson's writings.[2] The author is distinctly hostile towards existing technic civilization for it ravages the planet and dehumanizes the individual. Men, he says in "License" (1957), do not want to be "crowded together, and chained to one tiny spot of the earth's surface, and be an anonymous unit, bossed and herded and jammed into an iron desert of a city, subordinating food and sleep and digestion and love and play to a single monotonous job."

> "If industrialism can feed and clothe people better, though, doesn't it deserve to win out?
>
> "Who says it can? It can feed and clothe more people, yes. But not necessarily better. And are sheer numbers any measure of quality?"
>
> ("Progress" 1962)

But since there can be no turning back now, he proposes alternatives. The simplest one is some marvelous invention which will permit individual economic independence such as a protective force-field in "Shield" (1962) and a universal power-source in "Snowball" (1955).[3]

It is far more difficult to rechannel human nature by internal conversion. This is unsuccessfully attempted by alien intruders in "No Truce With Kings" (1963) and the Psychotechnic Institute in the UN-Man series.[4] This approach can harm as easily as heal. The aliens' secret efforts to modify humanity incite war and discredit their unwitting human agents. At first the Institute uses its techniques of individual mental-physical conditioning and sociodynamics to fight tyranny but eventually mistakes means for ends and perishes through pride.

Although some pressures of contemporary technic civilization could be alleviated by colonization[5] the best solution is radical, voluntary restructuring.

> Civilization was not material technology but a thought-pattern and an understanding.
>
> (Starways 1956)

Favourable adaptation may result from a cleansing catastrophe. After global holocaust, men rediscover benevolent feudalism and local autonomy ("No Truce With Kings"); exploit mutant physical and mental powers plus a new kind of logic ("Twilight World"1961); wed magic to science ("Superstition" 1956); evolve an ecologically



sensitive neo-Polynesian civilization ("The Sky People" 1959)and "Progress"). After the fall of the Terran Empire, they develop a voluntary mutual aid society to replace interstellar government ("Starfog" 1967). The world-wrecking catastrophe in Brain Wave (1954) is not war but a sudden increase in the intelligence of man and all higher animals which yields a transfigured, space-faring civilization. All these stories imply that the emergence of a healthier successor society at least partly compensates for the disaster that brought it forth.

Obviously adaption without such painful stimulus is preferable. Since Anderson has described his utopia so often-- at least two dozen times in twenty years-- a general description is easy. Except for unspoiled aliens who have avoided technological deformation altogether ("Green Thumb" 1953, "Sister Planet" 1959, Starways), his utopians are human colonists on a marvelously beautiful world.[6] Their population is extremely low typically ten million) and stable. Government is minimal and decentralized Individual citizens possess exceptional initiative, resourcefulness, and stability. They are adept at fine arts, crafts, and athletics. They have great reverence for tradition and an almost physical attachment for their planet. Sophisticated understanding

of ecology enables the colonists to enjoy nature without ruining it. Their vigourous culture is that of their ancient Terran ancestors modified by a fresh enviroment. The entire system might be dubbed "scientific pastoralism."

"Time Lag" is an excellent portrayal of utopia and anti-utopia locked in mortal combat. The "Finnish" Vaynamoans defeat the invading "Russian" Chertkoians by individual courage, superior science, and cultural vitality despite a 1:500 disparity in population. Vaynamo is lush and unspoiled but Chertkoi is a planet-sized slum:

> The city grew bigger, smokier, uglier. More people each year dropped from client status, went underground and joined the gangs.... The desert could no longer be seen, even from the highest towers, only the abandoned mine and slag mountains, in the process of conversion into tenements. The carcinogenic murkiness crept upward until it could be smelled on the most elite balconies.

The Vaynamoans are both energetic and tradition-minded. The heroine describes herself:

> I'm the Magnate's daughter and the Freeholder's wife, I

> have a University degree and a pistol-shooting medal, as a girl I sailed through hurricanes and skindove into grottoes where fanfish laired, as a woman I brought a son into the world...."
>
> .....
>
> "I'm a true daughter of Vaynamo,... whatever is traditional, full of memories, whatever has been looked at and been done by all the generations before me, I hold dear. The Chertkoians don't care. They haven't any past worth remembering."

A final summary of the differences between the two peoples:

> /The Chertkoians/ thought that because we preferred social stability and room to breathe, we must be stagnant. They forgot that you can have bigger adventures in the spirit than in all the physical universe. We really did have a very powerful science and technology. It was orientated toward life, toward beautifying and improving instead of exploiting nature. But it wasn't less virile for that. Was it?

In "Time Lag" utopia survived attack. Not all Anderson's creations fare as happily. They can be destroyed by Nature ("Pirate" 1968), abandoned ("Turning Point" 1963 and "Gypsy" 1950), forcibly evacuated ("The Chapter Ends" 1954 and "The Disinherited" 1966), or perverted ("The Helping Hand" 1950). The two most recent stories are especially poignant, perhaps because of the ever-widening gulf between the author"s ideals and contemporary reality.

Men must face challenge promptly, however it arises.

> Well, it'll only be us who die now. Not a hundred million people twenty or thirty years from now.
>
> ("Brake")

This theme of immediate response has appeared so often it is difficult to select representative examples. "The High Crusade" (1960), "No Truce With Kings," The Starfox, and the UN-Man series all stress the importance of solving current problems today instead of bequeathing them to future generations. Indifference to the well-being of its descendants proves the decadence of the Terran Empire.

> To hell with it. Let civilization hang together long enough for Dominic Flandry to taste a few more vintages, ride a few more horses, kiss a lot more girls and sing another ballad or two, that would suffice. At least it was all he dared hope for.
>
> (We Claim These Stars! 1959)

Challenge must not only be met briskly, it must be met freely. Anderson's concept of freedom is positive-- it is the presence of opportunity, not the absence of restraint. Violating the freedom of rational beings by domesticating or manipulating them is a heinous crime. What Anderson calls "domestication" is exploitation by shielding from challenge. The free will, individuality, and self-awareness of one group is damped by another until these essential properties atrophy.[7]

> A slave may or may not obey. But a domestic animal has got to obey. His genes won't let him do any different.
>
> ("The Master Key" 1964)

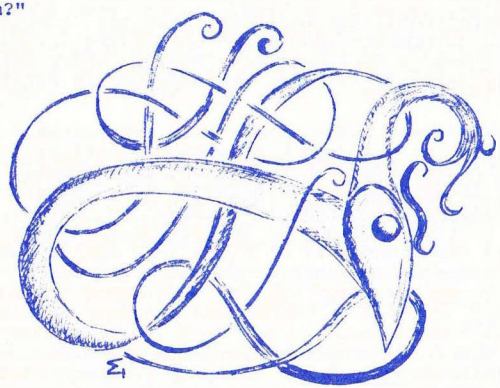
The threat of domestication plainly alarms the author. He fears



the emasculating consequences of some contemporary trends: loss of option, initiative, meaningful work; collectivization, homogenization; decline of rationality, taste, competence. First introduced in Brain Wave, this problem was reiterated in Starways, "The Children of Fortune," "Turning Point," "No Truce With Kings," The Starfox, "Satan's World" (1968), and generated the plots of "The Master Key" and "The Ancient Gods" (1966).

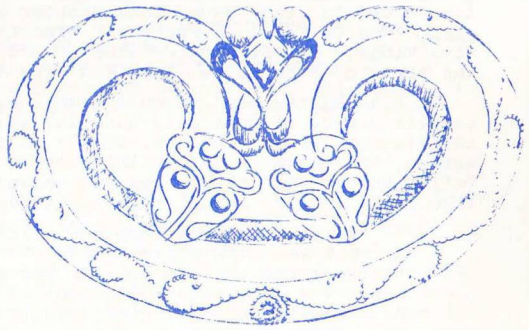
In "The Master Key" traders from the Polestechnic League encounter a race of radically unsocial aliens which controls an intelligent servant species. Unable to comprehend human civilization, the dominant Yildivians cannot decide if men are free "wild" beings like themselves or runaway "domesticated" beings like their Lugals. Actually, men can be either.

> "We here in this room are wild." Van Rijn said. "We do what we do because we want to or because it is right. No other motivation, nie? If you made slaves of us, you would for sure not be wise to let us near a weapon. But how many slaves have there been, in Earth's long history, that their masters could trust? Quite some!... And how many people today is domestic animals at heart? Wanting somebody else should tell them what to do, take care of their needfuls, and protect them not just against their fellow men but against themselves? And why has every free human society been so short-lived? Is this not because the wild-animal men are born so heartbreakingly seldom?"



The curse of domestication is presented even more sharply in "The Ancient Gods." The Ai Chun, an incredibly old psychic race, believe that they are literally gods. By eons of selective breeding they have raised another species to sentience and enslaved them. A few of these escaped and have developed their own social structure and monotheistic religion. A crew of marooned spacemen aids the free Pack against the Ai Chun, but a psychological flaw causes one man to defect to the enemy. Having surrendered his will and identity to the aliens, he stubbornly prefers bondage to manly struggle and dies with his masters. In contrast, Valland, the de facto leader of the humans is a splendidly free man. He is considerate, loyal, tenacious, and talented. With serene independence he rejects the permissive sexual mores of his society for a lifetime of heroic chastity.[8] To Anderson freedom is a painful glory; it is no cloak for selfishness.

Manipulation denies men the opportunity to decide their own response to challenge. The best intentions and loftiest objectives cannot avert disaster as the history of Anderson's Psychotechnic Institute illustrates. Established in the aftermath of World War III to improve individuals and society, the Institute develops techniques to make history to its own specifications. It no longer suffices to "meet the future when it gets here" argues an Institute supporter:



> "That is what man has always done. And that is why the race has always blundered from one catastrophe to the next. This may be our last chance to change the pattern."
>
> ("Marius")

But two generations later when the world has recovered, the Institute still considers itself the only savior of mankind. This period is described in "The Sensitive Man," a story with a protagonist as smugly self-righteous as the supermen in Heinlein's "Gulf."

> "I take it you favor libertarian government," he said. "In the past it's always broken down sooner or later and the main reason has been that there aren't enough people with the intelligence, alertness, and toughness to resist the inevitable encroachments of power on liberty. The Institute is trying to do two things-- create such a citizenry and simultaneously to build up a society which itself produces men of that kind and reinforces those traits in them."

A critic replies:

> "But what sort of person is needed? Who decides it? You've decided you are the almighty arbiters. Your superior wisdom is going to lead poor mankind up the road to heaven. I say it's down the road to hell!"

Read in isolation, "The Sensitive Man" seems inconsistent with the rest of Anderson's work. But in the context of the series, it is ironic for the objections blithely dismissed in "The Sensitive Man" eventually prove correct. In "Questions and Answers" set a century later, the Institute is so intoxicated with its plan for man's future it plots to forstall stellar exploration-- man is still too "uncivilized" to deserve the stars. An Institute agent says:

> "It will take a thousand years of slow, subtle, secret direction... to evolve the culture we want.... Men won't be blind, greedy, pushing, ruthless animals; there will be restraint, and dignity, and contentment,..."



A spaceman replies:

> "I claim that man crawling into his own little shell to think pure thoughts and contemplate his navel is no longer man.... I like man as he is and not man as a bunch of theorists thinks he ought to be.... Personally, I believe that no small group has the right to impose its own will on everybody else.... I vote for telling the truth, going out to the stars, and taking the consequences. Good, bad, or indifferent. I want to see what the consequences are, and I think most men do."

The mighty Institute is discredited and outlawed: hubris, nemesis, até.

> The tragic flaw in the character of Institute personnel was only that they were human.
>
> ("The Snows of Ganymede")

These same issues are vividly summarized in "No Truce With Kings." Here a small group of aliens secretly attempts to redesign post-Armageddon society. They try to force a centralized state and a passive, collectivized society upon men "for their own good." But the patronizing aliens actually fear human vitality. Their race wants no competition from other civilizations. Their role is discovered during a war they instigated to further their plan. One of the soldiers who exposed the conspiracy reacts:

> "If you'd come openly, like honest folk, you'd had found some to listen to you. Maybe enough, even. But no, your do-gooding had to be subtle and crafty. You knew what was right for us. We weren't entitled to any say in the matter. God in heaven, I've never heard anything so arrogant!"
>
> .....
>
> "Sure we make some ghastly blunders, we humans. But they're our own. And we learn from them. You're the ones who won't learn, you and that damned psychological science you were bragging about, that wants to fit every living mind into the one frame it can understand."

Benevolent interference can be deadly even when public. It precipitates bloody tragedy in Let the Spacemen Beware! (1963) when a well-meaning explorer distrurbs the delicate equilibrium of a schizophrenic society. The hero of "The Longest Voyage" (1960) rejects premature interstellar contact lest his own world be deprived of an exciting stage in its development and forfeit its own uniqueness. "The Helping Hand" contrasts the reactions of two alien societies to proffered Terran aid. Lush Cundaloa is corrupted by acceptance and loses its creativity. Painful independent efforts bring Skontar success without sacrifice of dignity.

The powerful statements all these stories make on the dangers of intervention must be reconciled with the author's approval of interfering agencies like the Galactic Patrol and the Time Patrol. The unsubtle Galactic Patrol series ("The Double-Dyed Villains," 1949; "Enough Rope," 1953; and "The Live Coward," 1956) relates this organization's efforts to keep peace in the galaxy through deceit, bribery, blackmail, or any other unscrupulous method that does not cause the death of a single rational being. The Patrol's ethics are simply based on choosing lesser evils.

> And I, for one, would rather break any number of arbitrary laws and moral rules, and wreck a handful of lives of idiots who think with a blaster, than see a planet go up in flames or... see one baby killed in a war it never even heard about.
>
> ("The Double-Dyed Villains")

The men of the Time Patrol (The Guardians of Time, 1960 and "My Object All Sublime," 1961) face more complex issues. They are charged with guarding the time line that leads to the indescribably far-evolved men of the distant future who discover time travel. They eliminate anachronisms that weaken the temporal fabric, apprehend fugitives from future justice, and correct changes made by time-criminals. Intervening to preserve history as it has been seems permissable even though it means leaving suffering unrelieved.

> He had seen enough human misery in all the ages. You got case hardened after a while, but down underneath, when a peasant stared at you with sick brutalized eyes, or a soldier screamed with a pike through him, or a city went up in radioactive flame, something wept. He could understand the fanatics who tried to change events. It was only that their work was so unlikely to make anything better.
>
> ("Delenda Est" 1955)

But the temporal agents can also be ordered to change "real" history to suit their superiors' needs. Historical reality is merely relative. The dilemma of contradictory interests stated in "The Only Game in Town" (1960) is not solved there or in non-series stories like "Progress" and "Turning Point." Anderson does not see any clear answers. He sees the pain choice must bring. Here lies the distinction between licit and illicit intervention: those who would change the course of the universe must bear the guilt. What guards the guardians is their humility and the anguish they endure for their deeds.[9]

When men meet any challenge, they must accept responsibility. Power without responsibility is tyranny. Therefore Anderson's rulers suffer. Leadership is kingship-- de jure or de facto. Its splendor is sorrowful. Not unexpectedly the ancient myth of the king's saving death inspires stories.

A secret agent characterizes his work:

> "We are the kings who die for the people so that little boys with shoeshine kits may not be fried on molten streets...."
>
> ("State of Assassination" 1959)

In "Kings Who Die" (1962) spacemen's deaths in an endless, stalemated war between America and Unasia serve as ritual sacrifice to preserve the rest of mankind. The hero explains:

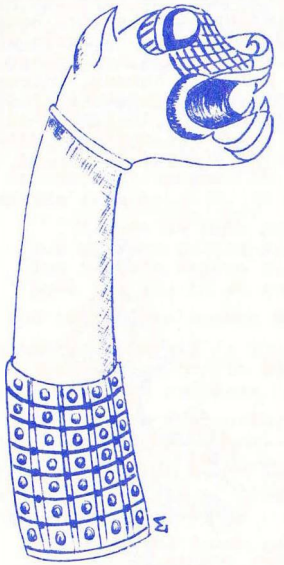
> "Today the machine age has developed its own sacrificial kings. We are the chosen of the race. The best it can offer, none gainsays us. We may have what we choose, pleasure, luxury, women, adulation-- only not the simple pleasures of wife and child and home, for we must die that the people may live."

When an American and a Russian officer attempt to replace the



slaughter with peaceful exploration, their collaboration fails. Bloodshed continues unabated.

Anderson's elites-- spacemen or witches, secret agents or feudal lords-- exist ideally to serve. Two good examples occur in the UN-Man series and Brain Wave.



The UN-Men are a band of identical exogenetic brothers, created and trained as special UN operatives by the Psychotechnic Institute. They are amply endowed with all the author's favorite skills: mental, physical, linguistic, and artistic as well as being considerate, humble, perceptive, dependable, and good-humoured. They are more remarkable for full and balanced development of all their abilities than for any one particular talent. Although performing invaluable services for the world, they do not share the Institute's delusions of superiority or its tragic fall. Some of the Brothers eventually join another elite service group, the semi-monastic Order of Engineers.

In Brain Wave an exponential increase in human intelligence suddenly makes men mentally superior to every other race they find in the galaxy. But these transcendent geniuses have no wish to conquer or domesticate other beings. They envision their future role:

> "We will not be gods, or even guides. But we will-- some of us-- be givers of opportunity. We will see that evil does not flourish too strongly, and that hope and chance happen when they are most needed, to all those millions of sentient creatures who live and love and fight and laugh and weep and die, just as man once did. No, we will not be embodied Fate; but perhaps we can be Luck. And even, it may be, Love."

This benevolence contrasts violently with the contemptuous attitudes of "Genius" (1948), Anderson's third published story. A colony of "pure geniuses" not only reviles the rest of humanity, but plots to rule it:

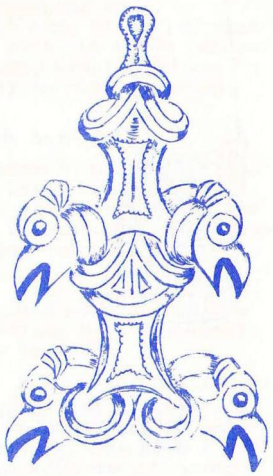
> The genius is forced into the straight-jacket of the mediocre man's and the moron's mentality. That he can expand any distance at all beyond his prison is a tribute to the supreme power of high intellect.
>
> .....
>
> The ordinary man is just plain stupid. Perhaps mind training could lift him above himself, but it's never been tried. Meanwhile he remains intensely conservative,

> only occasional outbreaks of minor hysteria engineered by some special group stirring him out of his routine. He follows, or rather accepts what the creative or dominant minority does, but it is haltingly and unwillingly.

This wretched story is anomalous. The author has kept to the path of compassion ever since.

Anderson's hero can be defined as "the man who pays the price." His endowments, motives, or even virtues are irrelevant. Readiness to bear burdens for some good purpose is all. A man's willingness to suffer-- not what he suffers-- is the key to heroism. Other writers see things differently. Heinlein heroes, untroubled by guilt or regret, are supremely confident of themselves and their causes. They have no sense of ambivalence. Delany's marvelously charitable heroes suffer but never have to grapple with vices within themselves or make agonizing ethical decisions.

The Anderson hero's ethics are pragmatic. The end justifies the means if one can stand the cost. Two particularly cruel examples of this occur in "The Burning Bridge" (1960) and "Sister Planet."



Spacefleet commander Joshua Coffin, a bleak Puritan with an aching sense of duty, saves Earth's first (and perhaps last) interstellar colonization attempt from failure with a lie that could cost a man's life. Overcome by guilt, he retires from spacefaring which is the only thing he loves. A long grim decade will pass before he learns to live with himself again.

"Sister Planet"presents a complicated set of moral dilemmas. Human explorers on Venus discover a way to terraform that planet. They decide to suppress their discovery since it would doom the indigenous race. After ravaging their own world men have no right to colonize at the expense of another intelligent species. But no knowledge can be permanently suppressed and human society is growing so brutal it would not shrink from planetary genocide. Realizing this, the hero teaches the innocent natives to fear men by bombing their holy place and forstalls future expeditions by murdering all his companions and blaming the natives for this crime. Although Venus is spared, he is seared by agonizing guilt:

> "Oh God,... please exist. Please make a hell for me."

Remorse over his friends' deaths drives him to suicide.

Elegant Dominic Flandry is also a price-paying hero. He is committing spiritual suicide-- trading off bits of his soul for success in his Intelligence missions. His costly efforts are not entirely in vain, for worlds he helped save survive the fall of the Terran Empire.



Purely private heroism also exacts its price. It may require rejecting marriage for the good of the beloved ("Shield,""Starfog") or remaining in an unsatisfactory marriage ("Brave to Be a King," 1959; "Three Worlds to Conquer," 1964) or reconciling conflicting loves ("No Truce With Kings," The Rebel Worlds, 1969). "Escape From Orbit" (1962) depicts this best. A NASA ground control expert who had resigned from astronaut training to care for his sick wife suffers keen regret, constant pressure, and involuntary celibacy. His professional problems can be solved; his personal ones only endured. But his sense of family responsibility allows no self-pity.

An obvious obstacle to heroism is refusal to suffer. "The Disinherited" is the reverse of "Sister Planet." Terran scientists studying an Eden-like planet enjoy living there so much, they refuse to leave although the good of the natives and their own descendants demands it. An envoy from Earth pleads for responsible action:

> "I have so much pride /in being a man/ that I will not see my race guilty of the ultimate crime. We are not going to make anyone else pay for our mistakes. We are going home and see if we cannot amend them ourselves."

But the scientists ignore him and must be evacuated by force.

A subtler pitfall is false asceticism. In "The Mills of the Gods" dour Joshua Coffin learns this only slowly. In Rogue Sword (1960) the ruthless Aragonese knight En Jaime never does:

> "But do you really believe that nothing more is required of man than... than kindness?"

Anderson's hero is no Übermensch.[10] He is often a typical member of his group or class distinguished by his willingness to seize the initiative.

> In so far as human qualities are important in war or less violent conflict, they tend to be courage and steadiness of purpose rather than intellectual complexity.
>
> (Is There Life on Other Worlds?, 140)

A minor bureaucrat starts a revolution in "Sam Hall." The heroines of "Time Lag" and We Claim These Stars! are representative women of their planets. "Three Hearts and Three Lions" (1953) makes paladin Ogier the Dane from the alternate universe of Faerie quiet Holger Carlsen in our world.

> We were all his friends. He was an amiable, slow-spoken fellow, thoroughly down to earth, with simple tastes in living style and humor.... As an engineer he was satisfactory if unspectacular, his talents running more toward rule-of-thumb practicality than the analytical approach.... All in all, Holger was a nice average guy, what was later called a good Joe.

Yet Holger is a vessel of grace. Subordinating personal desires, he accepts his role as Defender of mankind and breaks the hosts of Chaos.

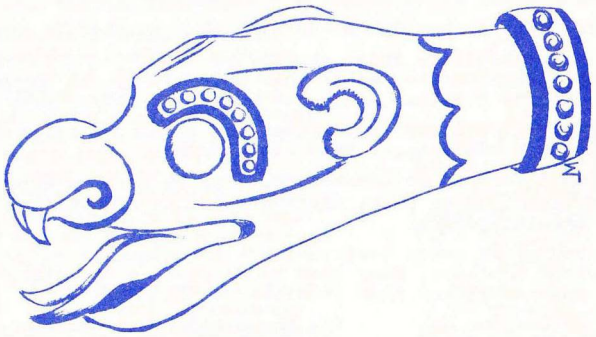
The hero realizes his own limitations:

> James Mackenzie knew he was not much more than average bright under the best of conditions.... His achievements amounted to patchwork jobs carried out in utter confusion,

> or to slogging like this and wishing only for an end to the whole mess.... Hero? What an all-time laugh!
>
> ("No Truce With Kings")

There is no glamour in heroic adventures: war is only "hunger, thirst, exhaustion, terror, mutilation, death, and forever the sameness, boredom grinding you down to an ox...." ("No Truce With Kings"). The lack of glamour in heroism is such a common motif in Anderson's stories that it even occurs in a colourful action tale like "The High Crusade." Even David Falkyn ("Trader Team," 1965) and the protagonist of Ensign Flandry (1966) find their exploits more grubby than glamourous.

Personal virtue is not a prerequisite for heroism. A man need not be a saint to perform great deeds-- consider Kemal Ataturk. In "Robin Hood's Barn" a waspish, conniving government Commissioner provides an escape hatch for faltering humanity by deceit. Pleasure-loving Maclaren and brutish Sverdlov are just as heroic as their more honourable crewmates in "We Have Fed Our Sea."



Moreover, good men are not necessarily the most effective heroes,[11] as in "The Man Who Counts" (1958). There the handsome, clean-cut, conventionally"heroic" young man neither solves the problem nor wins the girl. Slimy, self-indulgent Van Rijn does. The considerable good accomplished by Van Rijn is always presented as an incidental by-product of his greed. Not until his latest adventure, "Satan's World," does he admit any other motives. The merchant prince looks awkward displaying a conscience.

To Anderson fanticism is "the ugliest sin of all,"[12] for the well-meaning fanatic has been the cause of most human misery.

> The face in the screen grew altogether inhuman. It was a face Banning knew-- millennia of slaughterhouse history knew it-- the face of embodied Purpose.
>
> ("Brake")

> Don't you realize that deliberate scoundrels do little harm, but that the evil wrought by sincere fools is incalculable?
>
> ("The Double-Dyed Villains")



Fanatics are also the villains in the UN-Man series, "Progress," "A Plague of Masters" (1960), "Shield," "No Truce With Kings," The Starfox, and "Operation Changeling" (1969). No amount of sincerity can justify the fanatic's crimes. He knows no mercy, compassion, or self-doubt. And unlike Delany, Anderson does not allow his evil fanatics the excuse of insanity. They are fully culpable.

Men must bear the responsibility for their deeds and responsibility inevitably entails guilt. After leading a military coup against his best friend,

> Fourré reached out and closed the darkened eyes. He wondered if he would ever be able to close them within himself.
>
> ("Marius")

Even alien manipulators can feel remorse:

> "Do you think... when we see the final result... will the blood wash off us?"
>
> "No. We pay the heaviest price of all."
>
> ("No Truce With Kings")

Pain is inescapable. Good is always flawed.

> I didn't know. Whereever I turned, there were treason and injustice. However hard I tried to do right, I had to wrong somebody.
>
> ("Inside Earth")

Sunt lacrimae rerum.... The tears of things pervade the cosmos. The terror of the infinite spaces haunts the silent stars. Planets reproach their conquerors in every windsong. The more time and circumstance change man, the more he remains the same-- frail and fallible.

> The enemy was old and strong and crafty, it took a million forms and could never quite be slain. For it was man himself-- the madness and sorrow of the human soul, the revolt of a primitive animal against the unnatural state called civilization and freedom.
>
> ("The UN-Man")

What then is a man to do?

> We must try, or stop claiming to be men.
>
> ("What'll You Give?" 1963)

The endless challenge must be met with steadfast dignity. The Broken Sword (1954), a superb reworking of Volsunga Saga elements, is a forceful statement of one man's response to fate. The hero is absolutely unflinching in the best pagan tradition.[13] His courage illuminates his tragedy. Valiant effort matters more than success, for no victory is eternal. In a gentler key:

> Security was a meaningless dream. There was no stability except in death. Peace and happiness were not a reward to be earned but a state to be maintained with toil and grief.... There didn't seem to be any answer except the one grey command: Endure.
>
> ("The UN-Man")

But in the last analysis, why bother? Life, as stated in

Starways, "has no extrinsic purpose or meaning; it's just another phenomenon of the physical universe, it simply is." Or as the author states in his own voice:

> There is no scientific reason to believe that life was ever intended; it is simply a property of matter under certain conditions.
>
> (Is There Life on Other Worlds?, 93)

Since intelligence is a purely pragmatic development rather than a mystical goal of Nature, Anderson would emphatically reject the ideas of Teilhard de Chardin. He favors a non-rigourous, intuitive answer.

> I still see the same blind cosmos governed by the same blind laws. But suddenly it matters. It matters terribly, and means something. What, I haven't figured out yet. I probably never will. But I have a reason for living, or for dying if need be. Maybe that's the whole purpose of life: purpose itself.
>
> ("We Have Fed Our Sea")

The meaning of life is in living. Man finds his own purpose in struggling against the endless challenges life provides, for meeting challenge is all that justifies mankind.

## FOOTNOTES

1 C.S. Lewis scorns the endless propagation of the race in Out of the Silent Planet. He differs radically from Anderson in eschatology and teleology.

2 For example: the UN-Man series (1953 ff.), "The Long Way Home" (1955), "Inside Straight" (1955), "We Have Fed Our Sea," "Time Lag" (1961), and Orbit Unlimited (1961).

3 Compare Samuel R. Delany's ingenious solution to the problems of automation in Nova: workers regain their dignity by becoming cyborgs.

4 The series in internal chronological order: "Marius" (1957), "The UN-Man" (1953), "The Sensitive Man" (1954), "The Big Rain" (1954), "Brake" (1957), "Question and Answers" (1954), and "The Snows of Ganymede" (1955).

5 See The Starfox (1966) and the asterite stories published under his penname "Winston P. Sanders".

6 Of course Anderson has also shown vigourous societies on harsh worlds, for example: Skontar in "The Helping Hand" and Vixen, Kraken, Lochlanna, and Kirkasant in the Terran Empire series. But ordinarily he places brutal societies in brutal enviroments. Compare the social effects of enviroment in Frank Herbert's Dune.

7 Compare his use of this concept with that of Thomas M. Disch in Mankind Under the Leash.

8 For the possibilities of voluntary chastity, see his article "Nice Girls on Mars," The Magazine of Fantasy and Science



Fiction, May, 1956. Man has the potential to transcend his culture and even his genes, as most recently dramatized in "The Sharing of Flesh" (1968).

9 Intervention is similarly treated in Chad Oliver's "Blood's a Rover" and "Between Thunder and the Sun."

10 For some of his views on the superman, see "Earthman, Beware!" (1951), Brain Wave, and Twilight World.

11 In The Rebel Worlds the great personal integrity of the rebel admiral is the source of the tragedy.

12 "Writer Wrong," Niekas, No. 19, 1968, 29.

13 Man and fate from a Protestant viewpoint: "You must accept the worst because there is always more of the worst than the best in the universe.... Our part is to take what God sends us and still hold ourselves up on both feet." ("We Have Fed Our Sea")

## TITLE CHANGES

"The Ancient Gods" as World Without Stars, Ace, 1966

"The Day After Doomsday" as After Doomsday, Ballantine, 1962

"The Long Way Home" abridged as No World of Their Own, Ace, 1958

"The Man Who Counts" as War of the Wing-Men, Ace, 1958

"A Plague of Masters," as Earthman, Go Home, Ace, 1960

"Questions and Answers" as Planet of No Return, Ace, 1956

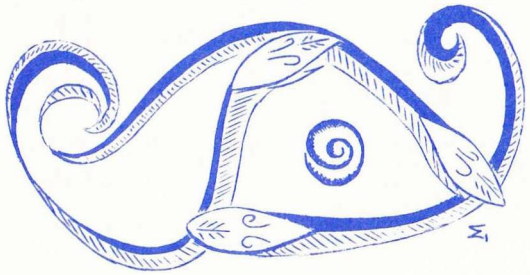
"State of Assassination" as "A Man to my Wounding" in The Horn of Time, Signet, 1968

"We Have Fed Our Sea" as The Enemy Stars, Lippincott and Berkley, 1958

We Claim These Stars! as "Hunters of the Sky Cave" in Agent of the Terran Empire, Chilton, 1965

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Rick Brooks and Ian Wright for loans of research materials.



# APHELION

If
The thin jet's thrust did not come
To give us impulse, we would move on
And passing our aphelion, fall a million miles
Toward that summer star that shines
Bright against the back-cloth of our night.

If
We chose to seek again the summer
Past the watchful frost-giants' ring,
To where the chosen children go
In endless dance about that central fire - whose pull
Yet reaches here, but not its light.

If
We passed from winter's endless rule
To where the warm flames' dance
Should warm these ice-chilled bones,
So would we softly vanish like the snow
Before the fury of that white-hot might.

But
The jets' thunder will come
To break our southward swing.
We will shake the rocks
Of this dead world, and by our flight
Change perpetual winter into spring.



But
The incandescent flame of our exhaust
Shall serve as sun, lighting
The cold Plutonian night.
Rivulets of molten snows, and sudden vapours form
In that abrupt summer our coming here shall bring.

But
The glory of the far, high stars
Will call us on; beyond
This point of our aphelion.
Our sons will cross that further void, and hear
With sudden wonder, songs the starborn sing.

--Bob Parkinson

# HOMO HYDROGENESIS

## Notes on the Work of J. G. Ballard

by

Nick Perry and Roy Wilkie

*(University of Strathclyde)*

The point of these notes is to trace out two elements in the work of J.G. Ballard and suggest possible connections. By doing so we are not saying that this is all that is in his writings, nor are we attempting to assess his overall significance, either in science fiction or in the field of contemporary literature, although we are quite sure that this latter point will be very well worth exploring. For the moment we intend to discuss just two topics -- landscape and character -- which we consider, to be central to an understanding of Ballard's writing.

Ballard's work is prima facie science fiction in the sense that his stories are instigated by external physical or social factors rather than, as with ordinary fiction, by a conflict between people. In The Drought radio-active waste has stopped the sea evaporating, and as a result fresh-water supplies become extremely scarce. In The Wind from Nowhere a wind begins to circle the earth's surface at an accelerating rate, destroying urban centres in its path. In The Drowned World due to prolonged solar storms the temperature of the Earth rises, the polar ice-caps melt and the water level of the Earth rises. In Storm-Bird, Storm Dreamer the use of fertiliser has generated a race of huge birds. In The Subliminal Man extensive advertising techniques dominate in order to maintain high-level production. Other stories are often variations on traditional science fiction themes. Ballard, however, is not writing traditional science fiction.

In the first place, Ballard's readers soon discover that landscape is of primary importance. Two quotations should suffice:

> The long arc of trees hanging over the water dripped and glittered with myriads of prisms, the trunks and fronds of the date palms sheathed by bars of livid yellow and carmine light that bled away across the surface of the water, so that the whole scene seemed to be reproduced by an overactive technicolour process. The entire length of the opposite shore glittered with this blurred chiaroscuro, the overlapping bands of colour increasing the density of the vegetation, so that it was impossible to see more than a few feet berween the front line of trunks. The sky was clear and motionless, the hot sunlight shining uninterruptedly upon this magnetic shore, but now and then a stir of wind could cross the water and the trees erupted into cascades of rippling colour that lanced away into the air around us. Then slowly, the coruscation subsided and the images of the individual trunks, each sheathed in its brilliant armour of light, reappeared, their dripping foilage loaded with deliquescing jewels.
>
> (The Illuminated Man)



> The coastal hills now marked the edges of the desert that stretched in a continuous table across the continent, a wasteland of dust and ruined towns, but there was always more colour and variety here than in the drab world of the salt flats. In the morning the seams of quartz would melt with light, pouring like liquid streams down the faces of the cliffs, the sand in the ravines turning into frozen fountains. In the afternoon the colours would mellow again, the shadows searching out the hundreds of caves and aerial grottoes, until the evening light, shining from beyond the cliffs to the west, illuminated the whole coastline like an enormous ruby lantern, glowing through the casements of the cave-mouths, as if lit by some subterrean fire.
>
> (The Drought)

These quotations, illustrative of much of Ballard's writing, clearly connect with the landscapes of Max Ernst and Yves Tanguy --self-consciously so, in fact, since Ballard himself is at pains to make these links explicitly. They also may suggest affinities with Aldous Huxley:

> Drooping in green parabolas from the hedge, the ivy fronds shone with a kind of glassy, jade-like radiance. A moment later a clump of Red Hot Pokers, in full bloom, had exploded into my field of vision. So passionately alive that they seemed to be standing on the very brink of utterance, the flowers strained upwards into the blue. I looked down at the leaves and discovered a cavernous intricacy of the most delicate green lights and shadows, pulsing with indecipherable mystery.
>
> (The Doors of Perception)

In this last passage, as in Ballard, the description of Nature clearly takes on special significance in that it is not simply representational, but informed by the perceptual nuances of the observer. Huxley's perception however is heightened by mescalin.

But if Ballard's landscapes are at odds with conventional natural backcloths, his characters are equally strange. Their social backgrounds and occupations, are professional and middle-class. This, of course, in itself is not unusual for the British novel, but the occupational range is drawn almost exclusively from the medical and biological sciences. The four central characters in his novels, for example, are three doctors and a biologist. Again this is not all that surprising -- Ballard studied medicine at Cambridge -- byt the recurrence over forty-eight short stories and four novels suggests that Ballard may attach some sort of symbolic importance to such professions. What is evident from his work, however, is that occupation is subservient to the central character's psychology, for it is largely a technical expedient which allows Ballard free rein to map out his concern with issues of life and death, pain and suffering. They are either physically injured like Conrad Foster in The Impossible Man or Maitland in Gioconda of the Twilight Noon; or in ill health like Mason in Now Wakes the Sea or Larsen in Zone of Terror; or have suffered at the hands of society like Gregory in The Insane Ones or Hathaway in The Subliminal Man.

A Ballard central character is always "out of joint." Moreover, his social environment, such as it is, is often composed of lepers and idiots and religious maniacs and psychopaths. Typically, however, Ballard's characters increasingly act out some internal imperative toward social isolation, at least from regular social contacts, and this internal imperative gives them a passivity, a sense of detachment in the face of the social and human predicaments which act as backcloths to Ballard's stories. "He had managed to accept an uneasy compromise that allowed him to view his predicament with the detached fatalism he had previously reserved for his patients" (The Voices of Time). This detached fatalism has become so pronounced a feature of Ballard's characters that James Cawthorne claimed of them:

> The two-fisted technologist of Astounding's heyday is replaced, in this setting, by a figure which it is tempting to label The Dissolving Hero. Faced with the breakup of the Universe he does not fight, but instead seeks, literally, to be absorbed. (New Worlds, August 1966)

One can easily come away from Ballard's books with this impression but we would suggest that the way his characters behave implies rather more than such cryptic comments would imply. Built into his work is the premise that the afflictions, mental, physical or social, from which his characters suffer are the precondition for some kind of insight into "the human condition." This theme has, of course, a long history -- from Lear's Fool to Dostoevski's Idiot, from Cyrano de Bergerac to Kierkegaard.[2]

Ballard, moreover, is not content to claim insight for his characters. They have a monopoly of it. "The only real cripples, Maitland reflected, were the perfect in limb" (The Gioconda of the Twilight Noon). "What our timorous passengers fail to realise, Doctor, is that outside your colony there is merely another larger one" (The Crystal World).

Not only are the "really crippled" deficient of insight into the human condition, frequently they are positively disliked.

> Without any doubt he reflected, homo sapiens en masse presented a more unsavoury spectacle than aomost any other species of animal.
>
> (The Reptile Enclosure)

> Gifford realized that his dislike of her was in no way personal, but merely part of the cordial distaste he felt for almost the entire human race.
>
> (The Delta at Sunset)

These two elements -- landscape and character -- make up a pattern. Ballard's characters connect with their landscapes, their psychological state is reflected in their environmental circumstances. Ballard's landscapes are descriptions of the workings of the mind.

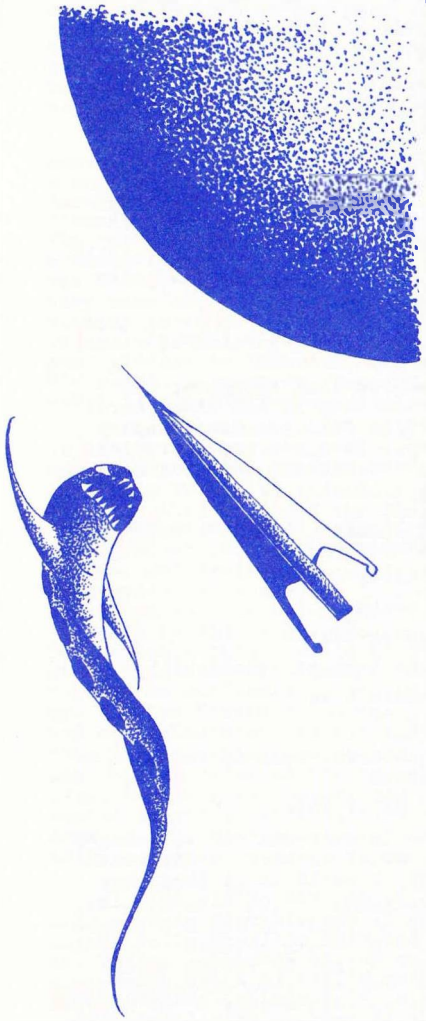
> How else is nature meaningful, unless she illustrates some inner experience. The only real landscapes are the internal ones or the external projection of them, such as this delta.
>
> (The Delta at Sunset)

The terrestrial and psychic landscapes were indistinguishable, as they had been at Hiroshina and Auschwitz, Golgotha and Gomorrah.

(The Drowned World)



Moreover, these claims are not marginal features of Ballard's work. They are the basic propositions of his philosophy. He has developed around them, not only the bulk of his literary work, but also a view of the future of science fiction.



> The images of surrealism are the iconography of inner space...what they demonstrate conclusively is that our commonplace notions of reality--for example, the rooms we occupy, the rural and urban landscapes around us, the musculatures of our own bodies, the postures we assume--may have different meanings by the time they reach the central nervous system. Conversely, the significance of the images projected from within the psyche may have no direct correlation at all to their apparent counterparts in the world outside us.[3]

Where the older science fiction has been most involved with outer space, this new offshoot is concerned with "inner space," the surrealists' "landscapes of the soul," and in creating images where the outer world and the psyche meet and fuse. Indeed, for these writers, science serves much the same role as did psycho-analysis for the surrealists--a standpoint rather than a subject matter. Recognising that the whole of science fiction's imaginary universe has long since been absorbed into the general consciousness and that most of its ideas are valid only in a kind of marginal spoofing, as in William Burroughs' "The Ticket that Exploded," they have set about trying to create a new set of conventions with which to explore their subject matter. As distinct from the teleological ends of science fiction in the past, with its explicit social and moral preoccupations, the new science fiction is devoted to ontological objectives--the understanding of time, landscape, and identity.

(from a Ballard review in The Guardian, 9th April 1965, of science fiction novels)

These last two quotations confirm the seriousness with which Ballard holds to the earlier propositions -- "the only real landscapes are the internal ones or the external projections of them."

It is interesting at this point to note that Ballard's literary development parallels the work of R.D. Laing and other members of the anti-psychiatry group -- a school of thought which evokes the mood of existential philosophy in its new formulation of the psychopathology of adult schizophrenia. In particular, Laing's desceiptions of the schizophrenic experience from the viewpoint of the patient are of immediate relevance.

> He was terrified at the threatened loss of identity involved in this merging and fusion of his self with the whole world. He knew of no half-way stage between radical isolation and self absorption or complete absorption into all there was. He was afraid of being absorbed into Nature, engulfed by her, with irrevocable loss of his self; yet what he most dreaded, that also he most longed for. (The Divided Self)

Or again a description by a patient who employed a form of magical camouflage to overcome anxiety:

> ...it struck me that if I stared long enough at the environment,that I would blend with it and disappear.. It is as if you get yourself to feel you don't know who you are or where you are...Then you are scared of it because it begins to come on without encouragement.
>
> (ibid.)

In another book, The Politics of Experience, there is an analysis of the schizophrenic experience as involving:

(1) a voyage from outer to inner

(2) from life to a kind of death

(3) from going forward to going back

(4) from temporal movement to temporal standstill

(5) from mundane time to aeonic time

(6) from the ego to the Self

(7) from being outside (post-birth) back in to the womb of all things (pre-birth)

--and subsequently a return "voyage" as it were.

Ballard's characters then behave in ways similar to Laing's schizophrenics. They have evolved a set of tactics to cope with the world. The question is: what sort of world is it that they are trying to cope with? In Terminal Beach, one of his most impressive short stories, Ballard gives us the clearest picture of this world. In the story, Traven, a one-time military pilot, has been driven by some private compulsion to the abandoned island of Eniwetok. His wife and son have been killed in a car crash. The island is cluttered up with towers, blockhouses, bunkers, plastic models of the dead. Traven is in rags, diseased and with a badly injured foot. He sleeps first in the open and then in a tomb-like bunker, and finally nearer to a maze of concrete blocks.



A biologist and his assistant, a young woman, arrive on an inspection of the site. They meet Traven but leave without him. A search party comes to find Traven, buy he eludes them by lying among the plastic models. Throughout this period he occasionally sees the figures of his dead wife and son. He resorts to a tactic of "switching-off" his environment, but abandons this as futile. He later comes across the corpse of a middle-class Japanese man. He communicates with the corpse, and it replies. He then moves the corpse into a position between him and the blocks he had earlier tried to "switch-off" and awaits his own death.

Eniwetok is Ballard's world. "Despite the sand and the few anaemic palms, the entire landscape of the island was snythetic, a man-made artifact with all the associations of a vast system of derelict concrete motorways." The blocks were a perfect cube, fifteen feet high and regularly spaced at ten-yard intervals. "These were arranged in a series of tracts, each composed of two hundred blocks, inclined to one another and to the direction of the blast. They had weathered only slightly in the years since they were first built, and their gaunt profiles were like the cutting faces of a gigantic die-plate, devised to stamp out rectilinear volumes of air the size of a house." Dying, Traven says goodbye to Eniwetok, and then adds in order Los Alamos, Hiroshima, Alamagordo, Moscow, London, Paris, New York. Eniwetok is clearly representative.

Eniwetok, then is not only the world of Ballard's characters; it is the world for all of us, but only the Ballard characters can perceive it accurately. The biologist and his female assistant help Traven by attending to his cut foot, and the girl warns him that they will ask the Navy to come and take him off the island. Both of them represent the "normal" human being, doing an "acceptable" job of work, behaving "normally" and being kind to Traven. But their response to the island -- and what the island represents -- is clearly inadequate. The dead Japenese who has committed suicide recommends to Traven a philosophy of acceptance -- "this island is an ontological Garden of Eden, why seek to expel yourself into a world of quantal flux?" -- but Traven finds great difficulty in reconciling himself to that position. The blocks, he confesses, stand in his way. The blocks are technology. And for Traven to soothe his inner compulsion he has to place the corpse between himself and the blocks as protection. Traven then is not making a martyred gesture against thermonuclear testing; he has rejected the "normal" world of work and love and play; but to move towards the right response to a world represented by Eniwetok is difficult and can only be achieved by drawing upon the experience and wisdom of ways of life not normally accepted by technological society.

Ballard's solution then connects with other societies and other ways of life. To reach this solution we have to throw out acceptable modes of thinking where "normal" man obeys "reason and logic, buzzing around his diminished unimportant world with his little parcel of instructions like a worker bee" (The Drowned World). Western ways and Western spirituality are insufficient to sustain us in this world. So we have to invert, turn the acceptable, normal world upside down befoee we can be secure. Ballard's stories repeatedly advise us to "invert" our logic which presumably represents for Ballard Western technological thinking and values. It is interesting to note that when Ballard was twelve he was interned in a Japanese prison camp near Shanghai. Of his experience he has written:

> During the Second World War I was interned with some 2,000 British and American civilians in a Japanese prison camp ten miles from Shanghai. For most of the three year period the camp was guarded by not more than a dozen Japanese. Apart from a few atrocities committed during the last months of the war, the main energies of the guards was devoted to helping the inmates strengthen the barbed-wire fence which kept out the starving Chinese trying to get into the camp and share the vegetables grown there on every square inch of available soil. Roll-calls, curfews and the like were organized by the inmates--the guards barely put in an appearance, realizing that left to themselves the inmates would devise a more regimented and impregnable prison within a prison than any they could hope for.

An observation made to one of the authors of this article by a fellow inmate of Ballard's may also be of interest."It's funny how your reactions are different in prison camps from outside. Take air raids. When I came back to Britain, air raids were things one fled from and feared, but in the prison camp air raids were welcomed. There was no school. The planes brought relief." The advocacy of "logical" inversion by Ballard's characters then, has its roots in the author's personal experience.

Such inversion permeates Ballard's work. Everything is the "wrong" way round. The central character walks into the rain or into the desert or into the forest. The "abnormal" are the normal. The "maimed" are the wholesome. Reality is a dream. The nightmare is the reality. Thus the victim in End Game begins--unlike Kafka's heroes--by assuming his own guilt; it is only when he claims and believes in his own innocence that he is killed. "When you know you are innocent," says the assassin, "then you are guilty." In commenting on his own story, Ballard has claimed that only a truly guilty man can conceive of the concept of innocence at all, or hold it with such ferocity.

What then can we make of Ballard's thought? Like the surrealists, Ballard accepts the absolute freedom of the mind--the inner world of the psyche is all important. In this sense, Ballard would concur with Hegel's view of the realisation of man.

> He attains this end by altering external things and impressing on them the stamp of his own inner nature, so that he rediscovers his own character in them. Man does this in order that he may profit by his freedom to break down the stubborn indifference of the external world to himself, and may enjoy in the countenance of nature only an outward embodiment of himself.
>
> (quoted by V. Vallis, "Artist and Environment," British Journal of Aesthetics, II (1962), 332.)

Like the existential psycho-analysts, Ballard is saying that the schizophrenic "solution" points the way to this realisation and that the schizophrenic is someone unable to subdue his natural instinct and conform to the abnormal, insane world. Unlike Laing's schizophrenics, however, Ballard's characters do not make the return journey to the world of everyday experience. Like Huxley, Ballard is convinced that the visionary experience is valid, a means of better understanding and realising ourselves.



> A man consists of what I may call an Old World of personal consciousness and, beyond a dividing sea, a series of New Worlds--the not too distant Virginians and Carolinas of the personal subconscious and the vegetative soul; the Far West of the collective unconscious, with its flora of symbols, its tribes of aboriginal archetypes; and across another, vaster ocean, at the antipodes of everyday consciousness, the world of Visionary Experience.
>
> (Aldous Huxley, op. cit.)

If one regards Ballard as providing an early warning system for social change--one of the legitimate functions of the artist--then his initial diagnosis is surely correct. The blocks that confuse Traven confuse us all. The metaphysic that emerges, however, is from a Western viewpoint pessimistic. His prescription seems all too close to that in the Tibetan Book of the Dead:

> ...Milarepa, Tibet's saintly master of Yoga...preparing to die...chose not only a favourable external environment... but an inner state of mental equilibrium in keeping with his approaching Nirvana. Indomitably controlling his body, which, having been poisoned by an enemy, was disease-weakened and wracked, he welcomed death with a song, as being natural and inevitable.

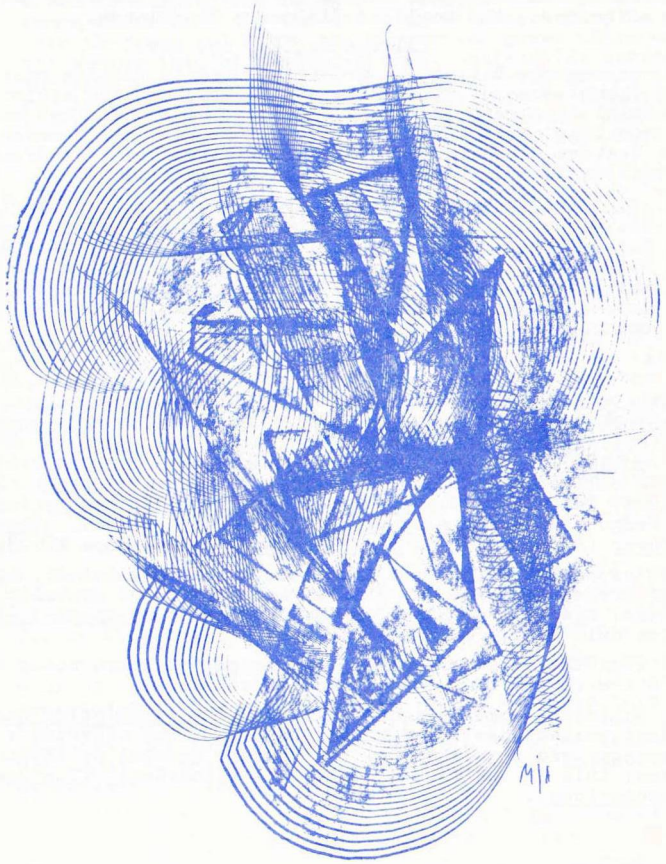
## FOOTNOTES

1) Quotations are from Ballard's work published in Britain: his four novels, The Wind from Nowhere (Penguin 1962), The Drowned World (Gollanz 1963, Penguin 1965), The Crystal World (J. Cape 1966, Panther 1968), The Drought (J. Cape 1965, Penguin 1968), and his five collections of short stories, The Terminal Beach (Gollanz 1964, Penguin 1966), The Four Dimensional Nightmare (Gollanz 1963, Penguin 1965), The Overloaded Man (Panther 1967), The Day of Forever (Paneher 1967), The Disaster Area (J. Cape 1967).

2) Most recently, this theme is found, albeit implicitly, in the work of Erving Goffman, one of the high priests of symbolic interactionism. See Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity, Prentice Hall 1963, Penguin 1968.

3) Although this appears in The Overloaded Man it is not a short story but a review of two books on surrealism.

4) Cf. Ballard's comment about Chirico's The Disquieting Muses:"An undefined anxiety has begun to spread across the deserted square. The symmetry and regularity of the arcades conceal an intense inner violence; this is the face of catatonic withdrawal" (The Coming of the Unconscious).





# THE PRESENCE OF ANGELS

Thus to have seen the summer day fall into dusk,
And known the sky-bright jet lift against evening
With voices calling upon the angel's path,
Held against fear. Thee we rejected
In such great need, denying
Light fall into night, and the presence with us
Of messengers among worlds. Knowing only
The radiance
Of such creatures, too marvellous to look upon. Now
We have built our own City of Lost Angels
From our superhighways, and dreams. These falling creatures
Caress us with their fire - move atom-orbits
with soft wings,
Disturb our lives. Guard us
Angel-creatures, guard us while we sleep;
Guard us from the terror of the feather that falls
in the night,
And the sudden violence at day.

--Bob Parkinson

# HALF POEM

In the beginning was the Word
John and McLuhan
The Medium in the Message
God come man
Logos in the bread and wine
A birthright sold before morning
And
In this mass-age mediums
Haruspicate or scry
Reality
Is a queue of people
In a laundromat
If you believe that.

--Bob Parkinson



# THE CROWD

Foot-sore, we bumped shoppers.
The marketplace was teeming
with the reprieved fantasies
that we had forgotten.
The barkers lurched out
over day-old bakery;
pungent odours of fish loomed
over the piled-high stalls.
Bags over our arms,
blisters straining under the weight,
we were jostled by an afterimage
of black eyes signalling frantically
and voices ascending to the clouds.

--T.C. Burtt, Jr.

# OUT OF TIME'S ABYSS

## The Martian Stories of Edgar Rice Burroughs, A Speculation

by

Richard Kyle

Every human season creates its storyteller. When the world grows suddenly larger and the old myths shrivel and seem to wither away, he arrives somehow to tell his tale. If he is a great storyteller, his story tells all the things the people feel but can never say, not even to themselves. If he is merely good, he tells only part of the story they long to hear, and years may pass before another storyteller comes along to complete the tale. But great or good, he is always popular -- for however disguised his story is, however fantastic it may seem, its true subject is the single one that interests all mankind, Reality.

Edgar Rice Burroughs was a storyteller, and for fifty-seven years he has been one of the most popular writers on earth. His books sell in the tens of millions. His characters are known throughout the world, and "Tarzan" has become a universal common noun. Wholly without literary reputation, his stories endure, perpetually successful, living beyond changes in literary style and content, in social behavior, and even in scientific knowledge -- while the stories of almost every other writer of Burroughs' generation, serious artist or commercial hack, lie unread and unreadable.

There is a story in that success. It began in England, I believe, in 1889.

•

In 1889 a world was being born, and another was dying. America had been an independent nation for a hundred and thirteen years. The Communist Manifesto was forty-one years old. Darwin's theory of evolution was thirty-one. In England, Queen Victoria still mourned her consort, Prince Albert, who had died twenty-eight years before. In America, the War Between the States was twenty-four years past, but it was not forgotten.

Fourteen year old Edgar Rice Burroughs was part of this new world. Chicago, his birthplace, was a frontier city then, only fifty years old, bigger and more cosmopolitan than the cities and towns to the West, but still raw and vital in a way Eastern America no longer knew. Agricultural trade and industry had established themselves. The arts and sciences were arriving. But the influences of the Old World were muted, and the surging, exuberant drive that was carrying America west and challenging the past belonged to America alone. "I still live!" became the rallying cry of Burroughs' first hero, the eternally youthful John Carter -- and it echoed the hope and determined conviction held by the young America of Burroughs' boyhood.



But a world was dying, too, in 1889. The God who had made kings divine and who had created man in His own image had no answer to popular democracy or mass revolution or Darwinian evolution. The British Empire was richer and more powerful than ever, America was growing and developing in every material way -- but in England and America the popular songs and poetry were often tragic or merely gloomy, fictional heroines were pale and consumptive and "spiritual," and a dark thread of necrophilia ran through literature and the drama. The dead, divine body of the past was helplessly mourned, and the living animal body of the present was looked upon with loathing. Anything associated with man's purported animal ancestry was refused social existence. At once a denial of Darwinism and an agonized acknowledgement, Victorian prudery was the sure consequence of the trauma created by evolutionary thought. Socially, women stopped having arms and legs and developed limbs. Poultry acquired "white meat" and "drumsticks" so that "breast" and "legs" need not be mentioned in mixed company. The naked legs of furniture was sometimes clad in decorative trousers. Metaphysically, it was less comic. To be made of flesh became obscene. No decent woman liked sex. That was for the beasts. Man had lost his divinity, men knew--but they would not accept his animality.

Two years before, H. Rider Haggard, the English author of the enormously popular King Solomon's Mines had written an epitath for that older world, the world he would mourn for all of his life. It was She. In one passage, the eternally youthful Ayesha, deep within the cave-tombs of ancient Kor, voiced the thoughts of an entire generation.

> "O Kallikrates!" she cried..."I must look upon thy face again, although it be agony. It is a generation since I looked upon thee whom I slew--slew with mine own hand."
>
> "Shall I raise thee," she said, apparently addressing the corpse, "so that thou standest there before me, as of old? I can raise thee," and she held out her hands over the sheeted dead, while her frame became rigid and terrible to see...I thought that the quiet form beneath the coverings began to quiver, and the winding sheet to lift as though it lay on the breast of one who slept. Suddenly Ayesha withdrew her hands, and the motion of the corpse seemed to me to cease.
>
> "To what purpose?" she said heavily. "Of what service is it to recall the semblance of life when I cannot recall the spirit?"[1]

Tormented from childhood by feelings of private guilt, part of a society that had lost its Prince, and member of a culture whose philosophies and traditions, one by one, were falling before the test of change, Haggard echoed the public fantasies of his readers by the personal fantasies that energized his stories. Haggard embraced this dying world, and it, in turn, embraced him, an unsuccessful "younger son," made successful by his unhappy inner vision.

Young Burroughs was part of this dying world as well. But he would not accept his role. He felt no morbid personal guilt, the Civil War and Lincoln's death were ten long years before his birth, and his culture, the pragmatic and technologically oriented culture of America, was creating new traditions. For his generation, the ante bellum South -- with its roots in the Old World -- was the stuff of dreams, a long-past romantic age.

But H. Rider Haggard wrote of Life and Death, and he had a vast imagination, one that could clothe his inner thoughts in bizarre and wonderful symbols wholly unlike those of any other writer of his time. Young Edgar Rice Burroughs had a vast and wonderful imagination, too -- and so that year of 1889 saw the publication of another H. Rider Haggard novel, one, with King Solomon's Mines and She, that probably changed the course of Burroughs' life, inspired the Martian novels, and was grandparent to the most well-known fictional hero of the twentieth century, Tarzan of the Apes.

The novel was Cleopatra.

•

Early in 1912, Frank A. Munsey's All-Story Magazine began publication of "Under the Moons of Mars," later to be printed in book form as A Princess of Mars. It was Burroughs' first novel, and the introductory story of his initial Martian trilogy. In the opening episode, John Carter of Virginia, late of the Army of the Confederacy, voyaged across space to the planet Mars. His mode of travel was as puzzling to his editor then as it has been to fifty-seven years of readers.

"Overcome by poisonous gas ," the editor wrote in his synopsis of the first part, "apparently he undergoes a physical metamorphosis, some inherent part of him being released...In this state, through a series of phenomena, he finds himself transported to the planet Mars..." The editor was only a little less explanatory than Burroughs himself. Why did he choose that singular means of passage? Travel by spaceship between the planets was not uncommon in the fiction of the day. Burroughs' mode of transport is so unusual in the light of his other purely mechanical fictional devices that it is difficult to dismiss.

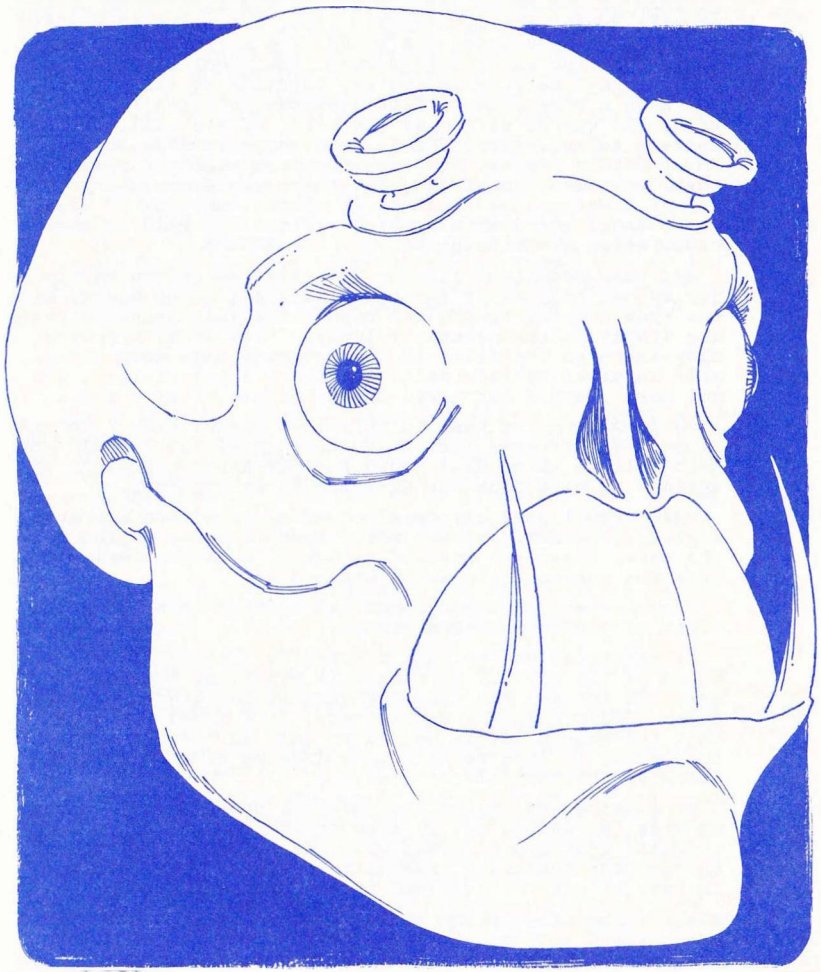
As Burroughs told the story, John Carter -- "possessed of several hundred thousand dollars (Confederate) and a captain's commission... which no longer existed" -- travelled west after the war, prospecting. Carter recalled no childhood. For as long as he could remember he had always been a man -- a man of thirty. "Possibly I am a hundred, possibly more...I appear today as I did forty years and more ago, and yet I feel that I cannot go on living forever; that some day I shall die the real death from which there is no resurrection."

In Arizona, Carter and his partner struck an immense vein of gold. But soon after, hostile Indians attacked, and carrying the arrow-riddled body of his companion, Carter took refuge in a mountain cave. There he was overcome by a mysterious "slight vapor," and fell to the floor, paralyzed but in complete possession of his mental faculties.



> From then until possibly midnight all was silence, the silence of the dead; then, suddenly the awful moan of the morning broke upon my startled ears, and there came again from the black shadows the sound of a moving thing, and a faint rustling as of dead leaves. The shock to my already overstrained nervous system was terrible to the extreme, and with a superhuman effort I strove to break my awful bonds. It was an effort of the mind, of the will, of the nerves; not muscular, for I could not move even so much as my little finger, but none the less mighty for all of that. And then something gave, there was a momentary feeling of nausea, a sharp click as of the snapping of steel wire, and I stood with my back against the wall of the cave facing my unknown foe.
>
> And then moonlight flooded the cave, and there before me lay my own body as it had been lying all these hours, with the eyes staring toward the open ledge and the hands resting limply on the ground. I looked first at my lifeless clay there on the floor of the cave and then down at myself in utter bewilderment; for there I lay clothed, and yet here I stood but naked as the minute of my birth...
>
> My first thought was, is this then death! Have I indeed passed over forever into that other life! But I could not well believe this, as I could feel my heart pounding against my ribs from the exertion of my efforts...
>
> Again was I suddenly recalled to my immediate surroundings by repetition of the weird moan from the depths of the cave. Naked and unarmed as I was, I had no desire to face the unseen thing which menaced me...
>
> ...I leaped quickly through the opening into the starlight of a clear Arizona night...
>
> My attention was quickly riveted by a large red star close to the distant horizon...It was Mars, the god of war, and for me, the fighting man, it had always held the power of irresistable enchantment. As I gazed at it on that far-gone night it seemed to call across the unthinkable void, to lure me to it, to draw me as the lodestone attracts the particle of iron.
>
> My longing was beyond the power of opposition; I closed my eyes, stretched out my arms toward the god of my vocation and felt myself drawn with the suddenness of thought through the trackless immensity of space. There was an instant of extreme cold and utter darkness.[2]

Burroughs' original working title for the novel was "My First Adventure on Mars,"[3] and it is clear that the second in the series, The Gods of Mars, had already been planned. A Princess of Mars is an introductory work. After John Carter's passage through the cold and darkness of space, we meet the fifteen foot tall Green Martians and Tars Tarkas of Thark, and the human Red Martians and Dejah Thoris, Princess of Helium. We roam Mars' trackless deserts, the sea bottoms of an earlier age; encounter its great beasts; visit its towering cities. We learn Barsoom's -- Mars' -- history. And we are introduced to the ancient religion of Barsoom.






Early in his experiences Carter notes, "I saw no signs of extreme age among them, nor is there any appreciable difference in their appearance from the age of maturity, about forty, until, at the age of one thousand years, they go voluntarily upon their last strange pilgrimage down the river Iss, which leads no living Martian knows whither and from whose bosom no Martian has ever returned, or would be allowed to live did he return after once embarking upon its cold, dark waters" (27). Later, Dejah Thoris tells him, "Except in the legends of our ancestors, there is no record of a Barsoomian returning up the river Iss, from the shores of Korus in the valley of Dor" (60). Already in this first book, Burroughs had imagined the world of the Valley Dor.

A Princess of Mars bears a slight, but suggestive, similarity to King Solomon's Mines. As with She and Cleopatra, the body of Haggard's story is also presented as an original manuscript, told in the first person. Both novels involve subsidiary hunts for riches, diamonds in King Solomon's Mines, gold in Burroughs novel. There are long desert treks in each story, and mountain caves containing human remains. Each has a subplot in which a sympathetic barbarian overthrows the cruel king who has wronged him and assumes the throne -- Ignosi, rightful king of the Kukuana, in King Solomon's Mines, and Tars Tarkas, ultimately Jeddak of Thark, in A Princess of Mars. Both characters conclude their speeches similarly. "I have spoken," Ignosi says, in a manner apparently characteristic of the Zulus, and Tars Tarkas -- as Barsoomians do --says, "I am done" (57). (However, in the second book in the series, Tars Tarkas concludes his remarks with "I have spoken."[5]) And in a deep cavern, in the land of the Kukuana, Haggard's explorers discover a strange figure carved from stone which suggests the spear-carrying fifteen foot Green Martians: "There at the end of the long stone table, holding in his skeleton fingers a great white spear, sat Death itself, shaped in the form of a colossal human skeleton, fifteen feet or more in height"(240). These likenesses are slight; but they do establish a similarity of symbolic patterns in the works of Haggard and Burroughs. (A clearer possible connection between King Solomon's Mines and the Martian novels may be found in The Chessmen of Mars, the fifth in the series.[6])

After making a warrior's friendship with Tars Tarkas, the fierce Green Martian, rescuing Dejah Thoris from captivity, saving her city from its enemies, wedding his princess, and preserving all Barsoom from death when Mars' great atmosphere plant -- which creates air for the dying planet -- fails, Carter is called back to Earth as mysteriously as he was sent. Ten earthly years have passed when he awakens once more in that Arizona cave.

In The Gods of Mars, after ten more years have passed, Carter returns to Barsoom, again called by some strange power or force. This time there is no "slight vapor" to aid him. As he stands on a bluff above the Hudson River praying to return to Mars he experiences once more the sensations of twenty years before. Once more he stands above his seemingly dead body, and once more he crosses space to Mars.

This time, however, he appears on the banks of the legendary Lost Sea of Korus, into which empties the River Iss, in the Valley Dor. The Martians who make their pilgrimage here believe it is heaven; they find that it is hell, inhabited by man-eating plant men, controlled by the Holy Therns, the cruel priests of a religion that worships Issus, "Goddess of Life Eternal."

Unknown to the Holy Therns, they are themselves prey of Issus and her subjects, the Black Martians -- the self-described "First Born" -- who inhabit a world beneath the Valley Dor. Ultimately, Carter exposes Issus as mortal, and destroys her religion.

The concluding novel, The Warlord of Mars, continues from where The Gods of Mars leaves off, but it is anti-climactic. The extraordinary energy that drives The Gods of Mars, central and pivotal story in the trilogy, is less controlled, and the story plunges into wild action which is no longer as deeply meaningful.

Why did Burroughs choose John Carter's curious means of transport? Is there another significant source beyond Burroughs himself for the Martian religion and the world of the Valley Dor?

Twenty-three years before, Harmachis, the tragic hero of Haggard's Cleopatra, had voyaged into space--as an initiate into "those last mysteries that are learned of the chosen of the Gods" he was called to Amenti, the Place of Death, home of Isis, goddess of life.

> "Isis, Holy Mother," I prayed. "Isis, Spouse of Heaven, come unto me, be with me now; I faint! be with me now!"
>
> And then I knew that things were not as things had been. The air around me began to stir, it rustled as the wings of eagles rustle, it took life...
>
> I knew that I was drawing near the confines of the Dead. Nay. I was dying fast, and oh the horror of it!...One struggle and the stillness crept into my brain..I was dying, and then, nothingness! I was dead!
>
> A change--life came back to me, but between the new life and the life that had been was a gulf and a difference. Once more I stood in the darkness of the shrine, but it blinded me no more. It was clear as ...day, although it was still black. I stood; and yet it was not I who stood, but rather my spiritual part, for at my feet lay my dead Self. There it lay, rigid and still, a stamp of awful calm sealed upon its face, while I gazed on it.
>
> And as I gazed, filled with wonder, I was caught up on the Wings of Flame and whirled away! away! faster than the lightning's flash. Down I fell, through depths of empty space set here and there with glittering crowns of stars. Down for ten million miles and ten times ten million, till at length I hovered over a place of soft unchanging light, wherein were Temples, Palaces and Abodes, such as no man ever saw in the visions of his sleep... Their spires pierced up and up; their great courts stretched around...Here was the flash of crystal, and there the blaze of gems shone even through the glory that rolls around the city which is in the Place of Death. There were trees, and their voices as they rustled was the voice of music; there was air, and, as it blew, its breath was the sobbing note of song.
>
> Shapes...mysteriously wonderful, rushed up to meet me and bore me down till I seemed to stand on another earth...
>
> "Throw back the Gates...open wide the Doors!" pealed the awful voice...Pass On, Child of Earth; but before thou goest look up that thou mayest learn how far thou art...from earth."
>
> I looked up. Beyond the glory that shone about the city was black night, and high on its bosom twinkled one tiny star.
>
> "Behold the world ... that thou hast left," said the Voice, behold and tremble."[7]



Harmachis had not dreamed his adventure. In Amenti, Isis had confirmed that he was the true Pharaoh of Egypt, and revealed that the Ptolemies would be overthrown and her own worship restored -- if Harmachis remained faithful to his people and his vows. Then "a Voice called aloud the awful Word" and the Egyptian was returned to earth, and to his corporeal body. "Once again I woke -- to find myself stretched at length upon the stone flooring of the Holy Place of Isis that is at Abouthis." (61).

Ultimately, Harmachis' fleshly desire for Cleopatra became his ruin and the final ruin of Egypt. Only the gift of revenge against the Ptolemy herself was granted him. As in so many of Haggard's novels, there is an obsession with death, a morbid preoccupation with guilt, and a tortuous division of love into the "spiritual" and the "profane."

But this episode -- some twenty four hundred words long in its entirety -- is remarkably suggestive. A rustling precedes the division of the astral from the corporeal body, in both Haggard's tale and Burroughs'. In each instance the protagonist is in the dark when the division occurs, and each then looks down at his dead body -- Harmachis to see in the blackness itself, John Carter in a sudden flood of moonlight. Each crosses tens of millions of miles of space to another world -- a world of towering spires, and blazing with gems. One arrives in the realm of Isis, Goddess of Life, the other in that of Issus, Goddess of Life Eternal. And each returns to his physical body on Earth.

It is singular, but not beyond coincidence -- and Carter's first trip to Mars did not take him to the Valley Dor, despite the allusions to it. However, there is a strange anomaly in that first story: the incident in the cave, the "slight vapor" that overcame him. What was its source?

After his return to Earth, following the events in A Princess of Mars, Carter finds himself in the blackness of the Arizona cave. He strikes a match, preserved by the desert climate.

> ...Its dim flame lighted up what appeared to be a huge cave, toward the back of which I discovered a strange, still figure huddled over a tiny bench. As I approached it I saw that it was the dead and mummified remains of a little old woman with long black hair, and the thing it leaned over was a small charcoal burner upon which rested a round copper vessel containing a small quantity of greenish powder. Behind her, descending from the roof upon rawhide thongs, and stretching entirely across the cave, was a row of human skeletons. From the thong which held them stretched another to the dead hand of the little old woman; as I touched the cord the skeletons swung to the motion with a noise as of the rustling of dry leaves. (157-8)

Here, the old woman departs from the Martian series, never to return. No explanation is ever offered.

But it would seem none is needed -- if The Gods of Mars were the first story conceived in the trilogy, and if the others grew about it: if the opening and closing episodes of A Princess of Mars had been originally intended to frame an earlier conception of The Gods of Mars.

The woman -- alive when Carter entered the cave, for how else could the vapour have been produced? -- would have been an earthly analogue of Issus, the cave her temple; and the death of Issus on Barsoom would have ensured the old woman's sympathetic death on Earth. The artistic symmetry the final work so curiously lacks would have been present in such a tale. Otherwise, there is reason for neither the old woman nor for her death.

Seen in this light, other dimensions of The Gods of Mars reveal themselves. If the trilogy had grown from an earlier form of the book, then Dejah Thoris, John Carter's princess and the heroine of the trilogy, would probably not have played a part in that tale -- for her function is not crucial to events in the Valley Dor itself. Thuvia, the beautiful princess of Ptarth, who had been captured and enslaved by the Holy Therns during her mysterious pilgrimage down the River Iss, could have performed effectively in both roles. And without Dejah Thoris and the events external to Dor, the novel acquires a haunting familiarity.

If Burroughs' inspiration for The Gods of Mars is Cleopatra, then the human relationships and geography of Dor found their origin in She.

*

H. Rider Haggard's She is the story of a mortal woman of compelling beauty who has bathed in "the flame of Life," and who has remained youthful -- "the face before me was that of a young woman of certainly not more than thirty..."(125) -- for two thousand years. Queen of a lost African valley, the grave site of an unknown people who built a now-ruined city and constructed the cave-tombs in which she dwells, Ayesha has awaited the return of the lover she slew in frustrated passion in the dawn of her youth. Leo Vincey, a reincarnation of Kallikartes, the man who gave up Ayesha and eternal life for the love of an Egyptian princess, Amenartas, finds his way into the valley, following instructions left by Amenartas, his mother two thousand years removed. He is accompanied by his guardian and friend, the narrator of the story.

As Burroughs describes it in the Gods of Mars, the Valley Dor lies beyond a great antarctic ice barrier. The ice fields surround the Valley Otz, he explains, which "lies in a mighty depression at the south pole. It is sunk thousands of feet below the level of the surrounding country, like a great round bowl. A hundred miles from its northern boundry rise the Otz Mountains which circle the inner valley of Dor, in the exact centre of which lies the Lost Sea of Korus. On the shore of this sea stands the Golden Temple of Issus..." (75-6). The River Iss flows beneath the ice fields and below the floor of the Valley Otz -- though its canyon-like channel is exposed to the sky there -- and then through the walls of the Otz Mountains to drain at last into the Lost Sea of Korus in the Valley Dor.

In Haggard's tale, the valley of Kor lies in Africa, beyond the barrier of a great swamp. The ground rises, rather than falls, until a vast plain is reached --but from it towers an immense circular mountain of volcanic origin. A deep channel cuts across the plain and through the wall of the mountain to its hollow, roofless interior, the valley of Kor, which in lost ages had been the bed of an enormous lake. A river, drainage from the valley, flows out this channel into the plain, and it is through the channel that Haggard's adventurers enter Kor (100-105).



Within Kor and the Valley Dor, beneath their mighty cliffs, are vast meadows and signs of cultivation. (The cliffs of Dor are shot with veins of gold, broken by outcroppings of "ruby, emerald, and diamond boulders" (21), which suggest the "blaze of gems" that shone about Cleopatra's Amenti.) In the distance, both John Carter and Haggard's narrator catch glimpses of strange buildings, Burroughs' character of a "gilded minaret" (28), Haggard's of "colossal ruins" (105). And then each finds refuge in a cave, part of a network of caves and tunnels that wind through the mountains' walls. The ruler of the caves apparently rules Kor, in She; and in Burroughs' story, the Holy Therns seem to rule the Valley Dor.

In The Gods of Mars there are three principal female characters (aside from Dejah Thoris), Phaidor, wilful daughter of the ruling high priest of the Holy Therns; Thuvia, princess of Ptarth and slave of the Holy Therns; and ancient Issus, Death, "Goddess of Life Eternal," who dwells in her golden temple by the Lost Sea of Korus -- and who truly rules the Valley Dor.

In She there are--seemingly--only two female roles, queen Ayesha and her subject and slave, Ustane, the reincarnation of the Princess Amenartas. Both Phaidor and Thuvia love John Carter as Ayesha and Ustane love Haggard's Leo Vincey. Their characters are analogous.

But, in fact, there is a third female role in She, as well. Ayesha is two women, the young woman she appears to be, much like Phaidor; and the old, old woman, much like Issus, her seeming youth conceals -- the woman Ayesha eventually comes to be. This old woman is a personification of Death-- the true ruler of Kor.

Burroughs has described Issus in her temple, after she had summoned Phaidor to serve her (and then to be slain after the passage of a Martian year):

> On this bench or throne squatted a female black. She was evidently very old. Not a hair remained upon her wrinkled skull. With the exception of two yellow fangs she was utterly toothless. On either side of her thin, hawk-like nose her eyes burned from the depths of horribly sunken sockets. The skin of her face was seamed and creased in a million deepcut furrows. Her body was as wrinkled as her face, and as repulsive. Emaciated arms and legs attached to a torso which seemed to be mostly distorted abdomen completed the 'holy vision of her radiant beauty.' (85)

And Haggard has described Ayesha after Death summoned her in the cave of the flame of Life (237), immediately following her ill-omened journey to the haunted ruins of the Temple of Truth in the city of Kor, the "colossal ruins" Haggard's narrator had glimpsed upon entering the valley. Her appearance paralleled that of Gagool, the ancient and dreadful witch-woman of King Solomon's Mines (136-7), and foreshadowed both that of Issus and the "mummified remains of the little old woman with long black hair" in the Arizona cave:

> Smaller and smaller she grew; her skin changed color, and in the place of the perfect whiteness of its lustre it had turned a dirty brown and yellow, like an old piece of withered parchment...The delicate hand was nothing but a claw now, a human talon resembling that of a badly preserved Egyptian mummy...Now the skin had puckered into a million wrinkles, and on her shapeless face was the stamp of unutterable age. She, who but two minutes gone had gazed upon us -- the lovliest, noblest, most splendid woman the world has ever seen-- she lay before us, near the masses of her own dark hair, no larger than a big ape, and hideous -- ah, too hideous for words! (237)

Death as a carnate image had ceased to be, Death as a haunt, a phantom, still lived and ruled in the ancient ruins of the Temple of Truth, forever beyond the will of Man. She did not so live in her golden temple in The Gods of Mars.

> "First Born," [John Carter] cried, turning to those who stood within the chamber, "you have seen today the impotency of Issus -- the gods are omnipotent. Issus is no god. She is a cruel and wicked old woman, who has deceived and played upon you for ages." (187)

And the Issus torn to bits by her former subjects was mortal.

Edgar Rice Burroughs' gift was to understand Haggard's anguished personal story and the metaphysical statement implicit in it. Instinct lead him safely through the mother-oriented world dramatized in King Solomon's Mines and She and Cleopatra, and into the masculine domain beyond. He saw as Haggard never could that Woman was not Mother, and the conflicts that Haggard could only resolve in a denial of the flesh, in spirituality, and in death did not exist for him. Moreover, the death that the tormented Haggard embraced as a solution was anathema to Burroughs.

In its earliest conception, then, The Gods of Mars may have been the single story of a man taken by Death, who refuses to die, who rebels, and who destroys Death herself. Where the guilt-ridden Ayesha, the eternal woman, seemingly forever thirty, surrenders to the will of Isis (for Haggard's is always a morbidly feminine world, one filled with iron whim but forever yielding to Fate), the vital, life-seeking John Carter, the eternal man, forever thirty, denies Issus and demands Life, a rebel even in Hell.

This version, however, would have been no more than She reshaped by a healthy masculine mind. It would have cried no! to death, but it would have given life no new direction. Instead, The Gods of Mars became part of a trilogy, and around it grew a whole new world, but a world that drew its inspiration from the distant, pre-Christian past as well as from the present.



Beyond the Valley Dor, in the dreams that came to him before his sleep,[9] Burroughs constructed a new civilization, one reborn upon the ruins of the old. He built it of Percival Lowell's theories of Mars, of his own recollection of the Arizona desert and the Indians who journeyed -- like Green Martians -- across its face, of Greek mythology and its heroes,[10] of his own imaginative speculations and those of others, and of his private dreams. Behind them all, however, giving form and purpose to nature and events, was Darwin's theory of evolution -- for Barsoom is a dramatic recreation of "the survival of the fittest": a world that revels in its animality, where men are born from eggs, and live the savage lives of predacious beasts; where men and women exult in their naked bodies, and hot-blooded passion, often absurdly real, evokes no shame.

Pale Ayesha, who ate only fruit and would not touch the flesh of animals, had died after two thousand years of life, turned into a large and ancient ape--even as Haggard's generation saw divine, God-created Man dying with the birth of evolution, after two thousand years of Christianity, leaving behind only a large and ancient ape. Haggard's novel paralleled the public's unspoken fantasies, particularly in England, with its dead prince and aging queen. It dramatized their loss, and his private mourning became their own. But in uniting evolution with his personal conflicts, Haggard tainted Darwin's theory. He put upon it a sick and irrelevant moral evaluation, one that -- unconsciously accepted by the public -- must have intensified Victorian revulsion for the flesh.

Burroughs, the American, however, saw proof of Man's divinity in the living body itself, perceiving in our long evolutionary struggle the certain evidence that Man was more than the "beasts that perish." He took a Westerner's pride in our savage will to survive, to understand and dominate our world, to set our sight on goals the other animals could never know. And so he clothed cold Darwinism in human warmth, replacing the morgue-like images that She and Huxley's lectures and Wells's The Island of Dr. Moreau evoked, and he gave his characters the nobility he knew they must have as men.

From there, it would be only one step further to Tarzan of the Apes.

•

Two astral bodies hurtling across space to other worlds, Isis and Issus, Kor and Korus, twin Valleys of Death, the Eternal Woman and the Eternal Man, and all the other similitudes -- all these could be coincidence. But I do not think so.

Surely, Cleopatra and She and -- perhaps-- King Solomon's Mines gave Edgar Rice Burroughs the crucial symbols with which to utter his most deeply felt emotions. But The Gods of Mars is not the work of a mere fabricator of "entertainment" who lifts plot gimmicks and story devices from this book and that. It is the work of a protagonist of his times. Burroughs came to his Martian trilogy not as an imitator of H. Rider Haggard's ideas, but as a determined opponent of the despairing philosophy of Haggard and the Establishment of his era.

In The Gods of Mars he makes no effort to conceal his source. He states it openly, and argues against its author's beliefs and the neurotic beliefs of the post-Darwin generation. And he advances his own dreams of a new and vital and affirmative world to supplant the gloomy ruin of the past.

For fifty-seven years, millions of men have dreamed Edgar Rice Burroughs' dreams. Our own inhospitable Mars is no longer far Barsoom. But the deeper dreams remain. There, the world has scarcely changed, and so Edgar Rice Burroughs lives on, beyond his critics, a people's storyteller, forever popular.

Time has a voice. It praises dreamers.

FOOTNOTES

1) She (Lancer Books, 1966), 134 (originally published in 1887).

2) A Princess of Mars (Ballantine, 1963), 12 (originally published in six parts as "Under the Moons of Mars," by "Norman Bean," in The All-Story Magazine , February-July 1912).

3) Allan J. Tompkins, ed. The ERB Digest (Australia, 1967), 48 (citing H.H. Heins and Hulbert Burroughs).

4) King Solomon's Mines (Dell, 1961), 50 (originally published in 1885).

5) The Gods of Mars (Ballantine, 1969), 46 (originally published in five parts in The All-Story Magazine, January-May 1913).

6) The "Hall of the Dead" in King Solomon's Mines (239-244) strongly suggests Manator's "Hall of Chiefs" in Burroughs' The Chessman of Mars (107 ff.). Too, the life-like embalming and mounting practices of Manator are not unlike those of ancient Kor in She (147-150).

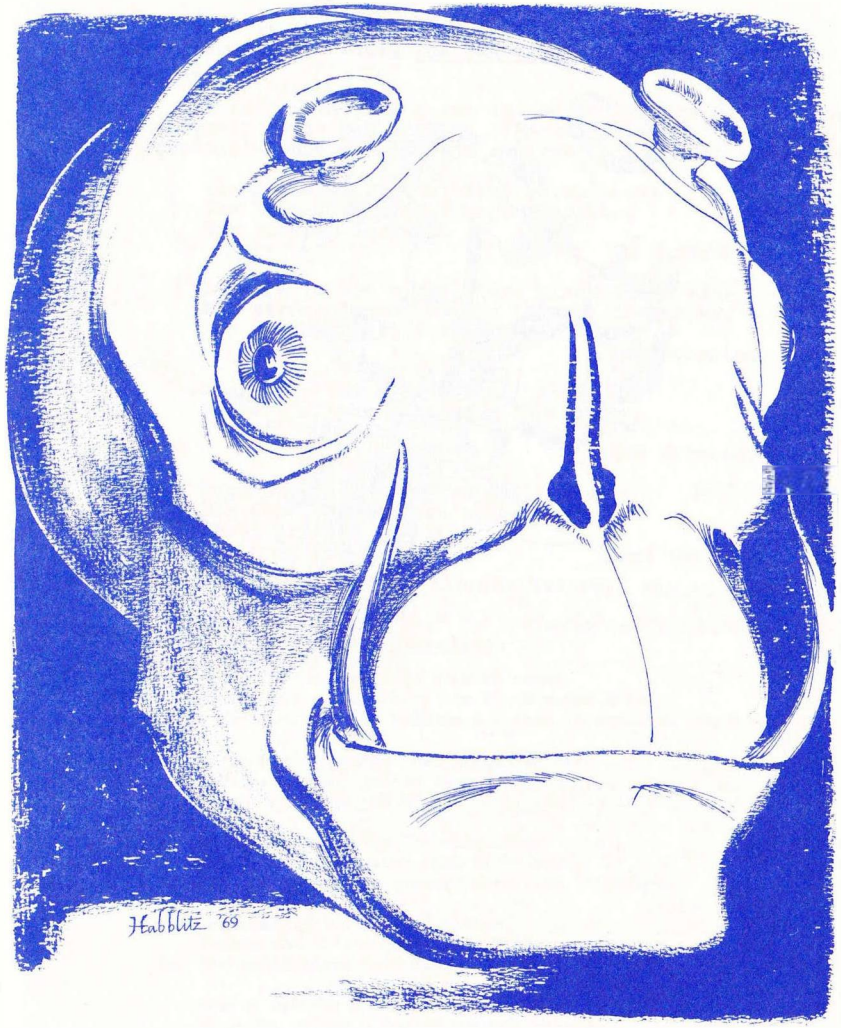
7) Cleopatra (Pocket Books, Inc., 1963), 54-6 (original publication date: 1889).

8) The Gods of Mars, 13; She, 104-5.

9) The Gods of Mars is not the only Burroughs novel that appears to have modern sources. The Mad King is unmistakably derived from Anthony Hope's The Prisoner of Zenda. A likely explanation, since the story was written early in Burroughs' career, is that he had "revised" The Prisoner of Zenda in his mind after he first read it--and well before he became a professional writer--casting the tale into a form that suited his own philosophy. "He used to put himself to sleep by telling himself all kinds of stories about life on other planets and in the far corners of the earth," John Harwood wrote in "The Master of Adventure" for the Burroughs Bibliophiles. Unlike The Gods of Mars, however, The Mad King was not transformed into a wholly new work. Entertaining enough, the story is of interest primarily for the glimpse it provides of that early, pre-literary Burroughs.

10) Editor's note: For details on the Homeric sources of the Barsoom series see Mr. Kyle's letter in RQ III, 244.








# CASSILDA IN TSAGOROTH

What follows is an exchange of letters between your editor and Robert Lowndes, who edits The Magazine of Horror.

Dear Bob:

...I am contemplating for the RQ a "Strange Coincidence Department" à la New Yorker,.. Here's [Robert Chambers'] "Cassilda's Song," which you reprinted in the April '65 issue:

Along the shore the cloud waves break
The twin suns sink behind the lake,
The shadows lengthen
In Carcosa.

Strange is the night where black stars rise
And strange moons circle through the skies,
But stranger still is
Lost Carcosa.

Song that the Hyades shall sing,
Where flap the tatters of the King
Must die unheard in
Dim Carcosa.

Song of my soul, my voice is dead,
Die thou, unsung, as tears unshed
Shall dry and die in
Lost Carcosa.

(Source quoted as "The King in Yellow," Act 1, scene 2.)

And here's "Tsagoroth," by Frederick John Walsen, in the Winter 1933 Time Traveller:

Out of the north, vile breezes sweep,
Out of the gloom, where the black moons creep,
With the breath of the bat-faced things asleep...In Tsagoroth.

An emerald glows in the glistening sky,
And the ancient palace towers high.
Long-dead creatures quiver and sigh...in Tsagoroth.

In a moor that even the wild things spurn,
Mandrakes writhe and witch-fires burn,
Dark talons toward the emerald turn...in Tsagoroth.

Unceasingly the emerald glares,
Before the palace a beacon flares,
But the spell-bound half-beasts lie in their lairs...in Tsagoroth.

Out of the sky a black star shines,
From the palace a marble monster whines,
On the throne a king for his witch-queen pines...in Tsagoroth.

Smooth is the crimson tinge of the lake,
On the hill mad amethysts burn in the brake,
A slain man moans on a sharpened stake...in Tsagoroth.

Trouble is, the haunting quality of Chambers' poem makes the piece by Walsen appear even worse than it actually is... so I may...not...print this pair...I'm still undecided. But anyhow, could you...give me the story title--and possibly book title, publisher, date of publication, and page number?

.....

Dear Leland:

Oh, I don't find anything particularly strange or coincidental...What seems obvious to me is that Walsen was trying his hand at "po'try," and having the fantasy-loving turn of mind used the Chambers bit as a model. Lord ha' mercy! I did the same sort of thing when I was in High School, only I used Poe as a model. Fortunately, I was not on to such possibilities for publication as fan magazines then. A lot depends, of course, as to whether this was really a genuine practice piece. Of course, that doesn't make it any better.. but it is still funnier (I really think you should run it...) if Walsen was of chronologically mature age and thought he was turning out a little masterpiece.

"Cassilda's Song" appeared on a separate page, prior to one of the three Chambers' tales from ...the 1902 edition of King in Yellow, copyright by the author. It does not appear on the contents page...but I think it preceded "The Yellow Sign."

...the "source" of the Chambers poem is the one the author himself gives. I suppose some readers were confused and thought this was excerpted from a longer bit that Chambers actually wrote. He didn't--or, if he did, never published.

.....



# ANDRE NORTON: WHY HAS SHE BEEN NEGLECTED?

## by Barry McGhan

Some time ago, an article about Andre Norton,[1] by Lin Carter, appeared as an introduction to the latest Ace reprint of her book, Star Guard. Carter begins by remarking, "Andre Norton is something of a phenomenon in science fiction today." He offers three reasons: her writing, purportedly for juveniles,[2] is read by adults; she is almost never published in magazines; she is ignored by the "serious" critics of science fiction. He goes on to say, "I mention these somewhat puzzling factors in her career without attempting to explain them." I believe that these "puzzling" factors are worth a closer look, not so much for what they reveal about Andre Norton, but for what they disclose about the field of science fiction and its critics.

Of the factors mentioned above, the central one is that she is ignored by those who write about science fiction. But before discussing it, I would like to deal with the others which, I feel, may contribute to it.

The first curious factor is that her writing, supposedly for youngsters, is read by adults. That many of Norton's stories are published first in hardcover, for the juvenile sections of bookstores and libraries, may prompt the critics to dismiss her as a writer of "kid stuff." But Norton's novels are invariably reprinted by Ace and so become part of the general s.f. market, where they receive the attention of young and old alike. Also, juveniles are discussed from time to time in the magazines, some of Robert Heinlein's juveniles having seen first publication there. (P. Schuyler Miller has remarked several times that Norton equals and has perhaps supplanted Heinlein as an author of juveniles.) In short, juvenile stories do receive general attention and are discussed by critics, so that the juvenile image should not account for lack of attention to Norton's writings.

The second curious factor, that until recently Norton's stories didn't appear often in magazines, also may account for the critical silence. Since her stories got no regular magazine distribution, her contact with the field of regular readers was reduced, thus providing additional justification to avoid criticising her work.

As noted above, the central factor is that Andre Norton is ignored by the critics, notable examples of omission being Sam Moskowitz's[3] Seekers of Tomorrow and Damon Knight's In Search of Wonder.

Although ignored by the critics, Andre Norton is not ignored by the readers. In a period of more than fifteen years she has sold some thirty five novels, and is one of Ace's best-selling authors. Her novel Star Hunter received a Hugo nomination and her novelette Wizard's World was a contender for the 1967 award. She ranked eleventh out of a list of the seventeen most prominent writers in the November 1966 Analog reader poll. She has been likened to such writers as A. Merrit, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Ray Cummings and Robert E. Howard.



This last comparison furnishes the desired clue--since it indicates something of the nature of Norton's writing.

It is sometimes unfair to describe an author's writing in a single phrase. However, Andre Norton's stories, more easily classified than many, might be called "romantic adventure"--akin to tales of island castaways, cowboys and indians, and knightly quests. Her heroes are of epic size; her books, filled with action, peril, and mystery, are rich with complex and colourful descriptions of settings, characters, and societies.

Certain themes occur in story after story. There is the "beast master" theme, a quasi-symbiotic relationship between men and animals that involves some kind of direct mind-to-mind communication. There is the "space-opera," often involving a galactic empire (or two). There is the "ancient race" theme, the concept of an old and mysteriously powerful culture that lurks in the background. There is time travel, and the aftermath-of-atomic-war theme. In addition, nearly all books written since 1963 contain the themes of witch powers and parallel universes.

P. Schuyler Miller claims that a prime attraction of this author's writing is that she introduces many intriguing ideas that are never completely wrapped up at the end of the book, thus leaving something to be filled in by the reader's own imagination. He points out that her stories are ageless in the sense that they are set on exotic and far-flung worlds that science cannot make commonplace (at least in the foreseeable future). But despite everything in her favour her work is stigmatised by the appellation "escape literature."

To this point I have indicated the substance of Miss Norton's writing and the concurrent lack of critical interest. So one naturally asks: why this absence of critical recognition and what can we expect from here on?

During the Fifties and early Sixties literary interest in s.f. shifted to "mental" or subjective events, viewed in themselves or in their relationship to external events in the "real" world --with the adventure story being relegated by critics to the domain of juvenilia. This "demotion" made it easy for critics to dismiss Andre Norton as just another female writer of children's books. (Without trying to settle the question of what is important or acceptable as science fiction, I can observe the snobbery of ignoring work simply because it does not bear the stamp of currently "important" writing.)

Recent years, however, have seen a revival of interest in the fantasy adventures of Burroughs, Howard, Cummings, and Merrit (cited earlier), each of whom offers escape to a world more "natural" than our own, where existence is unspoiled by the artificialities of urban civilisation. Of course, Andre Norton returns directly to the primitive mode only in her beast-master and aftermath-of-atomic-war themes, but in each instance the hero's courage and resourcefulness accomplish what city-bred degeneracy could not. Although her writing lacks a single archetypal figure to represent our primitive selves (like Tarzan or Conan), it belongs to the same general class as Burroughs' and Howard's and so, I believe, will be given the same critical attention these authors are starting to receive.

Also, with her recent Witch World series, Norton shares the literary primitivism exemplified in the Sword and Sorcery of veteran contemporaries like Leiber and de Camp and newer writers like Ted White, Michael Moorcock, and Lin Carter. Amongst this group, perhaps, Andre Norton will receive the type of recognition she lacked while apart from any other.

## FOOTNOTES

1) Alice Mary Norton is also known to science fiction readers as Andrew North.

2) This is no longer true, with Norton's "Wizard's World" (June 1967) and "The Toys of Tamisen" (April, May 1969), both in Worlds of If. These did not appear until after Lin Carter's preface, which accompanied the third Ace reprinting of Star Guard, early in 1967.

3) An exception is P. Schuyler Miller's column in Analog, which gives regular and detailed reviews of Norton's books (over thirty reviews in the past fifteen years). James Blish's The Issue at Hand is not cited above because it is restricted to discussions of science fiction in magazines during a time when Andre Norton published almost nothing in this medium.

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1960: The Sioux Spaceman, Ace.
Storm over Warlock, World.

1961: Catseye, Harcourt Brace and World.
Star Hunter, Ace.

1962: Eye of the Monster, Ace.
The Defiant Agents, World.
Lord of Thunder, HBW.

1963: Judgment on Janus, HBW.
Key out of Time, World.
Witch World, Ace.

1964: Night of Masks, HBW.
Ordeal in Otherwhere, World.
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1965: Quest Crosstime, Viking.
Three Against the Witch World, Ace.
The X-Factor, HBW.
Year of the Unicorn, Ace.

1966: Moon of Three Rings, Viking.
Victory on Janus, HBW.

1967: Operation Time Search, HBW.
Warlock of the Witch World, Ace.
"Wizard's World," Worlds of If, June.

1968: Dark Piper, HBW.
Sorceress of the Witch World, Ace.
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1969: "The Toys of Tamisen," Worlds of If, April, May.
Uncharted Stars, Viking.

# THE ANIMAL

In my time machine I returned unobtrusively, disguised as
    a Turkish conqueror,
to wherever the hell the Zaporogian Cossacks ranged
and caught me one, a bullet-headed lout with a queue like
    a Mohawk Indian.
Muscled, rounded, an iron gut pushing his leather belt,
    he was stripped to the waist,
and it was hard to tell which stank more, his torso, boots
    or breeches.
Self-satisfied, stupid, he looked like the fat Stooge,
cock-strutting. I figured, what the hell, he's dead already.
I mean, me from the 20th Century. So it wouldn't matter if
    I blinded him.
("Of eyes bunged and spitted")--though nothing malicious, you see.
He was dead already, and I was curious.
He knew what was coming, wasn't surprised, I suppose.
Tit for tat. He braced himself.
I slashed each, a cross, with the point of my Exacto blade.
He seemed surprised, I suppose, that it hurt so little, or so much,
and I at the slowness that the guk oozed out.
And then the question, because I could see in his brain
(optional equipment with my time machine)
how this fulsome thing, this massive-thighed huge-jocked
    savage would feel
losing that which he valued only above his sex and killing hand,
this fetid hoodlum, this homicidal pack of primitive gristle,
this dog who'd never lived in comfort, wiped his behind, read
    poetry.



He sat still, his elbows thonged behind his back, his eyeholes
    running,
this ancient zero, now and then long dead,
and thought,
            "All things considered, I've had a good life.
Bounced my wife, and others too, came from a decent family,
all dying respectably in feud and war
(except for the women who were carried off).
Had a few kids that lived, apples of my heart.
Arose far in fury in my fellows' estimation.
And now as is natural, I'm on the shelf,
dying in dignity and my seniority.
Who knows, perhaps--though maybe too much to expect--
they'll torture me or give me public execution befitting my worth.
But I've had my day, a good day--a man who was on the Big
    Board in his day,
with, as is natural in the tide of events, my Dow-Jones
    rating finally plummeting."
•
Poor jerk, he didn't know he was dead, long dead, you jerk.
I left him sitting on the steppes, revved up my machine,
whooshing to new horizons, life's music in my ears.

--Burt Shepherd

# OPERE CITATO
## by
## Harry Warner

Man's first moon travellers landed on a Sunday afternoon in July amid a thunderstorm of Wagnerian proportions that knocked out television service to cable subscribers in my place of residence, Hagerstown, Md. I found myself bathed in sweat from tension when my rooftop antenna brought the words that no science fiction story had predicted literally: "The Eagle has landed." It was the most dramatic example of science fiction turned into reality since Hiroshima, but it has produced a surprisingly small amount of large-scale fanzine analyses. Let's look at some of the items that did emerge in general circulation fanzines in the weeks and months that followed.

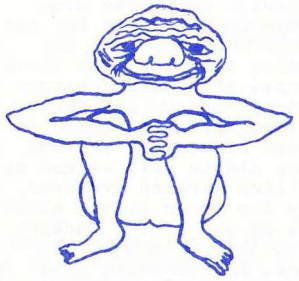
The most elaborate and ingenious assortment of Apollo 11 material was in the 183rd issue of Cry. For one thing, it contained some of the best cartoons I've seen anywhere, amateur or professional, about the moon landing. I liked particularly a tiny Wanner sketch of a few craters and a large sign: "Prevent Litter. Deposit Hasselblad Cameras Here." This tied in with the envelope in which Cry was mailed, half of which contained either a monolith or a Chic Sale superimposed on a photograph of the moon's surface, and a plea to astronauts to prevent space litter and "leave those planets as we would like to find them." On the cover are three photographs of the first moon walk taken from a television screen by Vera Heminger, and inside is a wide assortment of reactions to the moon landing, such as: "The world seems too often flat. On that night it was a three dimensional universe, and you could feel the sky in your mind"--Phil Haldeman. "After millenia of national distrust and hostility, it was a giant step, to be all together in front of our various TV sets. I don't care what the space program costs. These moments of international psychic orgasm are worth whatever the price tag says"--Elinor Busby. "Science fiction, the great predicter, had let us down on a few counts when it came to preparing us for the real thing. I'm not complaining, mind you; it's just that in some ways the reality is much gassier and more ingenious than anyone expected"--F.M. Busby. "Did anyone see Cronkite ream Kurt Vonnegut Jr. for his negativism and somewhat snotty attitude toward the moon project? Cronkite's mother hen attitude toward the whole space program is a pure delight"--Vera Heminger.



Roy Tackett's August, 1969 issue of Dynatron wasn't as lavishly illustrated or as full of material about the moon landing. But the front cover was remarkably effective for its simplicity: nothing but the date of July 20, 1969, and the first words spoken after the moon landing and after the first step on the moon. Inside the editor mused about the distance between 1935, when at the age of ten he picked up his first issue of Astounding Stories, and the tomorrow that became today: "Tomorrow is here now and the dream is well on its way to coming true. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin have walked on the surface of the moon while Mike Collins circled overhead. Immortals all. It is a long climb from the caves to the stars but Man has walked the moon and we are on our way." Tackett even found an unexpected effect from the moon landing: the need for him to reassess Spiro T. Agnew, for sounding like "a good Radical Centerist" in the way he backed continuance of the space program. On the manner in which the plaque left on the moon bore the signature of Richard Nixon in addition to those of the space travellers, Tackett commented: "He is the president and I'm sure that in the analysis of history he'll be right up there with Millard Fillmore and Warren Harding."

Something surprising appeared in a few fanzines published by younger fans. But it was a surprise that we really could have foreseen, with a little logical thought, like the predictable surprise at the way Mars is pockmarked with craters. It's inconceivable to us oldsters that the youngest generation of fans began to grow aware of world events at a time when the space program had already begun in Russia and the United States. But even some of these youthful fans themselves seem to feel surprise at their failure to find the moon landing something miraculous. Don Blyly editorialized in the first issue of Avesta: "It's a great accomplishment and all that, but I'm not awe-stricken by it. As long as I can remember, I have taken it for granted that one of these days there would be men walking on the moon, so all the moon walk really meant was that men first walked on the moon on July 20, 1969 instead of August 15 or October 21 or some other date like that. Is it possible that my generation does not have a sense of wonder?"

OSFiC, the publication of the Ontario Science Fiction Club, revealed in its 21st issue that related thoughts can run through the minds of slightly older fans. Gordon Van Toen wondered if fans might not be the last people to appreciate the feat, since he hadn't really absorbed what had happened. "We have all lived with space travel for so long that it is not so completely new to us." But quite soon he decides that the moon landing is one of the "...two or three events in history which will always be recognized as being significant" if humanity survives a million years. "We have gained the moon but lost a piece of fantasy."



Karen Johnson has a new last name since writing her own special set of reactions in the first issue of Li'em, since she has married Fred Haskell. "It was a historical moment. I was somehow not impressed," she remembered, so she tried to analyze this blase sensation. Her mind was asking for the moon base and space station and the first trip to Alpha Centauri, and she's impatient to go personally to outer space. "Earth is my home and I love her and she's beautiful and my friends and the things and people I love are here, but I worship the stars. I want to know who lives there and if I look like them. I want to know if they love peace or war or if they are even capable of either concept. I guess I'm just a little impatient because we're only on the moon. And then I stop and think...we're on the moon, wow! we're on the moon! wow!"

The September, 1969 issue of ANDROmeda, official organ of the Science Fiction Club of Germany, contained an article from Winfried Petri, whose outlook on the moon landing was different in two ways. He belongs to an older generation, at the age of 55, and he had additional insights through his role as an expert on space flight for the Cologne studios of the German television system. Surrounded by television monitors, teletypes, loudspeakers, and facing a large screen with a projected TV image, he felt himself almost a character in "2001: A Space Odyssey." Petri is the only fanzine writer I have encountered who said much about the mystery of Luna 15. When word came that the Soviet probe had changed its course and appeared to be starting a soft landing, "lots of us got goosepimples and thought about many (not always the finest) tales treating of such situations, where superpowers carried their rivalries into space." He expressed on a later telecast the suspicion that the Russian probe had landed ahead of schedule in the wrong place because of technical problems. On the moon flight of Apollo 11, Petri wrote: "Science fiction has lost much territory, since the moon as a stage is virtually excluded and even the nearest planets hardly offer much showroom for extra-terrestrials. On the other hand, the basic idea of the accessibility of strange stars" now seems believable, it won't be necessary to explain too many scientific matters about space travel in stories, and science fiction can develop in the directions of fantasy and "inner space." This issue of ANDROmeda, incidentally, has a half-tone cut on the front cover of Aldrin walking on the moon, which provides through high contrast and good cropping a more lunar impression than most moon photos that I've seen reproduced professionally.



Cry: 40¢ or 3/4 per copy, no subscriptions larger than $2 or 16/8, also available for trades, contributions, locs. Published eight times per year. Subscriptions go to Vera Heminger, 30214 108th Ave SE, Auburn, Washington 98002.

Dynatron: Sample copy for 25¢, also available for trade, "show of interest," some issues distributed through FAPA. Published quarterly by Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107.

Avesta: 256 per issue, also for trades, locs, contributions, and 26 different reasons that require most of the back page to describe. "Probably quarterly" from Don Blyly, 825 W. Russell, Peoria, Illinois 51605.

OSFiC: About ten issues per year, free to members, 40¢ per copy, also trades, published for Ontario Science Fiction Club by Peter R. Gill, 18 Glen Manor Drive, Toronto-13, Ontario, Canada.

Li'em: No publication schedule listed, available for 25¢, for locs, contributions if used, trades, also distributed through APA45. From Karen Johnson Haskell, Box 9872, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440.

ANDROmeda: No price listed but an international money order for a couple of dollars will bring several issues. Edited by Hans Langsteiner, A-1020 Wien, Bocklinstrasse 110/19, Austria, and Erwin Peterseil, A-4050 Traun, Hanfpointstrasse 11, Germany. Warning: it's all in German, and no English edition is available.

# The Seasonal Fan:
# SO FAST A BUCK
# by
# Jim Harmon

I awaited the arrival of Chelsea House's collection of Buck Rogers with my typical boyish eagerness. I checked in at the book stores, put in telephone calls, and finally was rewarded with seeing it at one of the stores while I was on another errand. It is a huge, impressive-looking volume, loaded with what appears to be many evenings of pleasant reading touched with the bitter-sweetness of nostalgia.

Then I got it home, and began examining it.

In times past, I have been taken aback by my friend, Bill Blackbeard, when he launched into an attack on the stupidity of people who do books on comic-strips and the popular arts in general. As I grow older, I am inclined to share his views.

Publishers invariably assign books to be written by people who know or care nothing about the subject they are writing about. The classic example was having Quentin Reynolds write Fiction Factory, a history of the Street and Smith publishing company. Reynolds knew nothing or cared nothing about Street and Smith; his sole interest was getting his pay for completing the book. The volume is full of errors, hideously bad choices of material, omissions, etc.

My own book, The Great Radio Heroes, was successful, I think, because I both knew and cared about the material. It was a miracle I got to do the book--a miracle not attributable to me, but to the book's "producer," Jeremy Tarcher, who could sell the book and its author to Doubleday. I think my interest in the subject will be repeated in the up-coming Great Radio Comedians.

When I decided to do a book on The Movie Serials, I took as a co-author Don Glut, who had the same kind of dedicated love for the movie cliffhangers as I did for the ones of radio. I shared a nostalgic affection for chapter-plays but I did not really feel I could bring out all the details and scope of them without the help of someone more dedicated than I was.

I think the Buck Rogers book also needed someone with the dedication of a "true Fan."

Originally, the book was advertised as The Complete Works of Buck Rogers. One could hardly argue with that premise, although all of the last twenty years or so hardly deserved being preserved. However, it rapidly developed that this was to be only The Collected Works of Buck Rogers. The works selected to be Collected could have been far better.



The editor of record is Robert C. Dille, who seems chiefly concerned with memorializing his late father, the owner of the Rogers strip. This preoccupation is understandable, but not entirely forgivable. Dille, Senior was the Man with the Money--the producer, the publisher, the banker--but he was not the creative artist. Men with Money get enough rewards in life without having them share unduely in the posthumous rewards of the creative artist.

Ray Bradbury dutifully sticks to the party line about Dille, Sr. in his introduction. Bradbury seems to be becoming the Compleat Celebrity, the Writer for All Occasions. One even is occasionally embarrassed by his genius for self-exploitation when he turns up on a TV show on a subject he knows or cares very little about--comic books. Comic strips he does know, however. (He was too old when comic magazines came out for them to mean anything to him emotionally.)

Aside from the obligatory bow to John F. Dille, Bradbury's introduction is excellent. As near as words can, he recreates the feelings of a small boy in 1929 reading the Buck Rogers strip. No one could have done it better.

Robert C. Dille begins his Preface by referring to the original source of Buck Rogers, stories by Philip Nowlan in Amazing Stories, as "articles," and ends by failing to list the later writers and artists on the strip as being "too numerous to mention." Perhaps they would be on a postcard, but they should not be in a book this size.

The largest, most prominent picture on the cover of the book is by Murphy Anderson, who receives no credit anywhere.

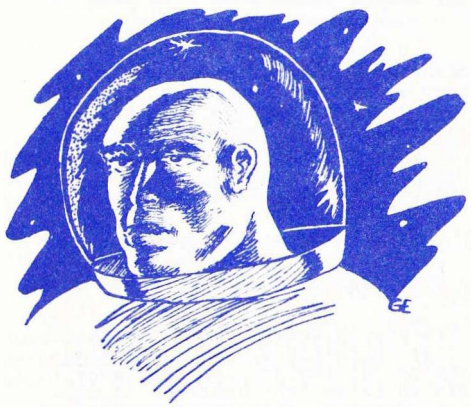
I understand Fritz Leiber wrote several years of Buck Rogers strips in the 1960's, and other sequences were done by such S.F. people as Judith Merril and Harlan Ellison.

About 1960, I engaged in a protracted correspondence with the editors at the Dille syndicate about writing Buck Rogers. This was shortly after they fired Rick Yager for a "lack of imagination" (according to reports) and seemed in a frenzy of confusion about what they wanted. The first letter seemed to indicate they wanted something as complex as a collaboration between A.E. van Vogt and E.E. Smith. I outlined a story about bad guys hurling planets of "see-tee" matter through space-warps at Buck and his friends. No good. Something simpler, with valid characterization was wanted. But with lots of action. So I wrote something such as might have been done by a team of Edgar Rice Burroughs and Ray Bradbury (in my opinion, of course). This wasn't it, either, of course. They kept encouraging me, expressing a desire to work with me. But I gave up. As I recall, writing the strip only earned the author about $200 a month. Some one of the New York area writers (I was in Mount Carmel, Illinois) must have gone into the New York offices and been a very convincing talker, talking the editor into taking the routine space-opera story that set the pattern for the ones that followed for nearly another decade, until the last gasp in 1967.

In any branch of art, style is about everything. Style is the heart of the matter. Nowlan and Calkins had it. Calkins had it alone. Some of it even rubbed off on Yager. No one can carry on another artist's creation as well as he could do, but Yager was the best possible replacement for Calkins.

He was not responsible for changing tastes and trends that were costing Buck Rogers market outlets. People wanted to read about space travel on the front page, not on the comics page.

I come (at last!) to the actual comic strips in the Rogers book.



The daily strips from numbers 1 through 278 are reproduced in sequence. Fine. Everyone wants to see how it all began. But from strip #278 we suddenly go to #327, a break of 49 strips. I can't see how this break would benefit any one other than Ed Aprill (whose help is credited), who can now say that if a collector wants the whole series he must buy his booklets of Rogers dailies at 64 pages for $5.00, or lately, 96 pages for $7.50.

The break does end at a logical place, but does not pick up at one. The reader entirely loses the thread of continuity.

There is another jump, from #429 (a fairly logical breaking place) to #583, definitely the beginning of the "Sunken City of Atlantis," which again, definitely ends with #816.

Then in a truly masterful feat of editing, the daily strips jump over the best period of Buck Rogers, the middle Thirties, to "Martian War Threat" of 1938. The mid-thirties was not the period in which I read the strip (I was only just born) but from examples I have seen and discussions with fans, I know this is the golden era. The strip had gone from its ultra-primitive stage, and was not yet in its inevitable decline. Not one daily or Sunday from this period is in the book.

The "War Threat" sequence is carried on through "Martians Invade Jupiter" for 94 pages--and then is not concluded. I suggest that any average reader--or any collector--who has paid $12.50 for a comic book and has read a story for 94 pages would like to see the end of it. The selections could have been shifted so each would have been complete, or representative strips synopsizing the climax could have been used.

The next sequence, one of horrible taste, could easily have been missed. If one were going to reprint all of Buck Rogers for historical purposes it would have to be included, but why select a sequence dealing with the racial slurs of hysterical war-time propaganda? Briefly, "When the United Nations destroyed Tokio--and the Japanese Empire in 1945 A.D., part of the Nips fled into space! They reverted to type--and became Monkeymen!" Once again, even this dubious sequence is not concluded, but chopped at an arbitrary point.



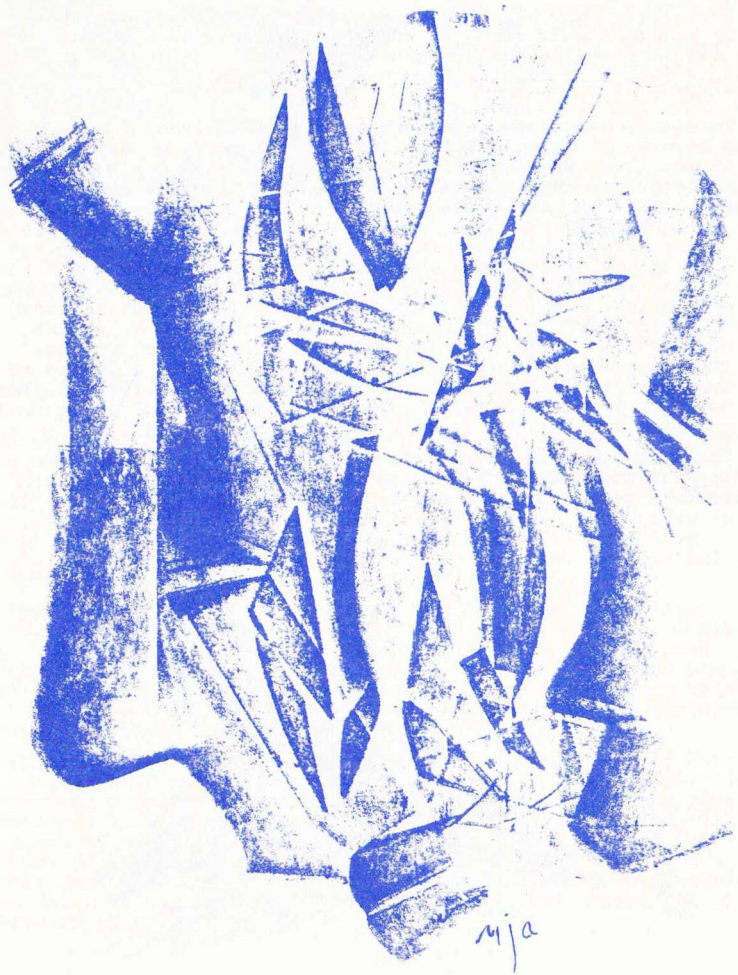
Finally, we get to a sequence in 1946, "The Atomites," attributed to Dick Calkins but of such poor quality--not the sloppy work of a professional, but the strained work of an amateur--that it is obviously the work of some underpaid assistant, probably not even Yager. One or two sample pages from this period would have been enough. (And this 18 page sequence has no beginning or ending point.)

The 64 pages of Sunday colour comics are the biggest disappointment.

There is a fair sequence by Rick Yager from 1939, which after 32 pages ends abruptly and goes into a 1947 sequence for another 32 pages, which are wasted on an example from the strip's declining days (though not nearly so poor as those 1946 dailies).

There may have been technical problems involved. There may have been no black and white prints of the early Sunday pages still on file. (Even intelligent friends of mine don't seem to understand that one must have a clear copy of the black outlines of a strip before the colour has been added to begin printing a comic strip. If coloured pages are all that are available, elaborate methods must be used to "wash out" the colour to get back the clear black lines which are printed separately and then the colour is put back in with the other plates.) However, for a few samples, such as the very first Sunday page and at least a few of the classic pages from the middle thirties, an artist could have been hired to trace and copy the coloured sheets. The 1939 sequence would have been acceptable to fill in the rest of the pages, especially if completed, with one or two examples of the last period--perhaps including the last Sunday Buck Rogers (and the last daily strip as well, elsewhere).

The book is still recommended, but it is a pity that the editing is so poor -- left to an heir and a businessman, instead of some not-quite-grown-up small boy.





# SELECTED LETTERS

3 Las Palomas
Orinda, Calif. 94563

Dear Leland,

A small correction, if you please. Your remark about "the advocacy by Heinlein and myself of the Viet Nam war" could easily be given a construction that I doubt you intended.

If anybody anywhere advocates this war--or any other past, present, or future war--in the sense of considering it a desirable thing, let him speak up now in order that we may shoot the son of a bitch and get on with a rational discussion. Some of us support the war in the sense of considering it probably the lesser evil. Alternatives (in a very oversimplified statement, granted) include: the slaughter of some tens of thousands of people who have trusted us and the enslavement of the rest; hence the falling away of allies who dare no longer rely on the word of the United States; hence Festung Amerika, steadily tightening regimentation at home and steadily rising likelihood of intercontinental nuclear war.

Naturally, this does not mean the present conflict should ever have been allowed to happen or, having happened, should be carried on in the manner it has been. But a discussion of means for bringing the nightmare to an end seems a bit inappropriate in RQ. I only wanted to state the principle. You--I assume--believe the actions of Israel vis-a-vis its Arab neighbors are justified; I don't, but that doesn't stop me from continuing to respect both your intelligence and your morals. The wretched fact remains that people fight wars; we have to take action (and even strict neutrality is an action) on the best judgments that we as fallible mortals with limited knowledge can make.

I also deny being an elitist, unless you simply mean one who would like to see government in the hands of the best qualified persons. But if so, then surely we are all elitists! Therefore the question turns on what the qualifications are and how their possessors shall be identified and put into office.

Obviously the desiderata always include intelligence, compassion, and decisiveness. But where should the emphasis lie? In my opinion, the type of leader needed at any given time is a function of the historical situation at that time. A Jefferson is ideal for an enlightened, hopeful, halcyon innovative era; but ours seems to call for a conservator, less intellectual and optimistic, as implacable as necessary--in short, a Lincoln.

As for how we are to choose our leaders, I for one emphatically do not want the United States to employ anything but its traditional democratic processes. However, they don't appear to be suitable for the many societies which strongly differ from ours; and they could break down for us too, as they have for others in the past. In either case, an undemocratic system results; and I, at least, would prefer some kind of timocracy to any kind of totalitarianism.

Enough of that. On the whole, the last RQ was enjoyed here--especially Sandra Miesel's letter! Still, don't you agree with Jim Blish that those literary slinging matches ought to be called off? They were always silly and now they've gotten boring. A reader nowadays has a wide field to roam in. Nothing compels him to re-enter those parts of it which he has found he doesn't enjoy. Why should he care if other readers do like them?

Regards, Poul Anderson

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I hope Mr. Anderson also enjoys the Challenge and Response article, which, I think, does the literary critic's most important job: to increase the reader's enjoyment by pointing out relationships he might not perceive by himself. // In the present war the lesser evil has turned out to be the greater, since U.S. promises were made not to the people of Viet Nam or their representatives but to what is now the U.S.'s own puppet government.

---

83-33 Austin Street
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

Dear Leland,

I submit that you are gravely in error in detecting "anti-sexuality" in Last and First Man. Stapledon is fascinated by sex in connection with telepathy and "collective mentality." The "dissemination" in the coda is something else again.

Harmon trumpets his amazing discovery that "those exclusively obsessed with horror stories are a sick bunch." Jim, people exclusively obsessed with anything are sick.

...William Temple is incredible. "Suppose...the sensations and impressions we call 'life' were electromagnetically recorded on film...and the same were run backwards." Suppose that the sky fell. Then we would all catch larks.

I am astonished at your "insult to Magna Carta, Guy Fawkes, and the Privy Council." Guy Fawkes attempted to murder the King, and no one sharing Lovecraft's political views would be offended by an insult to him. For that matter, I doubt that a serious royalist would trouble himself over insults to Magna Carta.

...Supercilious so-called NATO allies sneering about "the U.S.'s 'right' to tell the Viet Nam people what is best for them (even if they don't like it)" are requested to come off it. If the poor, suffering Viet Namese "want" Communism so fervently, why do the noble Communists have to kill, torture, and mutilate so many of their "supporters." (For a detailed description of Ho's terror campaign, see From Colonialism to Communism by Hoang Van Chi, a veteran of the Viet Minh.) Or is it that Communists have a right to "kill them if they don't accept [their] choice," but capitalists do not?

Sincerely,
William Linden

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I'll retain my original belief until Mr. Linden explains how the anti-sexuality in Last and First Men is "something else again." // To justify U.S. murders in Viet Nam by listing Communist atrocities is like justifying Hitler's invasion of Poland on grounds that Poles were mistreating the Jews.// I'm assured by the Society for Friends of Guy Fawkes that he did not intend to murder the King but only to make a big noise in Parliament.

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123 W. 93rd St (2-F)
New York, NY 10025

Dear Leland,

I must comment on the Boardman review of "The World of Ray Bradbury" from Vol 3 No.3 right here, a year late or not.

For some unaccountable reason Boardman has chosen to misunderstand Bradbury's concern for the dehumanization of man in our scientifically-oriented gadget world...and has rather viciously accused him of being anti-science...

Not to take much time defending Bradbury (for that's not my purpose in writing this), I should bring Mr. Boardman's attention however to Bradbury's...concern for man's treatment of himself and his own meaningful traditions; his surprise and bewilderment at our world's negation of much what was and is personally important to so many. A good example might be in this month's F&SF, a new story--"A Final Sceptre, A Lasting Crown."

I would agree in part with Terry Carr...that some of the dialogue was condescending and with you that "sensory impact" can be lost when the medium is changed. However, I can't altogether concur because I think some of Bradbury's writing is intensely dramatic and that he has a sharp penchant for dialogue and writes it well.

A word now about the productions of "World of RB"...The Los Angeles production was...by far the best...I was myself at the time playing in "Luther" at the Huntington Hartford Theatre in Hollywood in the winter of '64 and had time to see the production twice. What I contend to be a major reason for the success or failure of a production caused the difference in quality between the L.A. and New York companies. Namely that you need have not only "competent" acting...but comprehension and a rapport between actor and audience in order to begin, at least, to communicate. Where there was quite a lot of communication in L.A., there was very little in New York. A bit oversimplified perhaps but essentially true.

The sets were identical and fine; the graphics (by Joe Mugnaini, incidentally) were excellent in both places. The audiences were nearly so but the results were quite reversed. Where Harold Gould and Dennis Patrick succeeded, George Voskevec and Paul Sparer didn't. In other and simpler words, it was not (theatrically) so much Bradbury's fault as it was the company's and the casting's plusses and minuses...

Very Sincerely,
Jim Gregory

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Concerning the relative successes of "World of RB" I must accept Mr. Gregory's account as canonical, but I disagree on science and the Great Tradition. When scientific concepts and techniques have been assimilated they will become part of our general literary and artistic background. So there is no destruction of tradition, but only the replacing of one by another.

---

Cartwright's Point
Kingston, Ontario

Dear Mr. Sapiro

I read with great interest Richard Mullen's article on "The Uses of Spengler" in Vol. 3, No. 3. He is obviously correct in noting that the conflict between the "West" and the Soviets is simply a struggle between rival power blocs, and not between two cultures, as Blish assumed. It is true that Western culture is dying and that it will be replaced by a new world-wide culture. But like so many other s.f. writers, Blish has got hold of the wrong villain. The new culture is in fact that of McLuhan's "global village," and not that of the Bureaucratic State which, as Mullen notes, is simply Western culture in fossilized form. This may help explain why the Campbell/Analog school of writers, who glorify the struggles of the "heroic misfit" against the tyranny of the Bureaucratic State, are the first to leap to defend the status quo against a whole generation of misfits now seeking to overthrow the Establishment. The fact is that these writers long for the springtime of Western/literate culture, but are unable to cope with the dawn of the new tribal/non-linear culture which is replacing it.

Best Wishes, Angus Taylor

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While agreeing that the East-West conflict is not a cultural one, I don't think that McLuhan's terminology helps to describe it. One can speak of linear narrative (in which events are related chronologically) or linear music, as in a Theme and Variations, but it seems senseless to talk of one culture being more linear than another.

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This space originally was allotted to Andy Offutt's remarks on the New Wave, but since I wasn't sure if they were intended for publication I'll just paraphrase and say his thesis is that ostensibly given by the panel, "There ain't no such thing as the 'New Wave'!" in the current issue of Speculation. After referring to his own New Wave article in SFR #32, Mr. O. finally asks: "Look, I'm a Kentuckian, and re your reply to Hockenhull --you mean they make whiskey in Canada?"

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My reply would have been this: "Recall Roger Zelazny's contention that there's no New Wave--in the sense of a consciously defined 'school' of writers--but only a group of individuals each expressing himself in his own way. From the critic--who observes a common trait in several writers and uses it as a basis for classification--the answer is necessarily different.// Although Kentucky whiskey-makers are the best in the U.S., they can't compete with Her Majesty's distilleries, which have been practising since 1066."

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824 S. Burnside
Los Angeles 90036

Dear Leland:

I read the copy of your Kol Hillel article...with great interest, of course. I finished my first...novel and am almost finished with the second one. Two novels in one month and numerous interruptions, the Westercon, our house burglarized, two days in court testifying after they they caught the poor wretch, and the landing on the Moon--which I had to watch, schedules or no schedules, a most emotional moment--and other intrusions which cannot be avoided. Plus doing research and working out theories...on this projected book about Tarzan, similar in concept and design to Baring-Gould's Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street. Crowley Pub. is interested, but I have to sell them on the idea that there are enough problems and enough scholarly or semischolarly articles on Tarzan, that there is a big audience, etc. I am planning on sending two RQ's with the Tarzan articles as part of the selling package. And a copy of the article from the fanzine Escape, which contains a reprinted article from Baker Street Irregulars. This article is very funny; it "proves" that a crotchety old taxi driver in The Hound of the Baskervilles was Tarzan's grandfather.

Re The Lovers. Sigmen, as I remember my ideas when I wrote TL, was not Jewish or was at least only partly descended from Jews. He was mostly of Icelandic stock, which would be Norwegian and Irish. And you are right when you say that the Western Talmud had little to do with the Talmud. The idea was that Sigmen was more the Southern Baptist fundamentalist type who had done some reading in the Jewish "scriptures" but was by no means a scholar. His Western Talmud and other works were "spinoffs" or takeoffs at ninety degrees to the originals, and his time-theory religion idea was based on Dunne's books about time, Christ and Judas, Ormuzd and Ahriman, misconceptions of the ancient Hebrew religion, rather distorted rationalizations, etc. The basing of the religion on time travel gave the religion a "scientific" basis. About as scientific as that of Christian Science. Sigmen, of course, was psychotic but was powerful enough to impose his psychoses, disguised as religious "truths." And the Zeitgeist was right for acceptance of his ideas. In a way, he was a later Joseph Smith-Mary Baker Eddy...

Philip Jose Farmer

---

Without denying the failure of Free Enterprise in Saskatchewan and the U.S., I'd say our closest approximation to the Western Talmud is the Communist Manifesto, which (to quote A.J.P. Taylor) "must be counted as a holy book, in the same class as the Bible and the Koran." // Again I refer to Pete Weston's Speculation, whose current issue contains excellent reviews, by Charles Platt, of our correspondent's latest two books, Image of the Beast and A Feast Unknown (each $1.95 from Essex House, 7311 Fulton Ave., North Hollywood, Calif 91605). This last title is especially commended to students of Tarzan or Doc Savage, since it features them both.

---

3425 Prudence Dr.
Sarasota, Fla. 33580

Dear Mr. Sapiro,

In the process of working out the drawing for your zine I made several discoveries that may be of interest to you. First I had to research the description of the thark in the literary source, Princess of Mars, and then to make a couple of preliminary visualizations of the verbal facts, then a little scanning of various other artists' illustrations, St John, Schoonover...and several other examples. Then several sketches to intuitively make a picture that had the possibilities of being accurate to the author and at the same time stand as a satisfactory example of my own convictions rather than a copy of another or a pastiche of several others.

Following these I experimented with scale and here is where I found a significant difference. When I worked large...size--for a thark ···about 20 inches...for the head--I was able to express both structure and feeling with a sense of freedom that made it possible to think of the work as a possible work of "art."

However when I reread your admonitions regarding a 1/3rd reduction I realized that the size element would entail more cost for you to reduce it...hence I would have to reduce my original, which I did. But the simple reduction in size entailed a total change in attitude and consequent adaptions in media and technique. Instead of looseness I tightened up in favor of precision and found a pen easier to use than the brush. I'm sending you the whole kit and caboodle...Perhaps my experience will have some pertinence to your regular artists.

In any event it was an unexpected pleasure to try to turn one of the original BEM into art.

All the best
Harry E. Habblitz

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ERB's green tharks, depicted by Mr. Habblitz this issue, are described thus:

> Their eyes were set at the extreme sides of their heads a trifle above the center and protruded in such a manner that...this queer animal [can] look in any direction... without...turning the head. The ears, which were slightly above the eyes and closer together, were small, cup-shaped antennae...Their noses were but longitudinal slits in the center of their faces...The teeth...add a most ferocious appearance to an otherwise fearsome...countenance, as the lower tusks curve upward to sharp points which end about where the eyes of earthly human beings are located.
>
> (A Princess of Mars, Chapt.3)

The larger brush drawing cited above, reduced to 1/3rd actual size, is reproduced on p. 123; the pen drawing (2/3rd original size) appears on p. 114.

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3836 Washington
Cincinnati, Ohio 45229

Dear Leland:

Jim [Harmon] is perfectly correct about Stan Lee and his most recent revival. It's the characterizations that have made him famous. Without The Thing and Thor, he wouldn't be anywhere. These two characters are unique in their own ways. The Thing is one of the strongest beings in the world. Yet...he is as ugly as sin. And it's the ugliness that gives him his strength. While Thor is a god, he cannot choose between Asgard or Earth.

Superman, on the other side of the tracks, is perfect (except for a non-existent rock)...has all kinds of powers, muscles, good looks...In other words, he is almost sickening to the average American male. Lee's heroes have problems and weaknesses that are real and commonplace. All of his readers can look at these heroes and say that they are a little bit like the readers, themselves...

Peace in the forthcoming millenium, Frank Johnson

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As to Lee's Big "T" characters it suffices to repeat Arthur Brisbane's famous dictum (on two other gladiators): "A gorilla could lick them both." One disposes of Superman most readily by listing his embarrassments when no closets are available in which he can change clothes. (See Dave Hickey, "Superman's Last Diary," in the ninth issue of Trumpet.)

---

836 Government Ave.
Winnipeg 15, Manitoba

Dear Leland,

I am forced to agree with Jim Harmon in ...his article, The Creeping Horror. There are people who are Horrificers to the exclusion of all else...(after all, some people liked the Chase-Park Plaza Hotel). As for the rest, I think (really) that he was slightly pessimistic about fandom...

Regarding Dick Lupoff's note on J.J. Pierce, he calls [his] followers disciples, which implies something Holy. I agree that their ideas are rather moth-eaten, but if [Pierce] doesn't like New Wave, why the hell doesn't he stop reading it and keep his trap shut...?

To the core of the mutter, I mumble forward. Mr. Pierce calls Ellison and Ballard pygmies compared to Poe and Dostoevsky...But to use his own metaphor I would like to point out that the pygmies' poison darts did as much damage as their larger brothers' spears.. I agree with Mr. Pierce that the world is a fun place, if you don't count Viet Nam, Middle East, Biafra, India...Aside from those minor points the world is a pretty good place...

Bill Morris

---

Not only connoisseurs of horror enjoyed the Chase-Plaza but also those who disliked movies or Rock concerts and who looked so respectably middle class that their rooms were not searched by hotel detectives.// We should not ask Mr. Pierce and members of his ADL to keep quiet because similar requests often originate from the ADL itself--as when criticism of the pre-Ted White Amazing Stories was answered by crying, "If you don't like it, don't buy it!"

---

Route 3, Box 80
Savannah, Mo. 64485

Dear Leland,

I usually enjoy Jim Harmon's column, but "The Seasonal Fan" strikes out twice this issue. In the first part of the column Jim seems to say that supporters of Bobby Kennedy disillusioned with politics are now turning to comic books. I don't think that's true. On the other hand, if Jim was using the example of the horror comic book as a symptom of a widespread cultural change, I would reply that comic books are not really very good indicators of popular taste, since not very many people who are over the age of thirteen read comic books.

In the second part of his column Jim complains about the lack of plot in modern movies. Jim must not see very many movies. For instance, I can immediately think of two movies, Petulia and Bullit, that were brilliantly plotted, especially when compared with movies made a few years ago. And finally, Jim's claim that the reader wants "a good story, well told" is so vague as to be meaningless.

I thought Rottensteiner's article was good. I hope you publish more criticism by him in future issues.

The letter column seemed more interesting than usual. J. Pierce seems to be a connoisseur of the pun since he mentions not once, but twice, the resemblance between the words "Borel" and "bear." I suppose his ability to critically appreciate science fiction is about on the same level as his punning adeptness.

Sincerely, Creath Thorne

---

Define "plot" as an abstract sequence of conflicts and resolutions (with perhaps a major resolution at the end) and "technique" as the expanding of a well-wrought plot into a well-told story. Then a good story is necessarily well-told. Okay?// Relative to popular taste, comic books seem not only to indicate it but to determine it--and precisely because the readers are under 13. For how do the tastes of a 32-year-old differ qualitatively from those of his 12-year-old former self?

---

1426 22nd St, Parkersburg
West Virginia 26101

Dear Sapiro:

Re IV, 1.

Why you should want to pick on a pygmy like Pierce remains a total mystery to me. After all did not Aristotle warn us that every man ends up with precisely the kind of opponent he deserves?

Furthermore, you should keep in mind that anal humor is a most difficult discipline. Even Platt, whose letter is about the only sensible comment I have yet seen on the Pierce paper, was, I am told, not entirely successful with it in Garbage World. The Jonathan Swift is a rare bird. Consequently, it may well be a bit of wisdom to bury Yogi in the stuff and forget him or at least to affiliate him with a more delicate school of the Grand Academy of Lagado.



As we all seem to be doing these days, I myself prefer a conspiracy theory as the most likely explanation of what has been occuring. There is this Machiavellian puppet master, see, and it's just taken over SaM and it just happens to be the greatest Buster Keaton fan of all time. So one day it up and invents J.J. Pierce, Jr. and deadpan it disseminates. As a tribute to Buster, of course. This particular approach to humor is especially deadly when directed against the academically inclined who have no natural put-on resistance...

With some seriousness,
Valdis Augstkalns

---

I was always taught that Moskowitz himself was the puppet-master, so it's hard for me to believe that he is just a puppet that in turn manipulates another puppet called J.J. Pierce.// The allusion to the ADL was not merely an instance of scatological humour, but also a reference to the B'nai Brith Anti-Defamation League, a real (and useless) organization.

---

Box 30 Bacchus Marsh
Vic.3340, Australia

Dear Leland,

Riverside Quarterly Vol.3 No.4 opens with an article on Tarzan and Rima, no less. I read my last Tarzan book when I was about 14 years old. They never excited me much--or at least not to nearly the same extent as did the Mars books. Why, then, is Tarzan being discussed in a reputable journal of science fiction criticism? I would have thought that Tom Henighan had effectively begun and finished his article by quoting the prose from Green Mansions and Tarzan of the Apes. The mind of a reasonably intelligent reader immediately bounces off this prose--it seems more impenetrable than Joyce, when regarded with any detachment. I mean, except for the childish reader who accepts all this balderdash, who will be able to skate around the lumps of doughy prose to find the "compensating narrative virtues?" I could once upon a time. I may even be able to do it now, but the effort would take most of the enjoyment from the enterprise.

Henighan's main argument must, then, centre not on the books themselves, but on the people who read the books. I'm the first to admit that there are some fascinating possibilities in this direction. In fact, some good historical work (Richard Hofstadter is one name that comes to mind) has been done on the inter-relationship between neuroses in society, and neuroses in such social phenomena as reading habbits. I'm not sure where any really decent evidence has been collected on the subject, but such items as (for instance) Time's review of the Best-Selling Books charts of the last fifty years provide some food for thought.

But Mr. Henighan does not provide this evidence. His sociology is washy-washy--or, rather, his sociology may be expert, but there's not much evidence of it in this article. The "evidence" comes from the stories themselves. which is the correct way to do it in Liberary Criticism. But, as I said, his literary analysis could have been restricted to page 259 without anything more being said. After a great deal of pretty detailed and quite interesting analysis, what are Henighan's conclusions? That Burroughs (and Hudson, I guess, for I've not read Green Mansions) was a second-or third-rate mind feeding third-hand legends to third-rate minds shaken by the demonstrable problems of American society in the first twenty years of this century.

If I can sum this up in a few sentences, then why couldn't Henighan have done the same thing? He doesn't say much more than this. No amount of this sort of guff is going to prove that either Burroughs or Hudson were good authors. He's proved that they weren't. In other words, Henighan has wasted his own time and your space.

It's a matter of, as somebody put it, false questions falsely asked. The article about Tarzan and Rima doesn't matter much because the subject matter doesn't matter much. I know it matters a great deal to the people who did, and still do, enthuse over Burroughs--but, as I've said, that is a case for the sociologist and historian and psychologist, not the literary critic.

Warner's thesis is probably the most sensible thing in Number 12...The implications are frightening--there is a mutual cross-fertilization of mediocrity from fandom to the pros, and vice-versa. Pohl's influence, or perhaps Campbell's influence in the first place, seems to have seeped through every good timber of the ship. Who is there left to do a fumigation job? It's plain from Hugo and Nebula awards that the same third-rate standards prevail amongst both fans and pros. One must be thankful for isolated islands of rationalism, such as England and Australia (??). Unhappily, we still have to get the American magazines, while 8 copies a month of New Worlds reach the country.

Sorry to rave on. To set the picture straight--any Australian pro s.f. authors are very isolated from each other and from the fans and from the markets. So far, this has not led to freshness in Australian s.f. writing, but standards laid down by a small number of overseas editors. Wodhams works with Campbell, and most of the rest work with Carnell. The authors don't work with each other. Once a year they get up on an Author Panel and spout about the things that really hurt them. Not one in ten of our local fans knows what they are talking about. (Evidence--S.F. Commentary Number 3). The authors disband for another year, rarely to meet at all. In contrast, is it not true that the New Wave was born in the bar of a London pub? I'd be surprised if it were otherwise. Milford has a less benevolent influence. The intercourse between fans and pros in USA seems to have had the least benevolent influence of all.

...So, I come to Bill Temple's letter...Anybody who recommends anybody else to "re-read and really take in what John W. Campbell ...says..." must be a sadist. However, I'll look first of all at Temple's main argument, as it stands. "RQ suffers rather from the too constant thesis approach." I agree with that, if only because of the inconsistency of having three thesis articles in one magazine alongside two articles on fandom. Haven't you heard the saying about water and oil? ...If RQ is to be the Little Magazine of s.f. then it should be that, and quit being a wretched fanzine. If you're going to be a fanzine, then entertain a bit and present all the rubbish appropriate to fanzines...That's my point, not Bill's.

"It's as if everybody were...shutting their eyes to the world of experience which lies beyond the covers of books and the college walls." I'd tend to agree with Bill, if I precisely knew what he meant. From the evidence he gives, it seems as if he wants everybody to stop thinking in an organized way...



But one could take Bill's words in a slightly different vein. One could, for instance, use these words to support my views about the apparent aims of your magazine. What if you were burying your head in the sand, not so much by ignoring what s.f. is up to at the moment (although I think RQ is sadly lacking in this respect) but by ignoring what s.f. has been, and should be, up to all the time? What if you were...publishing a lot of very imposing articles about a lot of very trivial matters? What if the college walls had imposed a prison of academic procedures on material that doesn't warrant the attention; on material that is best discussed over a beer, or...at a science fiction club? And what if the important questions, the metaphysical questions of s.f., were passed over altogether by your scholastics?

I look forward to...another RQ to attack. Yippee!

Yours lunatically

Bruce Gillespie

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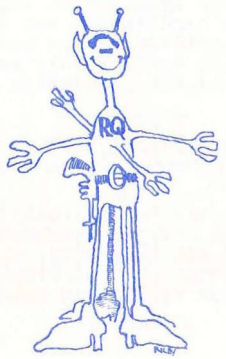
Literary criticism generally can't be restricted to purely literary matters, since writing occurs within particular social contexts. A novelist works within the context itself and a romancer, with myths or mythical figures induced by it. Examples of the latter are Hawthorne's witch-seductress, who represented the sensuality considered wicked by the author's own puritanical society, and Burroughs' primordial male, who embodied that primitive spontaneity then being lost in the great urban industrialization.

So I can't accept Mr. Gillespie's distinction between literary criticism and sociology.

Likewise for the argument on prose-style. As already noted by Tom Henighan (in turn citing C.S. Lewis), it doesn't matter in what language a myth is expressed, "for it isn't so much the language we remember as the central image or story." Or as Dick Kyle puts it this issue, "Time has a voice. It praises dreamers."

As to RQ itself--although it may not be the best we at least try hardest, our competitors being occupied with drinking beer, writing sex novels, or chasing merchant ships in the Caribbean.



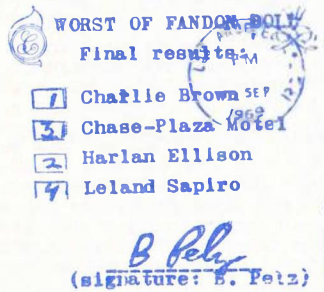
(continued from page 79)

THE WORST OF FANDOM (cont.)

Second was Harlan Ellison, who gave literature the priority over beer. A day or so before, Harlan collected donations (total: several hundred dollars) to defray the cost of a movie screen accidentally ripped by a make-believe Charlie Brown (i.e., by a fan dressed as the comic-strip Charlie Brown for the masquerade ball). When the estimated cost of repair turned out to be only about $50, Harlan announced he'd give the surplus to the Clarion s.f. workshop--and so caused great indignation at the money's not being spent on a drunkfest. Elliot Shorter, e.g., objected that the donors' consent ought to be obtained first--but in this instance it would have been nearly impossible to search out each individual giver and ask how he thought the cash should be spent.

Big winner, however, was Charlie himself, whose name produced some confusion in the polling area, where one voter was overheard asking if the let's-pretend Charlie Brown were being chastised for his accident with the movie screen and then being told, "No, this is the real-life Charlie Brown."

For the record,* I must repeat that official accounts differed from that given here. Compare, for example, the article by Dick Schultz in his magazine Harpies (issue #6), which is quoted to the right of Bruce Pelz's postcard.


WORST OF FANDOM POLL
Final results:

1 Charlie Brown
3 Chase-Plaza Motel
2 Harlan Ellison
4 Leland Sapiro

B Pelz
(signature: B. Pelz)

The winners (if you care to call them that) were:

The Chaste-Park [sic] Plaza Hotel at $76.65.

The New #2 was Harlan Ellison, $72.30.

And...you may find this hard to believe...#3 was...Charlie Brown... At $70.25. (Charlie was nominated anonymously...Word has it that Leland Sapiro was tossing the money in himself, in retaliation for various comments Charlie had been making in Locus...) **

To answer the inevitable question, Harpies' editor is no relation to Schultz, the Charlie Brown cartoonist.

Some concluding remarks are in order. Despite the comedy arising from the Worst of Fandom poll (and my own fun in ballot-stuffing for two candidates) and despite the usual Worthy Cause for which poll-taxes are collected, I'm obliged to note that such ballots don't merely record dislikes: they create them. So from here the conclusion should be obvious.

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* Also for the record: official Best Fanzine was Dick Gais's Science-Fiction Review, itself reviewed by Harry Warner in our 11th and 12th issues.

** Although everybody voted "anonymously" at St. Louis--in the sense that voters' names weren't recorded--Schultz failed to explain his own meaning for this word; nor did he explain how votes at a convention could be "retaliation" for malicious articles received one and five weeks after the convention ended.

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