
COSMOPOLIS

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A Jack Vance Biography

by Norma Vance

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I wrote a JV biography last year for Norwescon which was based on events experienced personally and others gleaned from conversations with Jack, concerning his life before our marriage, parts of which could have been termed amusing escapades. This was fun, but I would rather not repeat myself. So—I have decided to place him in the background (foreground?) of his parents and grandparents. I hope it won't prove to be a bore.

Jack's maternal grandfather, L.M. Hoefler, was a prominent lawyer who represented the San Francisco breweries, among other clients. He was a member of the Olympic Club and the Bohemian Club. On a visit to Italy, he shipped two marble statues of athletes, as a gift, to the Olympic Club. They are, to this day, still placed on either side of the Club's entrance, on Post Street. He counted among his friends other lawyers, judges, mayors, politicians, Hollywood types, successful businessmen and everyday, ordinary workmen, as well as more affluent members of society. Everyone seems to have known him, by sight if not personally.

L.M. Hoefler lived on Haight Street, rather a steep hill, which had trolley service. Normally the trolley stopped at intersections. Jack remembers that, wherever his grandfather stood along the block to hail the trolley, the driver would stop for him to climb aboard; the same policy applied wherever he wished to disembark. Jack's brother, David, recalls that when he was only ten, L.M. would require him to drive. On one occasion, probably to get around slow traffic, he asked David to drive on the left side of the street. David complained that they might be hit by an oncoming car, but his grandfather refused to listen, and David was compelled to do as he was told. Even though L.M. Hoefler had many friends, was kind and generous, he had no idea how to relate to children; he expected only obedience. Jack remembers being teased by his grandfather about 'four eyes', with no concern for Jack's discomfort. In those days this was a rather common tease, practiced by children against children who needed to wear glasses. I'm not sure that L.M. was being deliberately unkind—but Jack has never forgotten it.

I seem to have moved too far ahead in the story so will return in time a bit. Ludwig Mathias Hoefler married Emma Madeline Altemus. Jack's mother, Edith, was their only child. 'Edy', as we all knew her, had many advantages and to her credit she was never selfish. She was good-natured, intelligent and popular. Her schooling came at Miss Sarah Hamlin's, where she excelled in all her studies, especially History. Her memory for important dates was phenomenal. Another talent was for

playing the piano by ear. This was very much appreciated years later, after the move to Oakley, when she played for country dances and not much sheet music was available.

Edy was 16 when the San Francisco earthquake and fire* occurred. The earthquake was devastating, but the fire was even worse. Her father's house was so badly damaged that a small cook-shack had to be built to the side of the street, in front of the house, to cook meals. Someone took a snapshot of Edy, her mother and her mother's mother in front of the shack—a treasured memento today.



Jack's mother, Edy; great grandmother, Mary Elizabeth; and grandmother, Emma.
Photo supplied by David Vance.

*Another memorable event occurring in Edy's lifetime was the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. December 7 was Edy's birthday.

Now, to the paternal side of Jack's parentage: The Vance family owned several furniture stores—in San Francisco, Benecia, Stockton, Sacramento, perhaps at other sites as well. Charles Albert Vance, Jack's father, was born in Benecia. Edy and Charles Albert probably met at a party, or some such social function. Both the Hoeflers and the Vances were well-established members of San Francisco society and the two young people were considered newsworthy. It was no surprise to anyone when the engagement was announced and a wedding date set. The wedding was a grand event. Extravagant and beautiful gifts arrived, as well as others more practical. John Vance, Jack's grandfather and Charles Albert's father, gave the newlyweds a large lot on Filbert Street, which still is one of the best neighborhoods of San Francisco. He also saw to the building of a large two-story house. It seemed that the couple could only anticipate a long and happy life. At least it was fruitful: there were five children in about ten years, or a bit longer.

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After Prohibition was voted into law, the breweries of San Francisco shut down their operations and never reopened, or if they did so, it wasn't until more recent times and the beverage was most likely a soft drink. L.M. Hoefler had lost his greatest source of income; nonetheless, he had other clients and investments. He was not in danger of becoming destitute at this point. Over the horizon, however, loomed the Depression.

'Society' has never impressed Jack very much. Intelligence, drive, courage and mastery of special skills are what appeal to him. New Orleans Jazz is an example of a special skill: the playing of ensemble music, often without written scores, or without sheet music, by talented masters of their particular instrument. Each musician must be alert to the performance of every other musician playing in the ensemble. Jack also enjoys lively conversations with friends, about anything and everything, a type of 'brainy' competition derived from scientific knowledge of all kinds. He is thankful for the recorded books and magazines which keep him abreast of a great variety of subjects. Humor and friends are essential elements to Jack's idea of a good life.

Jack does not remember his father with any kindness, only as a self-indulgent, negligent, authoritarian person, to be avoided for the most part. Charles Albert owned a ranch of 23,000 acres in a beautiful part of Mexico, near the city of Tepic. On his periodic visits to the ranch, he sometimes took his second son, Louie, along for company. Eventually the property was nationalized, which must have been a terrible blow to Charles Albert.

The Depression held the U.S. in a tight grip. Jack's grandfather, L.M. Hoefler, began to realize that something had to be done to economize. He knew of a man with substantial means who was relocating, or starting, a business in San Francisco and needed a suitable residence. L.M. had been thinking of ways to cut expenses and also had thought the Sacramento Delta region might be a healthy environment for Edy and her children. He himself relished the idea of a weekend retreat in the country. He scouted around and found a small ranch in the area of Oakley. There was a house that was large enough and, with very little effort, would be perfect for the whole family. He approached Edy and his son-in-law with the idea, explaining that the rental of their Filbert Street home would pay the rent in Oakley and much of their other living expenses. Edy expressed no disagreement and so the move was made. All five children, the nurse, Allie, even Charles Albert lived there when he wasn't in Mexico.

To Jack's mind, the move to the country at that time was the single most important event in his life. Life was just about perfect. All five children attended the one room Iron House School. The school and the ranch house were both about a half-mile off the edge of a slough, the ranch house a half-mile further east and not far from a dairy. Jack absorbed everything within sight, sound and smell. He has remembered it all when writing his books. The experience has been a perfect resource for descriptive prose: of place, of mood, and sensation. His bedroom had a large screened window just beside his bed. The view was of rolling hills, fruit orchards, eucalyptus, firs of various kinds, shrubs, flowers and weeds in dun-colored soil. The backdrop was kingly Mount Diablo, a former volcano, now extinct (or so we should hope). Jack found this scene so enchanting that he painted it on a plaster batt to make it visible to him even when the sky was overcast. It was lost when everyone moved away to gain a higher education or find employment.

(Editor's note: This biography was originally written for the Marcon 38 convention. The other biography from Norwescon will be published in the next COSMOPOLIS.

— *D. Benson*)



Work Tsar Status Report

as of June 28, 2003

by Joel Riedesel

WAVE 2

We still have *The Stark* in special handling. We continue to need to clarify the front matter that has some incomplete pictures.

Techno work is almost complete. Only one text remains: *The Kragen*.

There are 28 texts in TI, 10 of which are not assigned. Three texts are in Board Review.

Three texts are in Implementation and one text in Security Check.

There are currently six texts in initial Composition while 11 texts are in various stages of Composition Review.

There are three texts in Post-proof and 15 texts in Post-proof composition updating and review.

Last month there were ten texts that were ready for volume composition. This month there are eleven. However, there are four pending a final step upon which they will be ready for volume composition as well. No more predictions. Work proceeds steadily if not speedily.

Last month:

- + Pre-TI: 6 texts (7.32%)
- + In-TI: 27 texts (32.93%)
- + Post-TI: 39 texts (47.56%)
- + Volume Ready: 10 texts (12.2%)

This month:

- + Pre-TI: 1 texts (1.22%)
- + In-TI: 28 texts (34.15%)
- + Post-TI: 42 texts (51.22%)
- + Volume Ready: 11 texts (13.41%)



The Sacred Hills of Erevan, The Fruits of Conduce

by Rob Friefeld

I was groaning through my freshman year at medical school back in the winter of '71 when the treat of all treats appeared in *Fantasy & Science Fiction*: the serialization of a new Jack Vance novel, *The Anome*. Resisting the impulse to grab every single copy off the newsstand, I bought mine, floated through the afternoon's classes,

delayed gratification long enough to eat half a dinner, then settled into my chair. Try to imagine my extreme disappointment, my shock, to discover that Canton Conduce is at one time between Canton Maiy and Canton Jardeen, and at another time closer to Canton Wild Rose. NOT! So far as I know, a generation of Vance fans has read these novels without any inkling of such discrepancies, until they were discovered by Suan Yong when he did the original TI work on the *Durdane* trilogy.

These inconsistencies certainly don't affect the plot, and I doubt if anyone could say with a straight face that they affect his enjoyment of the story. Is this because Jack Vance's artistry just carries the reader along? Is it because most readers are of too limited an intellect to notice? Regardless, things are a bit different now. Jack Vance drew a map. The VIE is going to publish this map with the *Durdane* trilogy. What then to make of the fact that, sometimes, the story doesn't agree with the map? Yes, the whole issue could be ignored. But pity the junior adventurer, who follows the story with finger to map. *Whoah! What's this?* What if . . . it were easy to fix?

The Prime Directive of TI work: Jack Vance writes the stuff, we publish it. If we make 'easy fixes', the question is always: do we leave a trail of clods on the fragile moth-wing mosaics of his prose? Even if Jack Vance did make a mistake, does it follow that fixing it strengthens the work? What would you say to adjusting someone's foot in a Manet? Well, OK. We are not cowards in TI. This is at least worth a discussion.

Wisely departing from usual TI practice, Suan did not try to discuss these problems in endnotes attached to the text, but created a separate document, neatly laying out every discrepancy, every part of the text they impinged on, and concluding with a proposed action. A few issues, such as the plum-red Ezeletta, one of the three suns, becoming blue Etta, will be left alone. Each passage has its own poetry, or so we think.

But, on the other hand, we have Gastel Etwane telling us "*I want to visit Jamilo, Vervei, Sacred Hill in Erevan, Lanteen in Shade.*" Then, instead of Erevan, he arrives in Conduce. He shouldn't be in Conduce! He assigned Aun Sarah to check out Conduce. On close examination of the passage describing Conduce, I think we are really in Erevan, or at least we are where Erevan is on the map. How about just changing 'Conduce' to 'Erevan' then? Little mistake, easy fix. Here is the passage:

In Conduce Etwane found confusion. Looming above the horizon to the southeast stood the first peaks of the Hwan; an arm of Shellflower Bay extended almost as close from the north. "Should we send our women north? Or should we prepare to receive women from the mountains? The Fowls say one thing, the Fruits* another. The Fowls want to form a militia of young men,

because old men are better with the flocks; the Fruits want to draft old men because young men are needed to harvest the fruit. Only the Anome can solve our problems!”

“Use young Fowls and old Fruits,” Etwane told him, “but act with decision! If the Anome learned of your delay he’d take heads from Fowl and Fruit alike.”

*Fowls and Fruits: the rival factions of Conduce, representing the poultry industry and the fruit-growers.

Erevan sounds, to me, like something out of *Lord of the Rings*. Humorless, a place apart from the hustle and bustle of rude commerce. Conduce, on the other hand, just sounds funnier here. Consider the actual meaning of ‘conduce’: to bring together. (He was sensible how much such a union would conduce to the happiness of both.—Macaulay) Perhaps more important, there are word associations in play here: ‘Conduce juice’, ‘silly goose’, ‘call a truce’. At a minimum, it is at least possible that a simple name switch is bluntly traumatic to the artistry of the text. Well then, what about changing the map? This map has never been published. Moving Conduce into Erevan’s place on the map would hurt nothing, would it? Again, the possibility of subtle associations—moth wings—which may or may not be real. Is a place called Conduce more suitable to a maritime province, with ripe orchards, productive fowl runs, easy weather? (Conduce?) Does Erevan sound like more of a mountain place, with storms, river gorges, sacred hills? (Erewhon?)

If it could be determined that Jack Vance mixed up these two cantons by mistake, sometimes, there would be justification in fixing the text with clear conscience. Editors made thousands of changes to the MS in these three books. We are undoing them all. The VIE is not trying to improve the stories; it is archiving what was actually written, or *what was intended* to be written. Roughly 98% of the time, what was written is startlingly better than what was published. (Many of us suspect the other 2% is just our own obtuseness!)

And the decision? Stay tuned. The discussion has been . . . prodigious. At last go-around, Suan’s work document was 73 pages long. Do we have nothing better to do? Better to say that no one wants to leave any angle unconsidered: Your TI team at your service!



38’s Crucible

by Paul Rhoads

Aspects of the Vance Integral Edition

So much attention is given to text restoration that other aspects of the project are cast in the shade. ‘TI’ (Textual Integrity) is indeed exciting, particularly since digitized VIE texts can be—and already are!—the basis of future commercial publications, and VIE texts will be ‘definitive’. But it does not diminish TI to say that I do not consider it the most important aspect of our edition, or that a correction of perspectives is in order. The following is my personal view; I invite others to offer their ideas on this question.

Besides TI, other aspects of the edition are:

- Digitization
- Typo elimination
- Page layout
- Frontispiece illustrations
- Acid Free paper
- Edition specific fonts
- Sewn bindings
- Chronological text order
- Covers
- Completeness

The long labor of digitization and double digitization is behind us; it was a monumental effort. If the VIE is compared to a building, digitization is the foundation, a work which took dozens of people years to accomplish. Text restoration is certainly the sexiest phase of project work and gets much attention in COSMOPOLIS; this is natural because it is closest to what we are all most interested in: Vance’s stories. In recent TI work I have been reviewing *The Dogtown Tourist Agency**; many corrections will be made to this text, mostly adjustments to punctuation and changes involving single words (e.g. editorial ‘squeaks’ corrected to vancian ‘squawks’). The most dramatic change is removal of two editorially interpolated passages. In *Cugel the Clever*** over 600 changes will be made. These include restoration of three lost passages and eradication of extensive editorial punctuation and wording fusage. A typical example:

published: *Cugel took a deep breath and rose to his feet.*

VIE: *Cugel took a deep breath, rose to his feet.*

By itself such a change is hardly dramatic. But the cumulative effect, as Patrick Dusoulrier pointed out in his discussion of *Big Planet* TI, will be distinct to the sensitive reader. Our texts will be the authentic, unadulterated

*TI by Thomas Rydbeck; second, Patrick Dusoulrier

**previously titled *The Eyes of the Overworld*, TI by Tim Stretton; second, Rob Friefeld

Vance; but no matter what degree of textual superiority VIE books achieve, the adulterated versions were never so bad that we were impeded in our enjoyment and appreciation. Thanks to the VIE we may enjoy and appreciate Vance more—I am convinced we will—but we already enjoyed him to the utmost, so much so that we are creating the VIE! Obviously text restoration adds a wonderful splendor to the edition. It makes the set that much more desirable. But it is not *essential*. Without it the VIE would still be the special and important thing it is. When the edition was still in the conception stage I had no idea that text correction could be so extensive. I had a little list of correct titles, was aware of a few words or passages that had been fussed with here and there but was light-years from suspecting that thousands upon thousands of alterations had been made! What concerned us then was sloppiness in the published versions; the reversed paragraphs, the herds of typos. During the early months, when we gathered hundreds of subscriptions and most of current management joined up, we remained unaware how extensive the problem would turn out to be. It was only when Alun Hughes began to investigate that the scope of editorial intervention emerged. Frontispiece illustrations are another non-essential; they also make a nice addition to each book and add their bit of splendor and prestige to the set overall but the VIE essence would not be affected by their absence. Text restoration, and frontispieces, each in their way, are non-essentials. This is not to say these aspects have the same importance or to diminish that importance.

On the other hand freedom from typos, sewn bindings, acid free paper, and the covers, *are* essential. Most important of all is covers. The VIE is about honoring the work of Jack Vance. His texts, even in their degraded published form, are great masterpieces but the published editions are either low quality paperbacks with vulgar cover art—now crumbling to dust due to cheap paper and glued bindings—or, if better materially, proclaim themselves more or less ostentatiously *genre literature*, ‘unworthy of serious attention’. As published until now Vance can never find a place on shelves of prestige. VIE covers revolutionize this situation. All by themselves they make a clear statement: *Jack Vance is a classic author whose work has a rightful place in the first rank of literary glory, beside Mark Twain, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Thoreau, and all his fellow American masters.*

Next in importance comes freedom from typos. Sloppy editions, like most published editions of Vance, dishonor their author. They say: *this author is not interesting or important enough to bother presenting correctly; his texts do not deserve respectful treatment.*

Next comes acid free paper and sewn bindings. The covers open the way to prestigious treatment of the books; correct (as opposed to ‘restored’) texts are an editorial statement of authorial worth; quality paper and

durable binding give them the physical viability and longevity they merit. High quality materials and workmanship say: *these are texts that deserve to last; they are for the ages.* The VIE book set thus becomes a *permanent archive of an important opus whose form corresponds to its inherent prestige.*

Other qualities have great, but lesser, importance. Completeness for example; would a VIE with 25% fewer texts lose its basic *éclat*? Even a 33 volume set would be an impressive treasure—or a mere 22 volume set, as recipients of Wave 1 may agree. But completeness adds special luster; the set becomes not only *indispensable* but *sufficient*.

As for chronological order, it is a way of taking Vance seriously as an artist. A chronological set proclaims: *Here is a great artist, deserving of study; you have before you the record of an important artistic life.*

Regarding page layout and fonts: the former is more important than the latter because fonts are simply an aspect of layout. In the case of the VIE they were even created specifically in function of our layout. The need for a custom font was discovered during work on layout, and constant work goes into VIE layout, in the context of which the fonts are mere tools. Layout is a live project activity; we use compositional guidelines but the nature of Vance’s texts are such that these must be constantly reinterpreted. This interpretive work is done by the VIE Composers with the help of the Composition Review team (CRT)—with both TI and Post-Proofing giving input as well. Layout is a domain in which a publisher may honor a writer. Since currently available fonts are not worthy of Vance’s prose, and though layout is not an absolutely crucial aspect of our edition, given that the printed page is the interface between an author and a reader beautiful layout add splendor and suavity to an edition.

Jorge Luis Borges, the celebrated South American writer, who like Vance became blind in his later years, spent the end of his life in Geneva helping prepare his work for publication in the *Pleade*. The *Pleade* is a tremendously prestigious French edition of world classics. To be published in the *Pleade* is the ultimate literary consecration. The coveted *Goncourt* prize is nothing by comparison. Goncourt or Pulitzer prize winners are here today, gone tomorrow; the *Pleade* is forever. It is not promotion, it is arrival. The VIE, of course, is no *Pleade* . . . or is it? Thanks to Paul Allen’s donations the work of Jack Vance is suddenly present in over 42* of the world’s most prestigious libraries: national, municipal, university and specialized. This is certainly an event unprecedented in the annals of literature. A motley collection of Ace, Daw and UM editions cannot, and more

*In addition to the Allen donation recipients, other libraries are also receiving sets thanks to individual donors. The Texas A. & M. library subscribed directly.

significantly *has not*, done its author a similar service.*

The *Pleade*, adulated everywhere and run by a recognized literary élite, carries a terrific charge of history and tradition. It is the most celebrated contemporary descendant of the scribes of the Alexandrian library and the printer-publishers of the Renaissance, whose aim has been to safeguard and broadcast the gifts of the great authors to mankind. *The Library of America* edition is directly inspired by the *Pleade*; it follows the same editorial principles and uses the same format and font.** Jack Vance is not under consideration for *Pleade* publication—even in the dark horse category. But what other writer, after being ignored by the literary élite during a long career, has had hundreds of his readers rise up, shake away the dust of tradition, cast aside the tutelage of irresponsible élites and, in an unprecedented gesture of democratic cultural élan, seize leading-edge technology in a world-wide effort of several years to offer him an unprecedented laurel crown?

Would Borges have preferred a BIE to the *Pleade*? As library curator, translator of Joyce and Whitman, film lover and crime novel reader, Borges was a modernist guardian of culture. Vance by contrast, is an artistically classical outsider; his interest in crime novels thus needs no explanation, and his lack of enthusiasm for the 7th art is an aspect of his abhorrence of emotional manipulation unusual in our time. Despite these marked differences, Vance and Borges have some surprising things in common. Vance never shared the political leanings of the American cultural milieu of which he is, willy-nilly, a member, while Borges, unlike many of his fellow Argentines, supported the allies in WW2 and later opposed Peron who persecuted him and whose rule Borges called 'the celebration of the beast'. Borges, like Vance, is a partisan of freedom and cantor of the sacredness of the individual. Both writers are fascinated by labyrinths and that special type of labyrinth; the library (*Marune*, *Night Lamp*, etc.). There is Iucounu's trap, the *Plain of Standing Stones* and, above all, the *Shelters* of Tschai with *Foreverness* at their core. For these writers the soul awakens to its mysterious presence in the outer labyrinth of the world and the inner labyrinth of its incarnate mortal life. Finally, we find Borges' *Aleph* in Vance's *Totality*, *tands*, *hub*, *Ioun stones*; symbols for the human capacity to encompass the universe within the scope of their cranium.

*What shelves will VIE books be put on? To say nothing of VIE covers, volumes 10 and 11, as well as volumes 1, 36, 37 and 38, will make it awkward to put them in the 'sci-fi' section, while volumes 4, 7 and others will make it difficult to class them with 'mysteries'. Will they fail to find their way, at last, to the 'general literature' section? Meanwhile, in libraries devoted exclusively to Science Fiction, such as in Toronto, the VIE volumes cannot fail to find a place of special honor.

**publishing classic authors in a dignified, durable and affordable form, in a digital version of a font created for the royal library of Louis XIV.

Borges may have been a State functionary, he may have been adulated; though assiduous in the performance of his duties and gracious in the reception of attentions, he was not impressed. Vance may have been mistreated and neglected, he also is not impressed. The real story, as both teach, is in the heart of each person. Has Man, at the dawn of the 21st century, at last learned respect for the sacredness of the human person? Probably not, but would Borges not have found the VIE supremely apropos to the light of that dawn?

Heroditus and Plato, La Fontaine and Labiche, Dickens and Hugo, the assembled literary greats of history enthroned in the supernal Pantheon, watch in glad admiration the apotheosis of Jack Vance, raised on the wings of a new thing: the unmediated admiration of *his readers*. The cymbals and trumpets will sound!



The VIE Crisis

Most people, myself included, find power struggle distasteful. We are not here to garner prestige or wrest control; we are here to honor Jack Vance. And yet power struggles have plagued the project since the beginning.

The first one began in January of 2000. AMIANTE was being created; it could not be attacked as such (that came later), but its creator was denounced for reckless irresponsibility for his *attempt to create* a font! What had been a simple and amicable matter of mostly technical interest became an 'issue'. It was months before the worst consequences of this messy episode were cleared away because personal relations had been damaged. Such matters are distasteful but recent troubles have boiled so far over into public areas that people are troubled; it is right to provide information.

The VIE, as I have stated before, is no inevitability like the wind and the rain. Its functioning requires many conditions: a good plan, a solid management structure, intelligent and active managers, and above all: an atmosphere of good will. We are *not* a business; problems cannot be treated with brutal economic or 'management' solutions. Our work—and there is a daunting quantity of it—is performed by people in their free time, at their good pleasure. There can be no question of giving orders or distributing economic recompense. To make things happen we can only request or persuade. As recompense we have only gratitude. Each person remains irreducibly free to accept or reject the constraints project work demands, including cooperation with specific other persons. When the going gets tough there is no scope for threats, only appeals to generosity. Furthermore the VIE is no typical volunteer organization where manageable numbers of people gather locally or know each other personally. In the VIE hundreds of highly diverse people

from all over the world are needed, and most have never met personally. Finally our life-line, our mode of internal and external communication, is the Internet—which is to say: a walkway of narrow planks teetering above an open sewer.

This is the environment in which we must cooperate, closely, doggedly, for a period measured not in weeks, or months, but years. The situation of the VIE is far more human than technical. More than anything else the project must fear ill-will.

Last month, as many are doubtlessly aware, disgusted and discouraged beyond patience, I dropped out. This situation lasted several weeks; when I was invited to rejoin by my friend John Vance, I somewhat reluctantly did so. The situation remains delicate. The raw facts are these: over the last year a small group has been militating against the project, often via attacks on a mythological criminal known as 'Paul Rhoads'. Only some of this goes on in public and most of the consequences are hard to see because they occur inside hearts and minds. Eventually the results were such that my presence in the project became both futile (all my VIE work time was being absorbed by 'the crisis') and incompatible with my personal dignity. This situation is particularly exasperating because it is so unnecessary. The project is a success: 11,000 books have been printed, and delivered, to a chorus of happy gratitude. The 'crisis', nonetheless, is real, and project viability is at stake.

It is not appropriate to go into full detail since this concerns the personal relationships of people who need to be friends for the project to work, but I will say as much as I can.

As many of you know, the 'VanceBBS' is a web 'message board' which, until recently, was hosted by Mike Berro. Mike's modesty is matched by his virtues, so things should be said about him he will never say about himself. First of all Mike is responsible for launching the VIE project; it began as a page on his Jack Vance site, already the most successful such site on the Internet at the time (August 1999). The launch instantly demanded a great deal of work, hours and hours per day, which Mike unhesitatingly shouldered. Five months later, with the help of VanceBBS regular Ed Winskill, the project became a 'California non-profit corporation'. Mike and I were part of the original five member Board of Directors, along with Ed, and John and Norma Vance. Since then Mike unflinchingly continues to support the project in many ways. In the early months he lent it thousands of dollars when this was a real risk and a serious show of hope and trust. He is responsible for the Deluxe edition and our present healthy finances. A move typical of Mike is his initiative to offer signed book-plates to subscribers not eligible for numbered editions; he is a truly thoughtful, considerate and generous person, always mindful of others, who puts his money, time and effort where his

mouth is. Like other volunteers he has performed many tasks and held many management posts, from archivist to proofing, but unlike most others his contributions have been so crucial that without them the project would not exist.

The crisis crystallized around a difference of view between Mike and myself regarding the VanceBBS.* Our difference of view led to quarreling; when two guys who have worked so closely, so long and so successfully together start having prolonged quarrels, it is not a good sign, and inevitably the quarrel spread to the Board.

My point of view was that the VanceBBS was being exploited by troublemakers, that their attacks were doing harm to the project, and that this problem was exacerbated by the fact that a member of the VIE Board was host to their activity. I wanted Mike to disallow that activity or, if not, I *very reluctantly* wanted him to resign from the Board.

Mike's point of view was that the VanceBBS predated the VIE, that he is strongly attached to the idea of 'free speech', that abuses of the BBS were not harmful to the project because they were so transparently mean-spirited, and that an adequate solution was to ignore the troublemakers.

I want to emphasize that, in my opinion, Mike's point of view is respectable. What was happening was not his fault; he was merely running a popular message board, averaging 600 visits a day, in the same way he always had. Meanwhile the damage being wreaked on the project was hard to see from the perspective of my fellow Board members because, or so I claim, they are less implicated in front-line project work.**

Whatever the merits of the argument, my view prevailed. Mike graciously remained on the VIE Board and passed responsibility for the VanceBBS to others. Meanwhile the VIE site was redesigned (by Suan Yong; worth a visit!) to separate it aesthetically from Mike's original Vance site (*The Vance Information Page*). The new VanceBBS managers chased off some of the agitators and discouraged irresponsible behavior. Predictably, disaffected posters created a new message board, but it is at enough virtual distance from the project that it presents no threat. Also, since 'Paul-bashing' has little inherent interest, and because certain stout unsqueamish souls take it upon themselves to bring contradiction to the bashers, after a flash-in-pan start, the new message board is languishing.

Adjustment of the VanceBBS treats only the most visible part of the problem. The agitators also use e-mail and telephone, and their insidiousness has troubled human

*The VanceBBS predates the project, is not a part of it, and is used by VIE and non-VIE folk alike.

**We are working to change the structure of the Board to broaden membership to more front-line volunteers.

relations. Since the attacks often take the form of complaints and insults directed at me, it is possible for others to see them as my personal problem, to advise that 'proudly ignoring provocation is the dignified reaction', and to interpret insistence that project viability is at stake as hysterical over-reaction or a sign that I am motivated by hurt feelings. But when someone calls you a "self-absorbed, pompous dimwit", is it a cause for hurt feelings . . . or is it a collectible?

I mean, just let that phrase roll off your tongue: *self-absorbed, pompous dimwit*; marvellous! I have it filed under *Sweatypalmed Faceslappers*. Note the studied rhythm, the cloying epistemological density! I now have a really wonderful collection of this stuff. For example, under *Mealymouthed Denunciato*: "Rhoads . . . shows fanatical proclivity . . . and distinct fascist tendencies"; nice word use! In the same category is this gem: "Paul is . . . an unprincipled person that might engage in questionable activities if he was given the opportunity"; wow! The 'that' is a subtle touch too. Under *Wodehousian Gallimaufry* is the memorable: "Paul Rhoads has shown himself to be a flake of the crispiest sort".

Vance readers, those who turn their hand to it, seem to excel in the genre, though there is occasional failure to remain on this side of good taste: "I despise Paul Rhoads . . . for an adult, informed, self-aware person of Jewish descent to convert to Christianity is a betrayal of the race . . . Converting to Catholicism—in order to marry a well-off woman . . .". That one is filed under *Pure Sludge* where I can find it whenever I'm feeling a little happy and need some cheering down. Here is another sample from the same pen, interesting mainly for the problem of classification it presents: "To everything unpleasant that is happening on these boards and in the VIE there is only one explanation, only one man bears full responsibility for actions that resulted in—let us not mince words—public scandal. This man is Paul Rhoads. If he wouldn't inflate his personality so much, it wouldn't have blown. But it has, and everybody is washing the smelly traces of it off his face." A dilute and sluggish style baffles the climax, so it's no *Sweatypalmed Faceslappers*, which must be all agile arabesque. Though 'icky' enough for *Pure Sludge* it is basically *Mealymouthed Denunciato* whose weak final metaphor, however, transforms it into an unclassifiable mongrel. For such concoctions I have a bin labeled *Pachydermathon*. But there are legitimate composites, like this fascinating specimen of *Wodehousian Sludge*—note the brisk finishing touch: "If there were *any* way to organize and put pressure on VIE to leave PR on the other side of the river as the Eskimos did to their undesirables, I'd put a wait on my VIE for an indefinite period. I'm not well programmed to suck crap from a jerk".

I hope these samples from my little collection have brought you as much amusement and edification as they have brought me.*

VIE work is successful because we follow procedures and cleave to standards. But much energy must be spent discussing these procedures and refining the application and scope of our standards, which are in constant need of modification and interpretation. These discussions would bog us down had we no way of assuring forward motion.

An example; because we are hundreds of volunteers, all over the world, working on dozens of files simultaneously—each job carried on by teams shuttling files both horizontally and vertically among themselves and other teams—we would quickly find ourselves in an unmanageably chaotic situation if the buttocks of John Schwab were not firmly planted atop our file control and work procedure hierarchy. Thus ensconced, or enthroned, John can promulgate and enforce file name and transfer protocols. This is not vaporous theory! On several occasions file chaos has descended upon us, with wasted time and lost work the consequence. It is impossible to do our complex work without following procedures—or adapting them as necessary, which it frequently is. It may seem amazing but as anyone closely involved in the project knows, nothing generates e-mail, and sparks, like questions of file-naming! File naming issues have absorbed weeks of discussion, and though discussion has always been a crucial contribution, at the end of the day the issues must always be settled by authority. John Schwab is the authority. Others may, and sometimes do, execrate his choices. They may assail him with pleas and protests concerning his edicts. John may take notice; he might even ordain adjustment; other times not! But if we lowly workers make infringement, no matter how innocently: *cringe then we must before reproach!* Complaint is vain. If it works for John, it works for the project. He is at the center of our archive and file movement system. He not only *does* it, he is responsible for having *created* it.

But if John Schwab had a DNA laboratory in his basement where he spent the nights cloning his favorite members of the Third Reich, or if he was perceived to derive genuine (rather than theatrical) pleasure from brow-beating us (as he must if work is to stay on track), the project would be in trouble.

*I wish to put the following on record: the house at St. Louand, which has seen many productive VIE gatherings and which both my wife and I hope will see many more, does not belong to her. It is the exclusive property of a branch of her family. By arrangement she uses the house for most of the year. Neither my wife nor I own a house. My wife's father, who fought at the battle of Verdun, was an officer in the Air Force Engineering corp and died in 1986. My wife has an inheritance from her parents, which she uses to pay taxes and maintenance at St. Louand. She earns her living painting portraits, landscapes and still-lives. I earn my living as a stone carver and painter. Like many people we look fondly to the day when we will become independently wealthy! Meanwhile we live in a modest 'bohemian' manner, making ends meet with the help of a classical expedient: fiscal rigor.

What are the goals of my insult collection suppliers? They can speak for themselves:

Mealymouthed Denunciato: "Jack Vance . . . and his family view the Universe in an entirely different manner than Paul Rhoads, and made it clear to me in no uncertain terms, of their own volition. I am convinced that this fact should be taken into account by the editors of COSMOPOLIS. What is going on in their publication is simply indecent."

Pious Porquitude: "Mr. Rhoads' prominent position within the VIE project unavoidably gives his statements an ex Cathedra quality."

Snacafaction: "The most damaging thing to Jack's image is the blather that Paul writes for COSMOPOLIS. How anyone can think that the political diatribes of a lunatic has any place in a publication dedicated to Jack Vance is a mystery to me."*

It has been stated over and over, but here it is once again:

1: Honest opinions, whatever they may be, whether or not they are identical to Jack Vance's opinions whatever those may be, and whether or not they have been awarded the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval or not, are welcome in COSMOPOLIS!

2: Everyone of good will, myself not excluded, is invited to contribute to COSMOPOLIS in the manner they like best.

3: COSMOPOLIS is not what outsiders say it is, it is what the VIE project says it is, which is this: *a public forum for VIE volunteers, subscribers and interested outsiders.*

4: COSMOPOLIS editorial policy can be summed up in one word: 'openness'.

5: Those who do not care for views expressed in COSMOPOLIS have many recourses: they may, a) unsubscribe, b) avoid reading articles they do not like, c) write their own COSMOPOLIS articles.

Naturally this will not satisfy my amiable accusers. They will crab that I have not addressed their concerns. But how can I, and why should I, address concerns that are imaginary? Since my allegedly controversial opinions and my allegedly detestable person has been prominent in the project from the beginning, which was several years ago, if they really were such dynamite how is it that all those VIE books are on all those shelves in homes and libraries world-wide? Basta.



*It's not really apropos but I can't resist sharing a super-gem of *Snacafaction*: "I do not even call for Mr. Rhoads to retract his contentious pieces in COSMOPOLIS!"

Durdane Text Correction

Suan Yong has done yet another remarkable job, this time on the *Durdane* books. The VIE will publish *Durdane* in a single volume, including the very exciting unpublished map of Shant found at the Mugar Library. Text restoration, which benefits from Mugar manuscript evidence, involves the usual sweeping out of editorial meddling and restoration of dropped phrases. Suan proposed some interesting corrections to problems revealed by confrontation of text with map. A full exposition of these questions would surely interest many COSMOPOLIS readers. One of the most interesting problems is the location of 'Brassei Junction'. A passage in *The Anome* explicitly puts it in canton Fairlea but the map, no less explicit, has it in Maiy. Consideration of all references, explicit or implied, indicate that Vance relocated it in Maiy but failed to make retroactive adjustments. These turn out to be unproblematic.

The most perplexing issue is confusion involving cantons 'Conduce' and 'Erevan'. The 'TI-narrative' document, already a *grimoire* when Suan created it, has been updated with discussion on several issues so that now it is some 75 pages long and includes a dozen demomaps. Though the question involved is only a matter of place-name consistency, because it is an interesting puzzle I thought COSMOPOLIS readers might enjoy an exposition.

THE EREVAN/CONDUCE MYSTERY

Vance's map uses numbers to indicate cantons, with a number-name key for the 62 cantons scribbled in the margins. In the text, mentions of 'Erevan' and 'Conduce' do not correspond.



Relevant section of map. Per map name-key 'Conduce' is in position 14 and 'Erevan' in position 8. The river is the Jardeen, of same name as the canton south of Wales.

The Anome, chapter 7:

. . . a storm had struck in from the Green Ocean, bringing floods to Cantons Maiy and Erevan . . . a section of the Great Transverse Route had been washed out; balloons were delayed two days, until crews were able to rig an emergency pass-over.

COMMENT: No particular problem here, though one might wonder why a storm striking in from the Green Ocean is said to affect an inland Canton like 8, when 14 with its segment of balloon way (the dotted line) is closer to the Ocean.

The Anome, chapter 9 [description of balloon-way trip from the Hwan to Garwiy]:

The balloon Shostrel, leaving Angwin, spun down the Great Transverse at extraordinary speeds, out of the Wildlands into Shade [. . .*] past Brassei Junction, where Etwane turned an expressionless glance west, to where Frolitz presumably anticipated his early arrival; through Cantons Conduce, Maiy, Wild Rose, each jealous of its unique identity, and at last into Canton Garwiy.

COMMENT: Here we have Confusion! Per the map, the order of the cantons would logically be Erevan, Maiy, Conduce, Wild Rose.

Brave Free Men, chapter 3 [Etwane instructs Aun Sarah]:

You are required to visit the cantons east of the Jardeen and north of the Wildlands, including Shkoriy, Lor-Asphen, Haghead and Morningshore. I am assigned the cantons to west and south. . . . Your first cantons should perhaps be Wale, Purple Fan, Anglesiy, Jardeen and Conduce; then you can take the balloon-way at Brassei Junction for the far east. I go first to Wild Rose, Maiy, Erevan, and Shade, then take balloon for Esterland.**

COMMENT: cantons 14 (Conduce) and 8 (Erevan) correspond to the text. They are on the correct sides of the river. 'Conduce' is logically grouped with the other cantons Aun Sarah should visit, and the series 'Wild Rose, Maiy, Erevan, Shade' correspond to the logic of the balloon-way.

Brave Free Men, chapter 4 [Etwane instructs Casallo]:

"I want to visit Jamilo [in Wild Rose], Vervei [in Maiy], Sacred Hill in Erevan, Lanteen in Shade. Then we will proceed directly across Shant to Esterland."

*the text here is: "then Fairlea, and", but will be changed to "then Maiy, and". See below.

**Shkoriy, Lor-Asphen, Haghead and Morningshore are to the east of the map detail shown. Esterland is in the extreme south east, but linked by balloon-way, from Maschein in Maseach in the south west, by direct route south of the Hwan.

COMMENT: No problem here.

Brave Free Men, chapter 4 [Etwane now undertakes the inspection planned with Aun Sarah and described to Casallo]:

. . . the balloon perceptibly accelerated and sailed east through Jardeen Gap. The Ushkadel became a dark blur to the rear, and presently they entered Wild Rose . . .

COMMENT: So far so good. This is per the plan and the instructions. Then they go to Maiy:

The folk of Maiy were commerciants . . . The canton's administrative center Vervei was not so much a town as an agglomeration of small industries . . .

COMMENT: Next should come Erevan, but:

In Conduce Etwane found confusion. Looming above the horizon to the south-east stood the first peaks of the Hwan; an arm of Shell-flower Bay extended almost as close from the north. "Should we send our women north? Or should we prepare to receive women from the mountains? The Fowls say one thing, the Fruits another.

COMMENT: Why has Etwane jumped back up to canton 14? Why did he not go on to canton 8 as announced? After making his travel plans perfectly clear to both Aun Sarah and Casallo, plans which are topographically logical because we go down the balloon-way to each of the cantons 'west of the Jardeen', Etwane instead backpedals to a canton he allotted to Aun Sarah, which is also to the east of the Jardeen, and which, to top all, is actually described as equidistant from Shell-flower Bay and the Hwan! Be this as it may, when the trip continues will he resume his interrupted itinerary and visit 'Erevan':

In Shade, under the very loom of the Hwan, the Roguskhoi were a known danger . . .

COMMENT: No! Etwane has skipped from 'Conduce' (canton 14?), by-passing 'Erevan', to go on directly to Shade! The itinerary, though interrupted, nonetheless has the same number of cantons visited as announced, from Wild Rose to Shade.

The Asutra, chapter 1 [the trip of Ifness and Etwane from the Hwan to Garwiy]:

Ifness only shrugged and looked out across the purple distances of Canton Shade . . . The Conseil spun up the slot; cantons Erevan, Maiy, Conduce, Jardeen, Wild Rose passed below and disappeared into the autumn murk.

COMMENT: No problem here.

Etwane's instructions to Aun Sarah and Casallo, followed by his trip of inspection, fall within a 4-page section. The canton he visits after Maiy and before Shade is called 'Conduce' but is described as equidistant from

Shell-flower Bay and the Hwan. The 'Conduce' on the map certainly is not that, but 'Erevan', the canton he planned to visit is. What if canton 8 'Conduce' and canton 14 'Erevan' got reversed when the list was transcribed to the Mugar map margins, so that as Vance worked and reworked, things got confused? To find out we can try switching the names on the map:



Is canton 14 'Erevan' and canton 8 'Conduce'?

The Anome, chapter 7 [the storm in from the Green Ocean]:

A storm had struck in from the Green Ocean, bringing floods to Cantons Maiy and Erevan . . .

COMMENT: This now makes somewhat better sense; 'Erevan' is closer to the Ocean.

The Anome, chapter 9 [description of balloon-way trip from the Hwan to Garwiy]:

The balloon Shostrel, leaving Angwin, spun down the Great Transverse at extraordinary speeds, out of the Wildlands into Shade, then Maiy*, and past Brassei Junction, where Etwane turned an expressionless glance west, to where Frolitz presumably anticipated his early arrival; through Cantons Conduce, Maiy, Wild Rose, each jealous of its unique identity, and at last into Canton Garwiy.

COMMENT: Canton order is now correct! But this will not do: Conduce cannot be south of Maiy since Brassei Junction must be in Maiy. But the Brassei Junction issue seems to be unrelated. In any case, per the name-

*See above

confusion hypothesis, all can easily be adjusted without altering the number of syllables:

. . . out of the Wildlands into Shade, then Conduce, and past Brassei Junction, where Etwane turned an expressionless glance west, to where Frolitz presumably anticipated his early arrival; through Cantons Maiy, Jardeen, Wild Rose . . .

Brave Free Men, chapter 3 [Etwane instructs Aun Sarah]:

You are required to visit the cantons east of the Jardeen and north of the Wildlands, including Shkoriy, Lor-Asphen, Haghead and Morningshore. I am assigned the cantons to west and south. . . . Your first cantons should perhaps be Wales, Purple Fan, Anglesiy, Jardeen and Conduce; then you can take the balloon-way at Brassei Junction for the far east. I go first to Wild Rose, Maiy, Erevan, and Shade, then take balloon for Esterland.

COMMENT: When 'Erevan' and 'Conduce' are switched, all is well:

Your first cantons should perhaps be Wales, Purple Fan, Anglesiy, Jardeen and Erevan; then you can take the balloon-way at Brassei Junction for the far east. I go first to Wild Rose, Maiy, Conduce, and Shade . . .

Brave Free Men, chapter 4: Etwane instructs Casallo.

"I want to visit Jamilo, Vervei, Sacred Hill in Erevan, Lanteen in Shade. Then we will proceed directly across Shant to Esterland."

COMMENT: again, 'Erevan' and 'Conduce' can be painlessly switched:

. . . Jamilo, Vervei, Sacred Hill in Conduce, Lanteen in Shade . . .

Brave Free Men, chapter 4 [Etwane's tour of inspection]:

In Conduce Etwane found confusion. Looming above the horizon to the south-east stood the first peaks of the Hwan; an arm of Shell-flower Bay extended almost as close from the north.

COMMENT: This passage is now unproblematic! We arrive in the correct canton, as prescribed by the two itineraries, and its description corresponds to its position!

The Asutra, chapter 1 [from the Hwan to Garwiy]:

. . . the purple distances of Canton Shade . . . The Conseil spun up the slot; cantons Erevan, Maiy, Conduce, Jardeen, Wild Rose passed below and disappeared into the autumn murk.

COMMENT: again, a simple switch makes things right:

. . . cantons Conduce, Maiy, Erevan, Jardeen, Wild Rose passed below . . .

FOLLOWING THE MAP

Readers of the VIE *Durdane*, thanks to the map, will be able to enjoy voyage and 'civil engineering' passages (such as below from *The Brave Free Men*) with new zest since, on the map, they are traced out exactly:

The gap in the balloon-way between Ilwiy and Eye of the East was one of several which must be closed as soon as possible! Likewise the long-planned link between Brassei in Elfine and Maschein in Maseach. The distance in each case was not great—perhaps two hundred miles—yet the balloon-way route between, in each case, extended more than sixteen hundred miles. Another loop might well be extended from Brassei west to Pagane, then through Irreale to Ferghaz at the far north of Gitanesq, then southeast through Fenesq to Garwiy. The isolated cantons Haviosq, Fordume and Parthe had small need for balloon-way service now, true, but what of the future?

CORONET EDITION AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

While studying these problems I had occasion to open my Coronet, second edition 1977, of *The Anome* and could not help noting how greatly superior VIE volumes are to these shoddy mass-market paperbacks whose affectionately thumbed pages are now browned and cracked with acid fire. And as for the typography . . . look at these revolting examples I saw as soon as I opened the book:

ation. Frolitz app
his proposals. Wh
to the side, abse

Such a printing error means free, postage paid, VIE volume replacement!

e tavern burst a young
Zerkow's. "Have you he

This kerning error would give self-respecting (and all of them are) CRT workers apoplexy, while the guilty Composer would have nightmares for the rest of his life. Has it ever occurred to anyone to harass the good folk at Coronet for their typographical turpitude?

Despite being spoiled by VIE books I nonetheless again savored the discourse at Zerkow's Tavern: a thief has lost his head to the Anome's justice; Loy, the inn-keeper, speaks:

"In a sense, the penalty seems extreme. The burglar took goods but lost his life. These are the laws of Elfine which the Faceless Man correctly enforced—but should a bagful of goods and a man's life weigh so evenly on the balance?"

[Ifness] offered his opinion. "Why should it be otherwise? You ignore a crucial factor in the situation. Property and life are not incommensurable, when property is measured in terms of human

toil. Essentially property is life; it is that proportion of life which an individual has expended to gain the property. When a thief steals property, he steals life. Each act of pillage therefore becomes a small murder . . . All folk, mercantilists as well as tavern-keepers and musicians, try to relate their work to abstract universals. We mercantilists are highly sensitive to theft, which stabs at our very essence. To steal is to acquire goods by a simple, informal and inexpensive process. To buy identical goods is tedious, irksome and costly. Is it any wonder that larceny is popular? Nonetheless it voids the mercantilist's reasons for being alive; we regard thieves with the same abhorrence that musicians might feel for a fanatic gang which beat bells and gongs whenever musicians played . . . To repeat: when a thief steals property he steals life . . . I am tolerant of human weakness, and I would not react vigorously to the theft of a day. I would resent the theft of a week; I would kill the thief who stole a year of my life."

A novel defense of private property, dovetailing interestingly with a defense of capital punishment! I am reminded of the Aristotelian-Thomistic position according to which certain virtues cannot be practiced in the absence of certain property. According to St. Thomas, for example, a poor man cannot be magnanimous because he lacks enough money for the practice of magnanimity. What of a painter without paint? Does 'artistic virtue' exist only when it is exercised?

Does the ontology of virtue depend on material expression? If only to 'do' is to 'be', can he who has nothing to give 'be' charitable—in the para-Christian sense of do-gooding, say alms giving? In the Christian sense Charity is love, and love is a disposition of the heart pleasing to God, to be which is its ultimate justification. But whether we veer all the way into theology, or not, such questions remain ambiguous until metaphysics are nailed down and words defined with exactitude. But whatever the metaphysics, the earth bound materialist has strong arguments. An orator, no matter how large his vocabulary, great his command of a subject or alert and quick, if his tongue has been cut off he is without 'oratorical virtue'.

If 'the pursuit of happiness' is interpreted in its most mundane sense, which is 'the pursuit of property', these musings might cast light on how it is linked to 'life' and 'liberty'. Together these terms make up the most famous American phrase. It may or may not represent the highest in Man, but at least it presents no serious internal contradiction. Compare it to the French slogan, coined two years later: 'Liberty, Equality*'. How much liberty do

*'Fraternity' was added after the revolution of 1848.

you have on the Procrustean bed? If you are too short Procrustes stretches you with ropes; if you are too long he cuts off your feet. True equality is spiritual; we mortals, born of dust and busy returning thereto, must have substance—our bodies, our possessions—to exist, to subsist, to flourish, and property can never be equal.

A further vancian perspective on the link between life and property, and remedies against those who violate it, occurs in another passage from *The Brave Free Men*:

In Dithibel the women who owned and managed all shops refused to leave the mountain areas, out of the certain knowledge that the men would loot their stocks. . . . Etwane. . . . cried: "Do you then encourage rape? Have you no sense of perspective?"

"A rape is soon; a loss of goods is long," stated the Matriarch. "Never fear, we have pungent remedies against either nuisance." But she craftily refused to spell out the remedies, merely hinting that "bad ones will rue the day. The thieves, for instance, will find themselves without fingers!"



The European Scene

PUBLISHING NEWS FROM FRANCE

A new Vance book has been published in French: *Croisades*. The contents are: *Rumfuddle* ("La Grande Bamboche"), *Dodkin's Job* ("Les Oeuvres de Dodkin"), *The Miracle Workers* ("Les Faiseurs de Miracles"), *Crusade to Maxus** ("Les Maîtres de Maxus").

The book was compiled by Pierre-Paul Durastanti, who revised the translations for the 2nd and 3rd story, and who translated the 4th. *Crusade to Maxus* had never been published before in French, and is still undergoing a tricky TI review by Thomas Rydbeck.

Jacques Chambon translated *Rumfuddle* specially for this edition. Jacques Chambon died a few weeks before the book was published, to the great sorrow of all French SF connoisseurs. Pierre-Paul has dedicated the book: *Pour Jacques Chambon, qui aurait aimé ce livre.*** Jacques Chambon was one of the most important editors of Science Fiction in France, and one of the people, with Jacques Goimard, responsible for the great popularity of Vance in that country.

The following testimonial occurs in *Croisades*:

The Editor wishes to express his gratitude to the members of the VIE Project (VANCE INTEGRAL EDITION), and in particular to Patrick Dusoulier, for

their invaluable assistance in the production of this book.

The goal of the VIE Project is "the creation of a complete and correct Vance edition in 44 volumes; a permanent, physical archive of Vance's work" in English. Furthermore, the texts are being "corrected under the aegis of the author, his wife Norma, and his son John", and constitute the "Authorized Version of Vance's work" [etc.]

Thanks to Patrick for his VIE liaison work, as well as for supplying many of the above details.

THE FRENCH MEDIA

Another typical TV week in France: a documentary on the McCarthy era, another on Ethel Rosenberg, a third on Jean Moulin—resistance leader and Communist agent (per a much decried thesis of Thierry Wolton), and also a new documentary by Serge Moati, parisian journalistic-artistic luminary and host of 'Ripostes', a weekly TV political debate. In our house Moati goes by the name 'Vishnu' because of how he runs his show; hunched over the table, arms held straight out, huffily pointing, directing and gesticulating. The subject of his documentary? What else: France's favorite Fascist. No less unexpected were Moati's techniques: scary music and extreme close-ups of the monster's face with scary lighting. Moati's voice-overs manage to be almost touching in their—how should I put it—naive dishonesty? tragic self-content? patronizing insinuation? The viewer-guidance icon warning off children under 10, is also used for *South Park*.

Moati is a leading hero in the ongoing campaign to convince French citizens of their racism, xenophobia and Fascism, and how those who refuse to join the camp of Light and Truth had better watch out because (*tremolo on low E flat and C*), their favorite Fascist might end up in power. I confess to fascination with this subject! But I protest that it is not unrelated to my interest in Vance.*

According to my reading** Vance is one of the rare artists who has evaded the ideological traps in which so many of his 20th century fellows are ensnared. He personally helped win the war on Fascism—by bravely delivering material across submarine infested waters to embattled U.S. troops—and afterwards did not fail to support the struggle against Communism, which finally triumphed in 1989 (the falling of the Berlin Wall—Ed.). Communists and Communist sympathizers of all tints from pink to green—in whose ranks artists have been shamefully over-represented—cannot say as much. It drives them nuts to have it pointed out (which adds zest to doing so) but they were actually *on Hitler's side* for years,

*Published as *Overlords of Maxus* in *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, Feb 1951.

**For Jacques Chambon, who would have loved this book.

*Vance himself is not uninterested by what goes on in France; more than once he has talked with me about the political situation here.

**As always I welcome, and even invite, other readings, of whatever color or flavor, in COSMOPOLIS.

and not just any old years, the ones in which Poland, Holland, Belgium and France got blitzkrieged. And they remained staunchly loyal to their ally Adolph—right up until Uncle Joe told them to change their mind.

So what does *that* prove? It proves that power and tactics were more important to them than ideals at *the moment of moments* in the 20th century when the world needed men to stand up for their ideals. As for the Communist sympathizers who jumped off the Stalinist shame-train too late; well, everyone makes mistakes! Some have even fessed up to their 'previous half-human condition',* but the Left hates to admit error! It is bad for their self-proclaimed reputation of superior intelligence and morality.

Nobody likes to admit error of course, but a freedom lover has fewer obstacles to this difficult act. Since he does not pretend to sovereign omniscience he is less hungry for power. More concerned with himself and people near to him than humanity in the abstract, he is closer to reality, more clear-sighted about practical benefits. This gives him easier access to modesty and, by consequence, honesty.

Vance is a poet of freedom. But vancian freedom is, first of all, inner freedom. Inner freedom is, above all, the unbound spirit free for the search for truth. It seems to me there is a distinct vancian abhorrence of propaganda, organized mendacity and manipulation. Vance may not have been an actual 'cold warrior' but when *The Stark*, where Russian Communism is a central issue, is published by the VIE his politics, fully implicit in his other writings, will come into even sharper focus. Part of my enthusiasm about Vance is because he is a teacher. His political teaching, like Plato's, is not ideological instruction but training in how to think about political things, or to state this more generally: training in the search for truth. For example, though he does not fail to identify evil, he seems to regard it from a somewhat clinical distance:

There is a dark side to humanity, which is like a stone pressed into the mould. The upper side, exposed to sun and air, is clean; tilt it and look below, at the muck and scurrying insects . . .

— *The Wannek*

The dark side is deplorable, and when necessary should be combated with staunch and inspired action, but Vance does not assume, in the facile wink-and-nod, uni-dimensional Moati manner, that we all know what evil is. The freedom he defends is more spiritual than physical, more about ideas than things, and, as in that poem of a novel *Emphyrio*, the ultimate weapon of the vancian liberator is truth.

Such matters are complex; many people are attracted by the fashionable concepts to which vancian irony does

full justice, relativism and anti-dogmatism:

"Ah, truth indeed!" mused Amiante. "If only we could identify truth when we perceived it! Here would be reassurance!"

Schute Cobol snorted in disgust. "This is the source of all our difficulties. Truth is orthodoxy, what else? You need no reassurance beyond the regulations."

But the glow of such phrases is a nimbus of reflected light from a different source:

. . . the people of Ambroy, who are sorely in need of truth.

"Emphyrio strove and suffered for truth. I shall do likewise! If only I can find the strength within myself! This is what Amiante would want!"

He wanted to bring truth to Ambroy.

There was no one to give him counsel; he was alone.

What, given the circumstances, would have been Emphyrio's course of action?

Truth.

Very well, thought Ghyl: it shall be Truth, and let the consequences fall where they may.

"I want only truth. Truth must be known."

...all who heard his words knew them for truth . . .

Only I, Grand Lord Dugald . . . of all the lords, have no pride. I am humble . . . because only I know the truth. All the others—they are blameless. They realize their difference; they assume this to be the measure of their superiority.

. . . the monsters, at first insensate, were now, through truth, of all folk the easiest.

This is the truth; now that it is known [they] no longer can coerce us.

"When the truth is finally told, there is no more to say."

Truth that inspires, comforts, sustains, confounds lies and wickedness, liberates innocence, makes humble: such truth is not for sale on every street corner! It is pearl, hidden in the labyrinth of time and reality. The ancient hero reaches across the ages, crawls through legends, leaves footprints in far libraries, colors the teaching of a father to his son. These feeble beams are enough; light comes to a mind; the hero is emulated; truth lives anew. The dream of a father becomes reality: a people are liberated.

But vancian liberation is always more spiritual than physical. When Reith frees the Chaschmen, or other oppressed human groups of Tschai, he is primarily concerned with their spiritual or ideological chains:

*the ensqualmed Gilgad, in *Rhialto the Marvellous*

A dozen Chaschmen, faces pinched and twisted under the grotesque false crania, sat hunched over stone pots of liquor, exchanging lewd banter with a small group of Chaschwomen. These wore gowns of black and green; bits of tinsel and ribbon be-dizened their false scalps; their pug-noses were painted bright red. A dismal scene, thought Reith; still, it pointed up the essential humanity of the Chaschmen. Here were the universal ingredients of celebration: invigorating drink, gay women, camaraderie.—*The Chasch*

The Chasch are not exterminators; they allow Chashmen to thrive in a manner; the commerce in melons and reed-walkers between Pera and Dadiche must continue, for even Blue Chasch must eat. Life is a perpetual compromise between our spiritual and our material natures, our minds and our bodies, but false crania or any surrender of our essential humanity is intolerable, revolting:

He ripped off the false cranium, flung it in a ditch . . . —*The Chasch*

The outward sign of the Chaschmen's degradation or the weird self-mutilations practiced by the Dirdirmen Immaculates, are less disgusting to Reith than the false thoughts and perverted desires which generate them. Jesus said: "It is not what you put into your mouth which defiles you, but what comes out of it." False crania are the expression of a perverted mind.

"Pera is a tumble of ruins. The people here are little better than fugitives. They have no pride or self-respect; they live in holes, they are dirty and ignorant, they wear rags. What's worse, they don't seem to care."—*The Chasch*

Their condition is bad, but worst of all is failure to care! The greatest degradation is not filth or even ignorance but embracement of a half-human condition which, to make matters worse, is imposed more by prestige than force, as we see most clearly in the dirdirmen's admiration of the dirdir. Tschai, though stifling, offers more scope for freedom than degraded men will seize at Pera! Whatever the pressure or incitement, in the last analysis Man imposes his degradation upon himself, from fear, lust for security, lack of initiative. As Eathre explains to her son:

To live without dissension they bind themselves by rules . . . The Faceless Man merely enforces the laws . . . they have made for themselves."

—*The Anome*

But why not march to one drummer? Are we not a bunch of troublemakers who need regimentation and discipline? The balancing act between the individual and society is a constant vancian preoccupation, beginning with his large sense of the unfathomable value of the human person. He expresses the latter again and again.

Perhaps the most blatant example is this unforgettable passage from *Mazirian*:

What great minds lie in the dust . . . What gorgeous souls have vanished into the buried ages; what marvellous creatures are lost past the remotest memory . . . ? Nevermore will there be the like . . .

This is a 'positive' expression. Even more powerful is the 'negative' one which permeates *The Anome* as Mur becomes aware of the doom that adulthood brings in Shant:

How would it feel to be clamped with a torc? Some said that for months, or even years, a person felt stifled, in constant dread; Mur had heard of cases where the person clamped became frantic and broke the torc apart, taking his own head.

—*The Anome*

The vancian individual is not a solipsistic closed system. It is not control of a 'private infinity' that is the glory of the human person, it is that the liberated individual conscience is the window upon infinity:

He felt intensely alert; by some unnamable faculty he seemed to know the precise condition of every person of Bashon.—*The Anome*

Our identity, thus our *individuality*, our awareness of ourselves and of others: this is the predicate of our humanity. Those who cannot think, who cannot commune, are not human.

In the Catademnon sat those without ears to hear, who owned no souls and knew neither ease nor fellowship . . . "We have no souls, no minds, no identities . . ."—*Emphyrio*

To be without a soul, empty of human personhood, is the source of oppression, stupidity, immolation of self on the altar of that which replaces it. The puppet lords of Halma, imitations of men, are no mere 'aliens', 'McGuffins', 'shmilblicks' of a two penny weird tale. *Emphyrio* is a masterpiece of world literature because this alienness is a symbol; the lords are pictures of dehumanization. The 'evil' of the lords may be suave and gentle, but so much real evil is! In the final analysis it is still all lies, destruction, exploitation. To suck life from others is to be a 'hormagaunt', a man who has become a beast. How can we comprehend the acts of beast?

The evil man is a source of fascination; ordinary persons wonder what impels such extremes of conduct. A lust for wealth? A common motive, undoubtedly. A craving for power? Revenge against society? Let us grant these as well. But when wealth has been gained, power achieved and society brought down to a state of groveling submission, what then? Why does he continue?

The response must be: the love of evil for its own sake.

The motivation, while incomprehensible to the ordinary man, is nonetheless urgent and real. The malefactor becomes the creature of his own deeds. Once the transition has been overpassed a new set of standards comes into force. The perceptive malefactor recognizes his evil and knows full well the meaning of his acts. In order to quiet his qualms he retreats into a state of solipsism, and commits flagrant evil from sheer hysteria, and for his victims it appears as if the world has gone mad.

—*The Face*

This passage is in concordance with Christian doctrine, not because it is inspired by it, but because both are inspired by reality. Normal persons, such as Etwane and Ifness, are mystified by the practice of evil:

“Were the Roguskhoi human we might reconcile these grotesque acts with simple treachery; but the concept of Garstang and Jurjin of Xhiallinen plotting with the Roguskhoi is sheer insanity.”

—*The Anome*

Who, or what, were the masters of the gas-chambers and the Gulag? Those who are proud of their ‘courageous’ contemplation of the void, do they also see ‘nothing’ when they peer into *this* abyss? From where does man topple into inhumanity, and what lurks in the depths? Garstang and Jurjin are infected by an alien parasite; in the work of another writer this might be no more than a grotesquerie, but in Vance it is the image of mind polluted by ideology. Remember the words of Grand Lord Dugald:

. . . the others—they are blameless. They realize their difference; they assume this to be the measure of their superiority.

Thanks to ignorance, to deprivation of truth, their sense of superiority is untroubled; tranquil in their conscience they remain capable of horrific error, of treating men as if they were worthless. Capacity for evil is a function of distance from truth.

The essence of the matter is the individual. Liberation, first and ultimately, is escape from the chains of our own darkness. Roy Barch escapes from Magarak and frees his fellows but, above all, he escapes the inner prison of his sense of racial inferiority. He does not become superior, he becomes: himself.

Freedom is the basic vancian value but freedom for us mortals is ambiguous. Vance, though he rightly places the individual in the place of central importance, never forgets that we do not live alone, or how difficult is the balance between freedom and responsibility, the need for self-restraint and cooperation.

True freedom is inner freedom, and inner freedom is not a *suigeneris* emanation of our will but something we

must seek and inherit, in labor and pain, from ‘Emphyrio’, from the ‘heroes of the past’. More, truth must be rebuilt, and this is work which cannot be done alone. The most platonic of all vancian passages is in chapter 8 of *The Brave Free Men*, where four people, in a particular situation, through dialogue, forge living truth. Each opinion contradicts the others, but all are resolved into a harmonious whole when proper perspective is achieved. For Vance’s readers such passages are spiritual training to become the Emphyrio it is their vocation to be:

Dystar said: “Without my torc I would be mad with joy.”

Mialambre seemed astounded. . . . “The torc is your representation, the signal of your responsibility to society.”

“I recognize no such responsibility,” said Dystar. “Responsibility is the debt of people who take. I do not take, I give. Thereafter my responsibility is gone.”

“Not so,” exclaimed Mialambre. “This is an egotistical fallacy! Every man alive owes a vast debt to millions—to the folk around him who provide a human ambience, to the dead heroes who gave him his thoughts, his language, his music. . . .”

Dystar gave generous acquiescence. “What you say is truth. . . . Nonetheless, my torc. . . . coerces me to the life I would prefer to live by my own free will. . . . without fear, in freedom.”

“Freedom?” cried Mialambre in unaccustomed fervor. “I am as free as is possible! I act as I please, within the lawful scope. Thieves and murderers lack freedom; they may not rob and kill. The honest man’s torc is his protection against such ‘freedom.’”

Dystar again conceded the jurist his argument. “Still, I was born without a torc. When the Sanhredin guildmaster clamped my neck, a weight came upon my spirit which has never departed.”

“The weight is real,” said Mialambre. “What is the alternative? Illegality and defiance. How would our laws be enforced? . . . Men without restraint are *ahulphs*. . . the flaw is not the torc; it resides in the human disposition. . . .”

Finnerack said, “The correctness of your remarks rests upon an assumption. . . . You assume the altruism and good judgment of the Anome.”

“True!” declared Mialambre. . . .

. . . At Camp Three we thought the reverse; and we are correct, not you. What man of justice could allow a Camp Three to exist?”

Mialambre was not daunted. “. . . No system lacks its flaw. . . .”

Etwane said, “. . . The Roguskhoi are about to destroy us. There will be no more torcs, no more

Anome, no more men, unless we fight with effectiveness . . . ”

“The Anome is the single free man of Shant,” said Finnerack. “As a free man I too would fight; an army of free men could defeat the Roguskhoi.”

What of our own situation? How can we contribute to the dialog for truth in our time and accomplish our own liberation? But, first of all: is our liberty threatened? If so, by what or who? Serge Moati makes the tired claim that the danger is ‘Fascism’, and that Fascism infects our society from the ‘right’.

But the terms ‘left’ and ‘right’ have long been nothing but incantations, an *Excellent Prismatic Spray*, an *Omnipotent Sphere*, tactics of attack and defence*. As soon as one can see past many of the absurd issues which seem to distinguish ‘right’ from ‘left’ the underlying political opposition comes clear: on one hand: faith in the individual and consequent love of freedom and desire for limited representative and lawful government. On the other: lust for control with consequent depreciation of individual liberty and unscrupulousness regarding non-democratic means of getting and maintaining it.** Political strife today, when it is not a melee of power hungry monsters, pits the party of Freedom against the party of Power.

The French situation is exemplary for many reasons; the French invented the left (in 1789) and what remains of it in the developed world is nowhere more pure and vigorous than here where its ideological reign of terror persists. All the politicians on the ‘right’ are eager to prove how left they truly are; even the infamous leader of the ‘extreme right’ says of himself: ‘I am leftist on social issues’. The real objection to this politician, and what Serge Moati likes about him but would never admit, is that he has served so well to divide the non-left vote, and has also repeatedly used his electoral influence, typically from 8% to 15%, to bring the left to power! The struggle against Hitler’s alleged epigones is a tactic in a power struggle. It keeps the ‘right’ stigmatized as ‘Fascist’ and wards off de-legitimization of the left by forbidding an equal sign to be drawn between the defeated and undefeated tyrannies of 1945.

After losing one of the bloodiest battles of the 20th century in 1939, after the humiliation of occupation and the shame of collaborationist government, the French are proud of those among them who were part of the Resistance. This is understandable and laudable. We must

*I am ‘left’, angelic and admirable; you are ‘right’, an insect-like thing.

**Having written this a few days ago I am amused to come upon the exact same thesis in Thierry Wolton’s latest essay; ‘Comment guérir du complexe de gauche’ (*How to get over the leftist-complex*) in which he quotes Chantal Delsol: “There are two types of governors; those who defy the governed (whom they judge incompetent, immature or seditious), and those who have confidence in their capacity to run their own mutual affairs.” (from *La République, une question française*, 2002, extract translated by PR.)

look to the heroic and remember the best! The situation in Germany is different. The Germans have flagellated themselves for half a century, bravely accepting national responsibility for Nazi crimes and struggling honestly to make amends. In some respects this process has gone too far; many young Germans are horrified not merely at their country but at the fact of their own ‘Germanness’. This degradation of their sense of personhood, a baffle to their quest for spiritual freedom, is carefully nurtured by the party of power. But German resistance to Hitler was numerically superior to French resistance. Furthermore, like the origins of the French resistance itself, it was largely ‘Christian’ and ‘right-wing’, rather than Communist. But, subject to total repression, and because the Nazi horror absorbs so much attention, German resistance remains unpublicized. Meanwhile, the real work of pushing the Nazi legions out of France fell mostly on Anglo-American soldiers, killed by tens of thousands, doing the job.

Prompted by Moati, our infamous ‘right-wing’ politician expressed frank contempt for the Communists of the 1930s and 40s. They were dregs, hooligans, wife-beaters. Moati is scandalized*; he segues to a black and white static image of a burned house, which, without explicit explanation, we somehow know to be a Nazi arson. Then: footage of five guys with small arms in a forest clearing; noble Communist non-dreg Nazi-fighters saving France while Christians and right-wingers twiddle their thumbs or help Petain export Jews to Auschwitz! The footage lasts several seconds . . . one guy peeks under a bush. Is a Nazi hiding there? . . . or perhaps he needs a place to poop? But even if he didn’t need to poop and there was a Nazi in that bush, and the guy really is a Communist, what I want to know is: how does this prove he isn’t a dreg? And yet, somehow it does! Somehow a guy peeking in a bush proves that Communists were the noble Nazi-fighting resistance. And yet when Hitler attacked France in 1939 *the Communists were on Hitler’s side*. Speaking of his dealings with Russia in 1941 Churchill wrote:

Up to the moment when the Soviet Government was set upon by Hitler they seemed to care for no one but themselves. Afterwards this mood naturally became more marked. Hitherto they had watched with stony composure the destruction of the front in France in 1940, and our vain efforts in 1941 to create a front in the Balkans. They had given important economic aid to Nazi Germany and had helped them in more minor ways . . . Their first impulse and lasting policy was to demand all possible succor from Great Britain and her Empire,

*All dregs? There must have been a few exceptions. Sartre comes to mind; he was not a dreg but a ‘leading French philosopher’ (example of Sartrian philosophy: ‘Stalin did not kill enough people’); or Picasso, not a wife-beater but a millionaire artist.

the possible partition of which between Stalin and Hitler had for the last eight months beguiled Soviet minds . . . The British Communists, who had hitherto done their worst . . . in our factories, and had denounced "the capitalist and imperialist war", turned about again overnight and began to scrawl the slogan; "Second Front Now" . . . — *The Grand Alliance*, p378, Houghton Mifflin 1950

The situation was identical in France, except that the Communists had not tried and failed to help Hitler win, they had tried and succeeded. In 1947 the French Communists attempted a coup d'etat involving a general strike, capture of arsenals, derailling of trains and killings. They were foiled, but continued to toe the Stalinist line as millions were starved, shot, tortured. These are the people Serge Moati is dewy-eyed about.

Francois Mitterand, Socialist president of France from 1971 to 1995, who practically invented the Nazi-fighter game, turns out to have been, quite simply, a minister in the Vichy government under Petain. He left and joined the resistance but remained friends with unrepentant collaborators. These facts came home to roost in 1994 but by then it was too late; a few months later he died and the issue has been ignored. The party of power will tell any lie they can get away with, ignore any fact they are allowed to, and things will get worse in France before they get better. People otherwise charming, cultured and generous, people I see around me every day, are in the grip of suspicion and hatred of the rich and the West, a state of mind nurtured by the media in a climate of hysterical witch-hunting degrading to democracy.



A Brief History of DD: From Scannos to TI

by Richard Chandler

I suspect that when Paul Rhoads, John Schwab and others first learned that our scan/ocr software for primary digitizing had fundamental flaws they must have had a moment of despair. The software of choice in the United States was either Caere's OmniPage or ScanSoft's Text Bridge and both had similar, troubling bugs: some short lines of text simply were not seen in the ocr stage; others were incorrectly placed.

For those of you not familiar with the digitizing process let me back up a little. There are basically two effective methods by which text can be entered into a computer. The first is the old-fashioned method, type it in; some of the VIE volunteers did exactly that. The second method is to use a scanner to take a picture of the text and then convert the picture into text through a very

sophisticated procedure called 'optical character recognition', ocr for short. To me this is a magical process. Getting a computer to recognize patterns, something we humans do superbly well, is very difficult. Small variations in pronunciation, for example, something we may not even notice, can cause ludicrous output from voice recognition software. That and handwriting recognition are still in their infancy, but *printed* character recognition is quite excellent. I just printed this page on my laser printer and scan/ocr'ed it with OmniPage and there were two errors in the digitized output: <scanlocr> instead of <scan/ocr> and <scanlocr'ed> instead of <scan/ocr'ed>. As I said, it's *magical*.

I first read about the VIE on *The Jack Vance Information Page* maintained by Mike Berro and was the seventh volunteer. As I recall, I originally signed on to digitize 2 novels and 2 short stories. This proved to be a slow and laborious task with the hardware and software I had: a 90 MHz Pentium (one of the original Pentiums with the famous floating point division bug*), a Microtek Scan Maker IIG, and OmniPage v3. Things significantly improved when I got a new computer (733 MHz Pentium III), scanner (Epson Perfection 1200), and upgraded OmniPage. I discovered that I actually enjoyed the process.

John Schwab was in charge of Text Entry, and it wasn't long before he had persuaded me to do much, wasn't more. About the time that text entry was just about finished and the very tough task of proofing had begun, we discovered a very disconcerting fact about ocr software: it makes mistakes, especially when recognizing scans of old paperbacks. We had not expected it to be perfect, that it would occasionally misidentify badly printed letters, broken type, and the like. Word's spelling checker would catch most of those kinds of errors. We were not prepared for the software to rearrange the text, to misplace a correctly digitized complete line, or omit a complete line. (One pernicious error that my version of TextBridge persistently makes: it doesn't 'see' a line consisting of the single expression <"No.">, something very common in conversations.) These kinds of errors are very difficult to catch in proofing. Chris Corley compiled a rather shockingly long list of repetitive errors he had encountered while preproofing *The Pleasant Grove Murders* and *Suldrun's Garden*. I suspect that a frisson ran through the entire VIE management team upon recognizing how pervasive the problem of ocr error really was.

John remembers that DD, *Double Digitizing*, was originally conceived as a way of providing persons doing TI work with alternative versions of the stories. When the full magnitude of this disaster made itself known, the VIE management (Paul Rhoads, John Schwab, Joel Hedlund and perhaps others) decided that the best way to

*See http://www.maa.org/mathland/mathland_5_12.html for a history of this curious problem.

identify the errors would be to have the computer do the work for us. We would re-digitize each text *three more times*, use Word's Compare Documents function to identify the differences in the three and reconcile them using the source (the Jockey stage), and then compare the final jockeyed version with the original digitized v-text (the Monkey stage) and reconcile their differences using the source. John recruited me to be in charge of the new version of DD. I was to manage the team of volunteers to produce 3 different digitized versions of each text. Paul has an extensive early article on DD in *COSMOPOLIS* 17.

He and I experimented extensively using pages from *Marune*, trying to optimize the ocr software. Without e-mail this stage would have taken a very long time. In fact, I'm not at all certain the VIE would have been possible without the virtually instant communication e-mail provides. I discovered something about our Editor in Chief: he doesn't sleep. I would send e-mails at 9:00 or 10:00 PM EST and get immediate responses back from him in France, 6 hours ahead of me in time.

Paul preferred to scan in grayscale and then tweak the TIFF files using a picture editor. Grayscale TIFFs are HUGE files and the scanner takes much longer to obtain such a picture. I discovered that I could get the best results from OmniPage by scanning in black and white after carefully adjusting the brightness setting for a book. Old, yellowed paperbacks were an especial trial. Sometimes the paper had deteriorated to the point that the book literally fell apart in your hands as you scanned it. The best originals were the Underwood/Miller texts; they would scan so cleanly that the ocr process produced very few errors.

By the time DD was about half finished, I decided that I was the wrong person to be in charge. I had difficulty delegating responsibility: rather than find a volunteer to digitize a book I would do it myself. I came to realize that I was holding up the VIE team; DD was a bottleneck, slowing us down. After much soul-searching, I asked Paul to find someone else to finish DD and Damien Jones took over its management. He was an exceptionally fine choice and now we are finished with this stage of The Project.

I would like to tell you what I know about the ocr process, now that I have become a world-class expert on the subject, thanks to the VIE ☺. Early on someone (Joel Hedlund?) sent me a copy of TextBridge (TB) to go with OmniPage (OP). Each is a good piece of software but each is flawed in its own way. OP is much better at correctly recognizing a-z and A-Z characters. TB frequently confuses b's and h's, recognizing <hut> as <but> or <he> as <be>. It also sometimes turns <hall> into <hail>, <and> into <arid>, <Ah> into <Ali>, <J> into <j>, and <he> into <lie>. Note that the best spelling checker in the world would not catch a single one of these 'scannos'.

On the other hand, OP is much worse with punctuation. It almost always turns <!> into <l> (ell) or <1> (one) and <"> goes to a random variety of other things: <'> or <,> being the most common. Three and four dot ellipses are transformed into unusual assortments of dots and spaces. (This was also one of TB's few failings with punctuation. Ellipses at the end of a paragraph were frequently not seen.)

Jack's dashes were a strange problem for OP. After getting the output into Word, I noticed that the dash had become something that looked like a dash, except it overlapped the preceding character. If I could determine what that character was, I could do a global search-and-replace to insert an ordinary dash. Unfortunately it would not paste correctly into the Find what: field. Eventually I created a document containing an easily recognized piece of text and placed the strange character in the text. With a hexadecimal file viewer I was able to determine that the offending 'dash' was character 0030, a non-printing control character. I could then search for it by putting ^0030 in the Find what: field in Word's Replace function. If you want to see this character, start Word, switch NumLock on, hold the Alt key down, type 0030 on the number keypad and release the Alt key.

Generally, I scan in black & white, one chapter at a time (two if they are short) and save the resulting images in a multipage TIFF file. This ensures that if there is some mess-up I don't have to do the laborious task of scanning a second time. These files can be used in both ocr programs, so I kill two birds with the same scan. I also scan two facing pages at the same time to minimize scanner passes (which are slow).

The next step in either OP or TB is to zone each page. Basically this is drawing a rectangle (with the mouse) around the text to be recognized. I try to avoid including headers and page numbers as these would have to be removed manually in Word. Both programs have a way to speed up zoning: you set a zoning template to be used on the rest of the document. With either you must then go through the scan one page at a time and tweak the positions of the zones so that each contains the text you want to recognize. Since I have scanned two facing pages at a time, generally there will be two zones per scanned 'page', one for the left side and one for the right. One nasty feature is that the zones for a page are numbered by the software and ocr'ed in sequence. If you erase zone 1 (left side), zone 2 (right side) is promoted to be zone 1. If you then redraw the zone on the left side, it is zone 2. The ocr process then reverses the two pages. So if you erase the left zone, you must erase the right one as well and redraw both in the proper order.

Output from the ocr stage can be formatted anywhere from no formatting to 'true page formatting'. This last setting is to be avoided since it places text in Word into

text boxes, a real mess to deal with. I retain minimal formatting, copy the recognized text into the clipboard and paste it into a blank Word document. The result contains many section and page breaks, optional hyphens, the strange (0030) 'dash' discussed above, peculiar font sizes and formats, and other undesirable features. After fixing several of these by hand, I had a bright (in retrospect, idiotically obvious) idea: create a Word macro to straighten all this out.

I recorded a macro which removed all page and section breaks, all optional hyphens, turned all single and double quotes into 'curly' (smart) quotes, replaced the false dash (0030) with two ordinary hyphens, and changed the font to 12 point Times New Roman. I could now fix the whole document by pressing Alt + v.

The final and lengthiest step is to go through the text rather carefully, correcting 'scannos' as found: misspelled words (careful here: Jack has many idiosyncratic spellings which set off the spelling checker), errors in punctuation, ordinary hyphens which have become double hyphens in the replacement of character 0030, and the like. The last step is to do a global search for the remaining double hyphens and replace them with m-dashes.

Typically, after finishing with an OP scan/ocr of a particular work I would repeat the ocr process using TB. As I said, two ocr's for the price of one scan.

Scan/ocr has proved invaluable for me in the two stories I have done the TI work on, especially *The Miracle Workers*. The evidence documents included a typescript from the Mugar collection, which I believe was the source of the original publication in *Astounding*. A second typescript from Oakland was probably the setting copy for the story's appearance in *Eight Fantasms and Magics*. This was clean enough to digitize and by comparing it with the digitized *Astounding* version using Word's Compare Documents function I was able to spot an interesting omission. Here is the way the paragraph (from Chapter IX) appeared in *Astounding*:

Below the blocks masses of First Folk engaged in various occupations, in the main unfamiliar to the jinxmen. Leaving the wagon in the care of Sam Salazar, Hein Huss and Isak Comandore moved forward among the First Folk, repelled by the stench and the pressure of alien flesh, but drawn by curiosity. They were neither heeded nor halted; they wandered everywhere about the settlement. One area seemed to be an enormous zoo, divided into a number of sections. The purpose of one of these sections—a kind of range two hundred feet long—was all too clear. At one end **three or four First Folk released wasps from tubes; at the other end** a human corpse hung on a rope—a Faide casualty from the battle at the new planting. Certain of the wasps flew straight at the corpse;

just before contact they were netted and removed. Others flew up and away, or veered toward the First Folk who stood along the side of the range. These latter also were netted and killed at once.

In the 8F&M typescript and in all other published editions of the story the passage in red was omitted! Examining the original typescript showed exactly why the omission occurred. In it the second occurrence of <end> had been exactly below the first occurrence of <end>. While she was preparing the second typescript I'm sure Norma's eye just went from the first to the second, leaving out the passage in red:

~~At one end three or~~
~~other end a human~~

Now we know where 'Certain of the wasps' came from!

I am convinced of the utility of the original conception of DD: to provide persons doing TI work with alternative versions of the stories. The general consensus now seems to be that the early pulp editions may be truer to Jack than some of the later reprints which were the source of many of the v-text editions. So let me renew my offer to those of you doing TI work: if you feel that digitizing an alternative version of the story you are working would be helpful, let me know. If I have it or can get it, I would be happy to digitize it for you.



Where Have all the Radios Gone?

Communications in Science Fiction
by Ian Jackson

I should at the outset declare that this composition ought not be taken too seriously. All too often literary works are examined, dissected, interpreted and misinterpreted in ways far beyond the intent of the author. Notwithstanding this, I feel disposed to highlight a logical inconsistency that has haunted me for many years.

As a new teenager in the early 1970s I began to explore the realms of Science Fiction writings. General works of fiction were fine, but science fiction was providing a platform upon which a vast wealth of possibility could be explored. Concurrent with this intrigue was my interest in amateur radio, so often referred to as 'ham radio'. For many, this will immediately conjure up visions of darkened rooms and ancient transceivers with vacuum tubes glowing from within, while distant lands are sought with gusto. While that may be the experience for some, it was not mine.

Like science fiction, the technical aspects of the hobby were a platform for building and experimenting in many different directions. Collectively, these interests were forging a path for my future and so at fifteen, I quit the ineffectual school I had been attending and launched into a career in telecommunications, which is to say that I became an installer of telephones in offices around Melbourne's central business district.

It was by some standards an odd trade. A good deal of time was spent on the phone working regularly with people that I may or may not ever meet. As with Amateur Radio, I had found myself immersed in a realm of connectivity where to converse with a person next to me or a person in a far place became transparent and as one. An abstract and artificial way of life? Perhaps, but by today's standards this is less than exceptional, and even approaches normality. The exponential rise of computer networking and cell phones has irrevocably modified our culture.

This level of interconnectedness forms the basis of my discontent. A goodly portion of the science fiction storytelling I have read inevitably feature characters and heroes within spacecraft or on far-off planets who have languished needlessly and sometimes horribly for the lack of simple communications.

Now having made this statement, I must qualify it. Jack Vance's *Lyonesse* is a fantasy adventure set in times of old. It would hardly be appropriate if the wayward Aillas sought to contact his lost son Dhruon by mounting a nearby hillock and whipping out a VHF transceiver, magical or otherwise. Apart from the inconsistency of the hardware, the *nub* of this and many other stories surrounds the geographic dislocation of the characters. I also understand that you cannot have a castaway on a remote planet with a working radio without compromising the thrust of the tale. Still, as one relates to the characters, a voice within cries "what's the big deal? Why don't you just contact the person you want, and get on with the story?" Alas no, we are doomed to read countless chapters where people are milling about, bouncing between time and place, looking for each other.

The *Dying Earth* stories are perhaps a different issue. Ostensibly these are a fantasy set into the distant future. Magic is in abundance, into this I read that the technology has long since been boiled down into obscure forms whose origins have been lost. Whether we call it old-science or 'magic' is immaterial. I recall the famous quotation: *any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic* and apply it to the context. Were I to confront an isolated native in the highlands of New Guinea with a carpenter's tape measure, would it not be an act of magic to extract 'the long stick' from such a small box?

The plight of *Cugel the Clever* had our hero cast to the far end of the world. Though I read this tale with pleasure, a part of me kept willing our intrepid traveller

to encounter a simple phone booth so that a call for help might improve his situation.

A good portion of our science fiction was put together forty, fifty or more years ago. Imaginative as the writers were, very few of them conceived the tremendous impact that cheap communications was going to have upon our culture. Even the instigation of the VIE project as it has unfolded would have been fanciful reading in the old *Astounding* magazine. Our contributors to the project are scattered around the world, many of whom will never see or speak with their co-workers. Nonetheless, I continue to be annoyed with many stories, with characters flitting from planet to planet in exotic spacecraft, with or without artificial intelligences on board, not many of these people had the foresight to stick a couple of cheap walkie talkie's in their pockets.

Some notable exceptions have risen to the surface. Releases of *Star Trek* in its various guises have explored the boundaries of personal communications quite imaginatively. Everyone seems to have instant contact with everyone else and any vessels that show up in the area. I have found that the many characters of Harry Harrison always seemed to have plenty of links to the people they needed the most.

Another morsel of discontent in science fiction has ties to Amateur Radio. On our own planet we have the concept of 'randomised' contacts whereby we may pop up on a frequency, place a general call and illicit a response from a chance point on the globe. This is thanks to the foibles of HF communications within our ionosphere. More recently, the use of Internet linked UHF repeaters (known as IRLP) sponsored by Amateurs around the world has extended the notion. I am yet to see this concept expanded in any of our Sci-fi futures. In the books we read, do hobbyists set up equipment to take advantages of wormholes and the like to have a random chat with other operators on distant star systems? Do operators seek awards for contacting all planets in a cluster? The potential of the theme is wide, but I cannot recall reading of it.

Perhaps I am alone in my observations, more probably this need for improved communications within stories has occurred to readers from time to time without truly rising to the surface of the mind. Certainly more recent writings in science fiction have been incorporating a high level of individual communications. As more and more of gadgetry becomes embedded in our culture as 'normal', our re-reading of stories of 20-30 years ago has already caused them to slide into a dated category of quaintness that we presently reserve for the likes of Jules Verne and Edgar Rice Burroughs.



J.V. and the Appreciation of Good Food (and Good Wine)

plus the Forgotten Pleasures of Life
by Max Ventura

In my not excessively wide experience as a reader, throughout the years, I have never noticed an author so much concerned with the pictorial representation of food, drink and sybaritic pleasures with the same dedication as Jack Vance.

Pick any of his mature works (meaning any book written after *The Dragon Masters*, which we can regard as his true step into notoriety and maturity), and, some pages into the story, any given character will notice it's time for supper, will probably step into a tavern, an open-air café, to a vendor's cart, and thereupon the author will elaborate for us on the quality and composition of the dishes served, the drinks that go with them, and the after dinner treats.

To begin with, JV calls the act of eating at specific times of the day with a great variety of names, some of them by now forgotten in modern English: supper, collation, repast, refreshment being just some examples.

Let us now analyze why JV puts so much emphasis on food and drink that are both traditional and exotic to the average American culture.

Jack Vance was born an American, and while he did grow up encircled by what was already developing into The Melting Pot culture, he soon took to the seas with the Merchant Marine and his own experiences differed from those of his peers.

When travelling during short-term vacations, Americans rarely adapt to the places they're visiting, for practical reasons, preferring hotels and resorts that somehow replicate the comforts, the choices and the lifestyle they are most accustomed to. Also, their forays into foreign languages are, at most, food-oriented, to the usual annoyance of local waiters. But in the case of Jack Vance, the Marine took him long months away, and he had the proper time to develop real 'relationships' with his ports of call, a chance not normally offered to the casual traveller.

In JV depictions of food, the keen reader discovers more than a casual reference to Mediterranean cooking, with the greatest prevalence for Spanish and French cuisine, rather than Italian or Greek, and even a hearty serving of traditional cooking from the British Isles, all sprinkled by mostly wine, of several qualities but always true and genuine, and types of ales and beers very different from the ones commercially distributed in the United States.

A typical luncheon on the Esplanade at Avente, or at Ys in the Vale Evander, or even on Wyst, may well include any of the following: a serving of lightly fried sardines in a paper cone, followed by a dish of broad beans sauteed with bacon and parsley, a serving of marinated slices of pheasant in a garlic and vinegar sauce, a bowl of percebs (a Galician seasnail) simmered in oil and garlic with white wine, a relish of leeks and onions, half a loaf of crusty new bread sprinkled with thyme and coarse salt, a dessert pudding of apricots and cream, a tankard of brown ale, and a goblet of tawny sweet wine for a finish.

Never do we witness water served at mealtime. Never do we witness someone eating on the run, or while doing something else. On the other hand, Vance almost never names highly alcoholic mixtures or spirits except wine, beer or ale, and sweet liquors such as port or digestives.

The attitude JV has about the meals is similar to that my own late father had, a Sicilian man transplanted in Milan who separated himself from the dinner table a good 45 minutes after I, a restless youth, had quickly ingurgitated my portions and raced to business elsewhere.

The meal on a terrace overlooking a city square, or a portion of beach, is a Vance fascination: in fact, he often depicts such moments, as well as the opposite ones, like a warming meal taken in a cozy tavern, in front of a sparkling fire, in from a cold and windy night on the moors.

Let us for a moment remember the magician Shimrod and his half-witch belle, Melanthe, when he says to her that "a simple dish of mussels, sauteed with white wine and garlic, served with a loaf of crusty bread, is a dish people of good sense eat". They take their meal, thereafter, on the open terrace of her seafront villa, a tremendously Hellenic image of Mediterranean languidity and aesthetics.

For Vance, meals and snacks, when the time allows, are a most important part of the day, and he takes pain in identifying each one and placing it correctly in the span of the day: the breakfast in the morning is derived straight from the Anglo-Saxon tradition, with sausages, eggs, porridge, bacon, ham, sweetcakes and juices; whereas Mediterranean people prefer a simple milk & coffee or cappuccino with cookies or donuts, and only rarely do they allow anything salty at that time in the morning. The lunch is taken when the sun is high in the sky, therefore between 12 noon and 1 pm, and it is generally quicker than breakfast or dinner, with a serving of meats, either coldcuts or recently grilled, and a wash of beer or ale, with some fruit for dessert. But it's at supper time that we encounter the magnificence of Vance's descriptions, what with stuffed fowls, suckling pigs roasted over fire with cinnamon apples and onions, pickled salmon and fresh flounders poached in wine, carafes of soft white wine, sweetmeats and a cornucopia

of fruits, even some extinct ones, puddings, tarts and cakes.

Largely, as I pointed out earlier in this article, Jack Vance draws from the West-Mediterranean tradition of cooking; being Italian myself, and being a former chef in one of my previous incarnations, I can recognize no Italian cooking in his books, but I do recognize a wealth of Northern-Spanish dishes, in particular Cantabrian and Galician ones (me and the missus spent our honeymoon in Galicia, summer 2002), Provençal ones (Provence is in the south of France and its herb-ridden cooking can somewhat resemble middle-Italian cuisine), ancient English tavern food (pork and mutton pies, stews, stuffed game), some Northern European dishes (preserved and pickled fish), and even German and Eastern-European meats and coldcuts, which are not typical of the Mediterranean area.

Curiously, we seem not to encounter any Oriental cuisine in Vance's books, although Jack travelled far in the South Pacific and the Indies, and Chinese/Japanese food is widely accepted in the States and Britain; we encounter no rice dishes, no soy-based influences, no coconut or palm ingredients, and also Caribbean and South-American flavours are totally absent from his writings.

Speaking of drinks, Jack relies mostly on wine, using the word also as a substitute for 'beverage' in general, which is the same way our ancestors used to define it: bread and wine as a synonym for food and drink, even though we realize that, obviously, most of a man's intake of drink must be water if he wishes to continue living. The wines JV mentions are normally of three kinds: hearty and robust reds, which are common in any country in the world nowadays; soft whites, which are a bit less common being more prone to early acidity than reds; and sweet dessert wines, which, although commonly found in any bar of the world, are almost exclusively vinted in Spain and Italy. The beers and ales he describes are not Bud or the like, nor are they the microbrews so much in fashion on the East Coast these days; they are, in truth, mostly Scottish, Belgian and Danish productions that we have in abundance in Europe, but that rarely cross the Atlantic. So we reckon he met them here in Europe, while travelling, as he did for most of his recipes. Jack Vance did not derive his taste for food from American cuisine, that's a fact.

We realize at this point that Jack Vance has specific tastes and makes them all too clear to us. Also, we realize that he definitely pushes forward to us specific foods and never mentions others that strangely enough are much more popular in our world.

An example: here's the king of the Vancian table: the Turnip.

Turnips pop up everywhere across the Gaeen Reach, the Dying Earth, the Elder Isles, and Beyond. We find turnips and leeks paired together in most meals. Never do

we see carrots, lettuce, broccoli, cucumbers, eggplants, peas or spinach.

The turnip, a root somewhat similar to a carrot but of a different taste and colour, and the leek, a hybrid of onion, celery and possibly asparagus, are definitely not the rage of today's international cooking. In fact, you'd be very hard pressed to find a turnip at your local grocer's. We can reckon those veggies to be more related to our grandparents' diet than ours; I have, for a fact, never chanced upon a turnip in the last 10 years at least, not in a restaurant, not at a grocer's, nor at anybody's house. Leeks? Barely more present than turnips.

And what about rice? Two-thirds of the world population sustain themselves on this grain, but I do not recall any mention of it in any Vance tale. I might be mistaken, of course, but I believe in essence this to be true.

Some other interesting views Jack Vance has in some of his books are the sad situations when someone eats alone and has no company (the lonely, cold meals in *Marune*, where eating is considered a private act equal to voiding), and JV makes a point of that; or the long hours spent by someone just sitting idly by the fire, or by the porch, cracking walnuts and sipping sweet wine (a favourite pastime of King Casmir of Lyonesse). Those are situations so typical of bygone times as to bring once again to my mind the memories of my late father, who indulged in the same cracking of nuts for ages, a pastime now totally unknown to the younger generations of bumpkins skipping to the nearest cheeseburger joint for a quick fix of saturated, artificial fats.



You Have Done It!

VIE Work Credits

Compiled by Hans van der Veeke

Because few texts have reached the 'Golden Master Ready' stage in the past few months there has been a hiatus in COSMOPOLIS. But now, with work progressing steadily again, a new set of credits is ready!

But first things first; since the publication of Wave 1 it has come to our attention that certain credits were incomplete, and that some people who should have been mentioned in certain volumes, were forgotten. This is a problem we take with great seriousness; we are extremely sorry this has happened and we will do all we can to make amends. However, avoiding this situation is exactly why we publish *You Have Done It!* We regard it as our responsibility to give full credit to all volunteers, but this task is impossible for us to do alone. Please review the draft credits presented in COSMOPOLIS with care!

Regarding credits not given I want to mention the following omissions:

Deborah Cohen (not unknown to some of us! In fact I took over phases of work she had been doing when I started with the VIE!) did RTF/Diff on *The Narrow Land*.

Axel Roschinsky post-proofed *The Deadly Isles*.

Mark Bradford did an RTF/Diff pass on *Where Hesperus Falls*.

These omissions have been corrected of course, for inclusion in volume 44.

A special mention goes to Joel Hedlund. Joel has been involved in the project longer than most people can remember and in the early days credit tracking wasn't yet what it has since become. Back then Joel worked at a job, since discontinued, called 'XIF-ing'. Joel did a lot (and I mean a *lot!*) of XIF-ing, and got credit for not a single of these jobs in the Wave 1 volume work credits. Again, we are very sorry about this! However, they will be accounted for in the detailed work description that will be included in volume 44.

Other mistakes were also made, including spelling errors. Let it be noted that it should have been Fred Zoetemeyer not Zoetmeyer, and Hervé Goubin's name ought to have had an accent on his 'e'! Again, apologies; and we will strive to do better in the future.

In order to lessen my personal responsibility for these embarrassing failures I will mention that I am not the

only one involved in credit verification. They are, first of all, based on record keeping by team leaders. Then they are distributed and classified on Suan's gigantic Database-of-all-VIE-related-stuff. Furthermore, once the lists have been set up, they get a going over by Robin Rouch herself, for which I am very thankful because she filters out all stupid mistakes made by me! Lastly, you yourself are a crucial link; please review the *You Have Done It!* draft credits as if your personal reputation were at stake!

Some may wonder when a text is ready for the *You Have Done It!* feature? Until now the cut-off was after Post-proofing was finished. But since then it has become clear that, on occasion, post Post-proofing other tasks sometimes need doing! There have been post Post-proofing composition issues for example, so another Composition Review is then needed as well as a supplemental RTF/Diff pass. When, in theory, everything is really and truly *done* a text achieves the status: 'Golden Master'. It is this *event* which signifies the normal *finished* date.

Back to business then. Here are the new credits. *Check your name!* A misspelling here may indicate a misspelling in our database, and thereafter in the books themselves. We don't want to spell your name wrong, or leave off a Jr. or Esq., or to overlook you altogether! For any corrections, contact Hans van der Veeke at hans@vie.tmfweb.nl

The Howling Bounders

Finished 4 March 2003

Digitizer

Luk Schoonaert

Special reformatting

John A. Schwab

Pre-proofers

Ron Chernich
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DD-Scanners

Charles King
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Dave Worden

DD-Jockey

Hans van der Veeke

DD-Monkey

Charles King

Technoproofer

Bob Moody

TI

Rob Friefeld
Paul Rhoads
Steve Sherman

Implementation

Donna Adams
Hans van der Veeke

Composition

Joel Anderson

RTF-diffing

Charles King
Bill Schaub

Composition Review

Marcel van Genderen
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Bob Luckin
Paul Rhoads
Robin L. Rouch

Post-proofing

"Penwipers"

Rob Friefeld (team manager)

Robert Collins

Andrew Edlin

Tony Graham

Rob Knight

Betty Mayfield

Errico Rescigno

Mike Schilling

Carl Spalletta



Four Hundred Blackbirds

Finished 27 March 2003

Digitizer

Kyle Scott McAbee

Pre-proofers

Lisa Brown
David Gorbet

DD-Scanner

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Dave Worden

DD-Jockey

Damien G. Jones

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Bill Schaub

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Marcel van Genderen
Bob Luckin

Correction Validation

Charles King
Rob Friefeld
Paul Rhoads

Post-proofing

"Sandestins"

Jeffrey Ruzszczyk (team manager)

Deborah Cohen

Michael Duncan

Sue Manning

Mark J. Straka



The Potters of Firsk
Finished 31 March 2003

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Joel Riedesel
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Sub-standard Sardines
Finished 22 April 2003

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Pre-proofers
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DD-Jockey
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The Phantom Milkman
Finished 23 April 2003

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Encystment"
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Bob Moody
Axel Roschinski
Bill Sherman
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The House Lords
Finished 29 April 2003

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DD-Jockey
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Greg Delson
Patrick Dymond
Charles King
Roderick MacBeath
Michael Mitchell
Gabriel Stein
Fred Zoetemeyer



Maske:Thaery

Finished 21 May 2003

Digitizer

Bill Schmaltz

Special reformatting

John A. Schwab

Pre-proofers

Jeffrey Ruszczyk

Steve Sherman

Suan Hsi Yong

DD-Scanners

Richard Chandler

Huy Dinh

Peter Strickland

DD-Jockey

David Reitsema

DD-Monkey

Suan Hsi Yong

Technoproofer

Patrick Dusoulrier

TI

Patrick Dusoulrier

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Steve Sherman

Implementation

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Hans van der Veeke

Composition

Andreas Irle

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Charles King

Bill Schaub

Composition Review

Christian J. Corley

Marcel van Genderen

Charles King

Correction Validation

Joel Anderson

Charles King

Robert Melson

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"Penwipers"

Rob Friefeld (team manager)

Bob Collins

Andrew Edlin

Tony Graham

Rob Knight

Errico Rescigno

Mike Schilling



The Pleasant Grove

Murders

Finished 2 June 2003

Digitizer

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Pre-proofers

Michel Bazin

Christian J. Corley

Till Noever

DD-Scanners

Mark Adams

Billy Webb

Dave Worden

DD-Jockey

Hans van der Veeke

DD-Monkey

David A. Kennedy

Technoproofer

Hans van der Veeke

Special tasks

John A. Schwab

TI

Paul Rhoads

Steve Sherman

Tim Stretton

Implementation

Derek W. Benson

Hans van der Veeke

Composition

Andreas Irle

RTF-diffing

Mark Bradford

Errico Rescigno

Composition Review

Marcel van Genderen

Brian Gharst

Charles King

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Rob Friefeld

Marcel van Genderen

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Robin L. Rouch

Post-proofing

"Dragon Masters"

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Angus Campbell-Cann

Marcel van Genderen

Yannick Gour

Erec Grim

Jasper Groen

Jurriaan Kalkman

Willem Timmer

Hans van der Veeke

Dirk-Jan Verlinde



Wave One Kudos

from Around the World

compiled by Suan Yong

By the way I am absolutely thrilled with the books overall. Money well spent.

Thanks very much,

— *Brooks Peck* (California, USA)

I'd just like to take the opportunity to thank the VIE team for giving me the chance to own such works of art. The printing, the binding and the typeface are all magnificent in my eyes, and I await the next 22 volumes with bated breath.

I'm inestimably indebted to all of you for your hard work and your loving care . . .

Best regards,

— *Mike Ralston* (Scotland, UK)

You may (or you may not) be interested to know that after a journey across the world, that commenced as a shared vision and a cooperative effort of scores of people working around the world, that became physical reality in Milan, my share of which then went on a storm-tossed container vessel to the US, there to be separated out and,

carefully packed and sent by surface to Singapore, the books made it to my local post office, which is about 150 yards away from my office.

They refused to deliver it and invited me to come get it myself. It is, apparently too heavy for the Singapore Postal Service to manage. Back to earth with a bump.

Regards,

— *Martin Green* (Singapore)

The books really do look good. I bought one of each edition intending to use one and store the other as an investment. Now I want to read and keep both of them.

— *Mark Shoulder* (Hong Kong)

Well, it took 10 weeks but it's finally here—and just in time for weekend reading.

My wife and kids couldn't understand the fuss I was making slobbering over the books.

A job well done guys and many, many thanks from an appreciative fan.

— *Rahim Din* (Malaysia)

I am very pleased to advise that Wave One has finally made it down-under!

I have checked them all, no page errors detected, and all books are in great shape after their 2 and a half month journey from New Jersey.

The quality of the product is apparent, as is the functionality of AMIANTE and the books themselves. Delightful to see that the VIE is achieving what it set out to do.

Kind regards,

—Fred Zoetemeyer (New South Wales, Australia)



About the CLS

by Till Noever

CLS22 will be published together with this issue of Cosmopolis. It contains more of *Dragonchaser*, by Tim Stretton, as well as the beginning of *Finister*, by Till Noever.



Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

I am still puzzling over the Rhoads phenomenon.

As I was skimming over his *From the E-i-C*, very, very lightly of course since I have to watch my blood pressure, I couldn't help noticing the following: "It can be noted at this point that George Bush is the Constitutionally elected president of the freest people on earth . . .", another excellent illustration of what Rhoads takes for granted. Now the habit in American academia to preface any statement by the words "I think that . . ." infuriates me and I am not reproaching Rhoads for not conforming. On the other hand, it may also be noted that not everybody will grant him (1) that Bush II was elected and (2) that Americans are the freest people on earth, as Rhoads ought to know better than to identify a country with its top 1 per cent, also known as its ruling class, a quite evocative, if by now *démodé* term. Would Rhoads say that the Athenians were the freest people of their time or would he allow that only their ruling class was?

And then there is the fact that I don't like to be assimilated to either the French or the American ruling class or their intellectual lackeys (I love the term). When he mentions "The opinion expressed by almost all [. . .] intellectuals in France . . ." I am annoyed: I consider myself a Franco-American intellectual but *their* interests are not mine and my interests are not theirs. For instance, when Rhoads mentions the "intellectual giving a conference in which he condemned [. . .] Lincoln" and says "Lincoln being one of the greatest statesmen in

history", I wonder in what sense he thinks it is of relevance to me. And, aside from the fact that it *has* been plausibly argued that the Civil War was fought over which would be the ruling class—that controlling cotton or that wishing to control textiles, why should I be interested in the opinion of such 'intellectuals'? I will rest *that* case after pointing out that there is no French equivalent of the *New York Review of Books* and of the *London Review of Books* and that, unfortunately, *Le Monde* is now trying to emulate the *New York Times*.

Finally though, Rhoads' "they agree that cowboy-George and the U.S. cavalry are running amok" raised two questions in my mind: might he be hinting that Chirac et. al. do not represent 99% of the French and that he, Rhoads, too thinks that "cowboy George and the U.S. cavalry are running amok"? If indeed, then I will confess to having loathed, inter alia, Mitterrand and Kennedy as much as Chirac and Bush.

In the May 1, 2003, NYRB, T. Judt wrote *Anti-Americans Abroad*, a review of seven French books on about what 'motivates French opposition to America' and I can't resist quoting the opening paragraph:

If you want to understand how America appears to the world today, consider the sport-utility vehicle. Oversized and overweight, the SUV disdains negotiated agreements to restrict atmospheric pollution. It consumes inordinate quantities of scarce resources to furnish its privileged inhabitants with supererogatory services. It exposes outsiders to deadly risk in order to provide for the illusory security of its occupants. In a crowded world, the SUV appears as a dangerous anachronism. Like U.S. foreign policy, the sport-utility vehicle comes packaged in sonorous mission statements; but underneath it is just an oversized pickup truck with too much power.

By the way, I think that it's there that Judt mentions that 20% of the people in the US assume that they are part of the top 1% and that the next 20% are sure that they will make it into the said 1%.

Having already spent a lot of space, I am afraid that I cannot do Till Noever justice. Still, I wish he had acknowledged that, appearances to the contrary, most people actually going to war do not do so of their own free will but on that of their ruling class. In 1914, even though both the French and the Germans were singing on their way to the front, they were sent there and woe on those few who resisted. And, permit me to doubt the American ruling class' (very belated) 'good intentions' and to persist in thinking that controlling who was going to get oil in the future was more in the cards. Of course, *they* don't need it for themselves, thank you, but you wouldn't want, say, the Japanese and/or the German ruling classes, not to mention the French, Italian, etc. (Blair

would ask . . . should his ruling class need it.) to be able to help themselves without asking *them* would you?

Regards,

Alain Schremmer

P.S. May I suggest that Cliff Abrams lease the copyrights to the VIE and publish it in his preferred font? He could even do that in a *Pleade* format as, for instance, Einaudi, Artemis or Bompiani are doing. I would buy it. Again, AMIANTE is perhaps a bit *désuet* but, having been hammered to death by Times, New Roman or not, I am hardly objective at this point.



To the Editor,

I've just finished skimming my way through the entire back catalog of COSMOPOLIS, an endeavor that has taken the better part of a week. The experience has left me exhausted, but as with the apostle John in his cell, has resulted in a vision. At first it seemed inexplicable to me that a project devoted to the works of Jack Vance—wherein religion is portrayed at best as exemplifying the fecundity of human imagination, and at worst, as sheerest human folly and delusion—should have as its primary spokesperson an avowed Catholic apologist. How could the works of as exquisite a puncturer of human hubris as Vance have become so inextricably associated with a man who with a straight face can assert that the popularization of the Vancian oeuvre can save Western Civilization from the scourges of materialism, modernism, socialism, and science? Was I the only one to whom Mr. Rhoads seemed to have more than a whiff of the crank about him, not to mention the blinkered fanboy? Was it only me who winced when Mr. Rhoads with apparent unself-consciousness refers both to his own thwarted ambitions in the artistic marketplace, and to the evil hegemony of modernist art? Or when after being offered the works of other modern authors and casting a critical eye on them, he concludes with laughable predictability that Vance is *simply the bestest*? Did it seem only to me that he was managing to find, in Vance, (and at extraordinary length) pretty much *anything he wanted* in the service of grinding his peculiar axes?

But then I realized what was *really* going on, and boy, did I feel stupid. Far from being an embarrassment, I realized what Mr. Rhoads' COSMOPOLIS performance is: *farce*. It's a brilliant one too, as mordant as any Vance himself could come up with. Mr. Rhoads is playing a Vancian character, one of those comic popinjays puffed up with their own righteousness, that Vance loves to offer in contrast to his skeptical, reserved, down-to-earth protagonists.

Previously I could not help feeling a sense of protective dread for my favorite author as I turned the virtual pages of the 'zine ostensibly devoted to his

Integral Edition, wondering what tortured polemical use his work would be put to *next*. Now that I'm 'in on the joke' as it were, I look forward to future issues as keenly as Dirdir to the hunt.

Steven Sullivan



To the Editor,

First I would like to thank the Editor for his explanation of posting policy in regard to who has access to letters before publication and how and when replies are made. I am reassured by this clarification.

I originally penned a reply to Paul Rhoads' letter to be included in the last edition of COSMOPOLIS; however, events intervened and I withdrew it from publication. This present letter can be viewed as a second draught of my original letter. There have been movements offstage of which I am only partially aware, plus a good deal of acrimony, and some revelations, on the various Vance-related BBS sites. The upshot of which is the cry, to paraphrase the patriotic slogan of the French revolutionary period, "*La VIE en danger!*" has been raised. I mention this merely to state that whatever is threatening the VIE project, it has (and will have) no influence upon the subjects I intend to write about. Some things are more important than the VIE, and are more important than the ego of any one person, myself included.

Before entering the body of my main argument I will make a couple of personal observations. In Mr. Rhoads' reply to my first letter I was characterised as a "snake" and "vermin." I shall not reply in kind. I have never engaged in the exchange of puerile insults and I shall not start now. I merely note that Mr. Rhoads has shown himself, whatever else he may be, to be no gentleman. My original letter was critical of Mr. Rhoads, it was meant to be, but it did not contain insulting language. Both Mr. Rhoads and Mr. Lacovara seem to be laboring under a misapprehension, namely that I am part of some sort of conspiracy. This is not the case; I noted in my original letter that I have had no private correspondence with Mr. Rhoads, I can add to this that before I wrote my first letter I had had no private correspondence with any person whatsoever on this matter. All my opinions up to that point had been expressed in public, on Mike Berro's website (now under new management).

In his letter Mr. Rhoads accuses me of attaching a number of unpleasant 'labels' to him: that he denies the Holocaust and that he is a neo-Nazi to mention but two. If he steels himself to re-read my letter he will find that I have done no such thing. The best case that could be made against me on this count is that of applying the 'neo-Nazi' label. However, the term I used was 'neo-Fascist,' and that was only in reference to Jean-Marie Le Pen and his party.

In the course of some rather snarling exchanges on the Vance BBS, Mr. Rhoads made a couple of direct statements, to the effect that he found Hitler's crimes hideous, and that he did not support Le Pen and the *Front National*. In the light of these statements, which I have no reason to doubt in any way, I wish to retract any suggestion I may have made to the effect that Mr. Rhoads did not find Hitler's crimes objectionable and that he actively supported Le Pen. I am reasonably certain that Mr. Rhoads, in his zeal to put forward his arguments that the scale and gravity of Communist crimes have not been fully recognised and that Le Pen and his party have been over-demonized, seriously overplayed his rhetoric with unfortunate results. I admit that I and other readers, not inhabited by the same very focused zealotry that Mr. Rhoads displays, may have interpreted his writings in a different manner than he intended.

Having said this, the words Mr. Rhoads committed to paper still stand and have to be addressed as they appear. Having apologized to Mr. Rhoads for any mis-interpretation I may have made as to his intentions when he was writing his articles in COSMOPOLIS, I asked him to make a similar clarification of his position here. He declined to do so, interpreting my invitation as some form of attack.

Mr. Rhoads wrote his contentious articles in a public forum, COSMOPOLIS, he therefore could only expect that anyone disagreeing with his statements would also do so in public. Indeed he has gone on record, more than once, as saying that the place for people to write critiques of his articles is indeed within COSMOPOLIS. Having taken this invitation at face value I found that Mr. Rhoads, in response to my critique, heaped insulting epithets on me. My motives were also questioned, though I think I spelled them out reasonably clearly. These were to point out that the unpleasant atmosphere surrounding Mr. Rhoads could be effectively diffused by an apology from him for having caused offence to a number of COSMOPOLIS readers by his airing of various of his political hobbyhorses.

In his letter Mr. Rhoads challenged me to quote some of the statements I have found objectionable back to him; I am very willing to oblige. For the sake of other readers I have kept them as brief as possible, all italicised passages are quotes from Mr. Rhoads' writings in COSMOPOLIS.

Even if the blatantly false Hitler-Stalin,'right'-'left' equivalence were true, if you add up war casualties and death-camp tolls, while Hitler is responsible for some 20 million murders, this is only some 20% of the ravages caused by only those Marxists the Left permits us to label as such.

This is perhaps one of the most objectionable of Mr. Rhoads' statements. In order to beat his readership over the head with his contention that Communism has been let off lightly for its atrocities by 'History and current opinion' he makes this odious comparison. Leaving aside

the questionable numbers involved (the 100 million people 'Marxists' appear to have murdered is a number greater than the whole population of modern Germany, or Japan) this quote appears to infer that Hitler's crimes were a mere fifth as horrible as those of Stalin and Mao. I find the whole idea of relative frightfulness when applied to genocide unpleasant, and any assertion which appears to diminish the horror of Hitler's atrocities, even relatively, repugnant.

Hitler, radically worse than Stalin? Fascism, radically worse than Communism? Why is it worse to commit mass murder with industrial methods than use the low-tech pistol-bullet-in-head method, on the basis of class?

Well Mr. Rhoads, yes, probably, and I will answer the last question at more length later.

As to the probably, indeed as Mr. Rhoads says, in terms of repression of freedom and crimes against humanity the Fascists and Communists are both guilty. As to which ideology is 'worse' in a fundamental way then I would definitely say Fascism. In its basic tenet, never honoured in the breach, Communism asserts a universal brotherhood of people, and that all are equal. As I said this was never really honoured, but the basic principles are, in many ways, admirable. The basic tenet of Fascism, and more particularly Nazism, is that 'We' (nation, race, culture-group) are the best, all others are wanting in some way and are inferior and should be treated as such. This idea allows, and indeed encourages, those perceived to be 'other' to be treated as less than fully human. This is the central node of malignity that led to the slave-workers and Auschwitz. At its heart Fascism is objectionable in a way that Communism is not.

I would imagine that the majority of informed opinion in the world looks on Hitler's crimes as worse than Stalin's, and for very good reason. Although Stalin's crimes were of greater extent than those perpetrated by autocratic rulers throughout history, their nature was little different. They may have been carried out under the guise of ideals or politics but in reality they were very pragmatic. Stalin killed those he perceived as a direct threat to his power or, indirectly, to the apparatus which kept him in power. It is merely the fact that he had access to mid-twentieth century bureaucratic organisation, weaponry, communications and transport which allowed his death toll to be so great. If an earlier 'Autocrat of all the Russias' Ivan the Terrible had had Stalin's resources his murders would have been as great, though, as far as I know, Ivan was never a card carrying Communist.

In contrast Hitler's crimes were overwhelmingly motivated by ideals; he was a true fanatic. Not only did Hitler make use, like Stalin, of modern methods to increase the scale of his crimes, he perverted modern civilization itself. He perverted Darwinian theory, anthropology, eugenics, medicine and industrial methods variously to support the ideals which underpinned his

crimes, or his methods of carrying them out. Hitler's crimes were more horrific in that the vast majority of their victims were not chosen because of what they did, thought, or with whom they associated, but because of who they were. Most of the people of Russia who kept their heads down and toed the official line could be relatively confident that they would not be targeted. Not so those who lived under Hitler's Nazi regime, a mere accident of birth, being a Jew, Romany, or having a congenital disability either physical or mental would target you for death. This was true inhumanity. Stalin's crimes were monstrous, but Hitler's were of an unparalleled and depraved evil. And yes the industrial scale, the factory-like processing of the victims, the soap made from human fat, the chiseling out of gold from their mouths, the skin lampshades, yes they do make Hitler's crime more ghastly. Yes indeed!

In the nineteen-thirties, another Marxist, Adolph Hitler, came to power and also tried to take over the world.

Admittedly this is just wrong-headed on Mr. Rhoads' part rather than being objectionable, but in all conscience I couldn't let it lie. Forgive me, but I had the distinct impression that a basic tenet of Marxism was 'the appropriation by the people of the means of production', this to be achieved by the nationalisation of industry and the collectivisation of agriculture. The owners, directors and shareholders of companies such as Krupp, Henschel, Porsche etc. etc., and the many thousands of landowners and private farmers in Nazi Germany, must have been quite unaware that they were living in a Marxist State.

To turn to historically more recent matters, there is Mr. Rhoads' defence of Jean-Marie Le Pen and his party the *Front National*. I use the word defence advisedly, as Mr. Rhoads has stated that he does not support this politician or his party. In this he has been very prolix so I will use only a couple of short snippets.

Le Pen may, or may not be a good choice for President, but the idea that he is Hitlerian, or that the Front National is fascist — as the French Left, parroted by the leftified 'French Right', insists — is perfectly ridiculous.

Mr. Rhoads, says, in his own words, that even some of the French political Right class Le Pen and his party as Fascist. If such a broad spectrum of French political opinion considers this to be the case then perhaps they are correct. If it walks like a duck, quacks and lays eggs then maybe it is a duck. If a political party trades on ultra nationalism, xenophobia, racism, repression of civil liberties, is in favour of hang'em and flog'em punishments (or in this case guillotine'em...) then perhaps it is Fascistic. Mr. Rhoads also wrote a section on how reasonable the election manifesto of the *Front National* appears to be. Presumably Hitler, who was voted into power, did not mention in his manifesto a desire to exterminate the Jews, and plunge Germany into a war that would flatten most of its cities and kill millions of its

population. Or, in short, does anyone believe the election promises of any political party? Can Mr. Rhoads be so disingenuous as to give the *Front National's* promises any particular credence?

The Leftist controlled justice system is non-existent for predatory criminals — mostly Arab, 'sad to say', a fact ineptly masked by the media. . .

This is crude racial stereotyping; I certainly find it objectionable as it stands. In order to make such a statement and not have it interpreted, or misinterpreted, as prejudiced one has to back it up with facts. If the above quote could be supported by a statement such as "50.1 % of all prosecutions for 'predatory crimes' (this would have to be defined closely) in France in the last year were of people of Arab origin" then there would be no room for misinterpretation.

At present there is a resurgence of extreme nationalism and extreme right-wing politics in Europe. It is not difficult to find the cause of this: poor economic performance, recession and high levels of unemployment. These stressful conditions make it easy for those of Fascistic views to work on the dissatisfaction and unhappiness of people, particularly the less well educated, which they channel against outsiders, especially the outsiders within. Those who manipulate people towards hatred are of two main types: those who believe in the lies and half-truths they peddle for whatever (usually personal) reasons, and those who are merely cynical and power hungry.

Whatever the motivation of these people their extreme rhetoric is dangerous, it creates the environment where Turkish families can be burned alive in their own houses in Germany or where a youth can be stabbed at a bus stop in London simply for being black.

Indeed in my own home town last year the activities of the British fascistic party 'The British National Party' (BNP), once known as the 'National Front' (*Front National?*), led to traumatic 'race riots' breaking out.

My reason for writing these lines now is not that I have a personal grudge against Paul Rhoads, I have never met him so how could I? Though I have no doubt that he sees it this way. No indeed, the reason for me writing is that Mr. Rhoads' opinions, as expressed in COSMOPOLIS, can be construed as part of a dangerous continuum, the 'thin end of the wedge', if you like. Mr. Rhoads has intimated that some of his writings have been misinterpreted; I imagine that he considers my selections and interpretations here as being gross distortions of what he intended. However, I am certainly not the only reader of COSMOPOLIS who has a similar understanding of these articles. This suggests that Mr. Rhoads has written in a manner that invites misinterpretation; if he truly wishes to silence criticism of his political writings he needs to make a clarification of his views in COSMOPOLIS. This clarification, in order to be effective, would need to

be clear, concise and unambiguous. If Mr. Rhoads' opinions, as they appear on the page, are not challenged then the silence of the audience may be taken as approval, or at least acquiescence.

It has come to my attention that a number of people have been exerting themselves to defend Mr. Rhoads from criticism; I would suggest that Mr. Rhoads is a grown man and should be allowed to defend himself. There is also a suggestion that criticisms of Mr. Rhoads are some form of attack on the VIE itself, as though Louis XIV's statement "L'Etat, c'est moi!" applied here. This cannot be supported by any reasonable analysis of the facts, unless there are hidden ramifications that have not been made public.

It seems clear to me that Mr. Rhoads' misfortunes are essentially of his own making, it is a pity for him and all the other people connected to the VIE that he cannot find the quality of character within himself to admit that he may have been to any degree unwise, rash or even imprecise in the content of his writing. He wrote to criticise the sins of the various Communist regimes, but no one was lauding or defending these regimes in COSMOPLIS; he wrote to defend Le Pen and his party from demonization, but no one was demonizing them in COSMOPOLIS. Mr. Rhoads gave in to his proselytizing zeal when and where it was wholly inappropriate. He cannot really be surprised that his idiosyncratic, and yes, extreme views have provoked criticism.

A namesake of mine once said, "I have a dream!" Mr. Rhoads seems to be saying, "I have a nightmare!" It is just a pity he chose to share his nocturnal perturbations with the readership of COSMOPOLIS.

Martin Read

P.S. I intended to answer Mr. Lacovara's letter in detail, but consider that I have trespassed on the attention of the readers of COSMOPOLIS enough.



To the Editor,

Regarding Cliff Abrams; giving his silly letter the whack it needed, I calculated I would be safe from counter blows thanks to his incapacity to decipher AMIANTE—the font in which COSMOPOLIS is published. Cliff's secretary must read COSMOPOLIS aloud to him while he eats lunch.

As to Alain Schremmer, I hope one day to take advantage of his repeatedly offered hospitality. Meanwhile regarding his disputing my statement: "*I cannot say how many Frenchmen I know who . . . believe that a significant segment of the American population . . . [dies] on the streets . . .*"; to borrow Cliff Abrams' formula: 'that's my story and I'm sticking to it!' I do not know the exact number, but lots and lots of them for sure! Apparently Alain Schremmer is

not among them. It is a truth universally acknowledged that 40,000,000 Frenchmen can't be wrong, but what about just one Frenchman—like Alain Schremmer?

Andy Gilham's remark is somewhat cryptic though I strongly suspect he fails to share my expressed sentiments. In this case, by contrast, he would seem to wish to dishonor the American founding fathers, to curse America, and hope bad luck will overtake the coalition administrators in Iraq. I can only hope my suspicion is unfounded.

All joshing aside, I wish to acknowledge, on my own behalf as well as for the many VIE volunteers who, though less voluble, are just as, or even more, hard working and meritorious as I like to think I am, how happy we all are at the strongly expressed contentment at the fruits of our labors. They have been long, and difficult, and will continue to be both, though we do hope to deliver the final 22 books, as well as full sets of 44 to all new subscribers, sometime in 2004.

With your continued support and encouragement perhaps we shall!

Paul Rhoads



To the Editors,

I have received my books, and they are wonderful. Many thanks to all involved, and congratulations. Vance is now richer and deeper than ever, and I am holding and beholding beautiful volumes. Bravo!

George Rhoads



Closing Words

Thanks to proofreaders Rob Friefeld and Jim Pattison.

COSMOPOLIS Submissions: when preparing articles for COSMOPOLIS, please refrain from fancy formatting. Send plain text. For COSMOPOLIS 41, please submit articles and Letters to the Editor to Derek Benson: benson@online.no Deadline for submissions is July 28.

Derek W. Benson, Editor

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