
C O S M O P O L I S

Number 13

January-February, 2001

Contents

- 1 Down With the Dark Ages!
Will the Popularization of Jack Vance Save the West from Plunging into a New Dark Age?
 - 4 It's Bright, Fast, and Goes West to East
The Space Station
 - 5 DD
Double Digitizing Update
 - 6 PP
Proofreading Update and Pre- and PostProofing
 - 7 Letters to the Editor
Russ Wilcox
 - 9 Notes
Downpayment Pre-Info/ Email Policy/ Miscellaneous
-

Will the Popularization of Jack Vance Save the West from Plunging into a New Dark Age?

The question is not as ridiculous as it may appear to some. To answer it, before we get to Vance's possible rôle, we must have an idea of what it is that wants saving, and whether it should even be saved. There is a great deal of half-baked anti-westernism among us, which is a sad-denying trend, and an important part of the problem. Western Civilization, of course, is the essence of what distinguishes Western society from other societies, as well as from the famous (and only theoretical) 'State of Nature'. Western Civilization has little to do with 'Western barbarism'. The latter is simply natural barbarism, aided and abetted by that typically Western tool: science. Science, in its origins as well as its stupendously

successful current manifestation (modern technology), is an aspect of Western Civilization related to a characteristic unique to it: openness. Openness to nature and its phenomena, as well as to other societies and civilizations, creates the 'cultural space' in which science can develop. Other civilizations, by contrast, are closed: rooted, or stuck, in tradition. The multitude of societies which have, over the centuries, adopted Western Civilization to whatever degree, have, in the course of doing so, slowly had their attachment to tradition loosened by this adoption. I hasten to point out that openness and tradition are not simple opposites. Openness is only the enemy of falsehood, and traditions are not necessarily based on false things. Openness, in the true sense, tends to destroy traditions not based upon truth.

Western Civilization, it can be argued, begins with Socrates. Socrates was brought to trial, and condemned to death, by Athens. He was accused of corrupting the youth, by teaching that the gods of Athens did not exist. In fact Socrates did not teach this idea, but it is easy to see how the traditional Athenians came to believe that he did. Socrates' mind and spirit were open. This openness made him 'critical' (in the strict sense of the word) of tradition, but not disrespectful of it. He was not an iconoclast and he was not anti-social. He was the opposite: he respected civic institutions, including civic religion. He was profoundly 'social', both in the ordinary sense of spending time with people, and in the more abstract sense of benevolence toward his fellow man. He criticized other philosophers for doing what he had done in his own youth: concentrating exclusively on Nature. Modern science is an extension of the work of such Greeks as Thales, Parmenides and Pythagoras. But Socrates thought that the most important thing man could study was not Nature, but Man himself. Socrates' way of studying Man, however, had little in common with what are sometimes referred to as the 'humanistic', or 'soft', sciences: sociology, psychology and so on. Sociology and psychology, in their contemporary forms, have become branches of that philosophical direction criticized by Socrates: exclusive concentration on Nature. Sociology and psychology, thus animated by scientism, treat Man as part of Nature, a

sort of animal whose doings may be understood using the same methods, and on the basis of the same metaphysics*, as the objects of chemistry, geology or biology. But for Socrates, what counted about Man was Spirit. It was Man's capacity to apprehend Truth which separated him from the rest of nature, 'ennobled' him, and made him the highest object of study.

In the modern era the Socratic philosophical tradition has been broken. Up until the last few centuries philosophy retained the distinction between spirit and matter, and between Man and the rest of the Natural world (of which he was, of course, also seen as a part). The Socratic tradition is what gives élan to the great medieval theologues, as well as to the Humanism of the Renaissance. In these traditions spirit and matter are neither one, nor radically separate, but have a hierarchical relationship in which spirit dominates. Modern science eliminates both this dominance, and spirit itself.

So, with the inebriating success of modern science, philosophy—in the Socratic sense—lost its primacy, and the ancient philosophy regained ascendancy. It is known today as 'science'. It cannot be said that the ancient philosophy (that of Pythagoras and the others) is not an aspect of Western Civilization: it is. The ancient philosophy is openness to, and consequent knowledge and demystification of, the natural world. But one of the things that gave Western Civilization its tone was what might be called the 'Socratic correction' of ancient philosophy. The ancient philosophers had an acid-like effect on society. They dissolved traditions and therefor confused people, and were thus considered dangerous. Aristophanes' *The Clouds* is about this very issue (with Socrates cast in the rôle of ancient-style philosopher!). The science of today, including 'soft science', is utterly materialistic. The notion of spirit, and therefor the notion of 'persons' as opposed to mere evolved animals, is absent. It is mainly the stubborn resistance of reality itself that stops the 'scientific' view of Man—Man as merely another natural phenomenon like rocks or

* The 'metaphysics' of modern science is materialism. Metaphysics is a word invented by Aristotle, meaning 'beyond physics'. Metaphysics is therefore the study of what lies beyond Nature (the sensible world of matter and force). The famous metaphysical view presented by Socrates in Plato's *Republic*, is that there is an 'ideal form', or spiritual model, that underlies each actual material thing (note that Plato's Socrates presents other metaphysical views in other circumstances). The metaphysics of Christianity is that God is the source of things, and even of being itself. The metaphysics of scientism is not really a metaphysics at all in the strict sense, but a rejection of the concept of metaphysics. There is nothing 'behind' nature. For modern science, what you see is what you get.

trees—from triumphing everywhere. Still, for many, Man is no longer a 'person' in the full sense. For many of these people animals, and even plants, are as much persons as Man—if the term 'person' carries any conviction at all. Human life no longer inspires a particular and mysterious awe, and the 'scientific' view thus inevitably scores local triumphs, like euthanasia, abortion, human cloning, and 'ethnic cleansing'†, not to mention breast enlargement, nose dis-enlargement, performance enhancing, mood altering drugs, and so forth. Most of these things, at least to the extent and in the ways they are used and practiced at the moment, are incompatible with the older paradigm, whereby the body is the temple of the soul.

When the Socratic philosophic tradition was broken, the defense of the 'human person'—to the extent it was carried on outside the Church—escaped into the Arts. Starting in the 19th century, writers, and novelists in particular, took up the task of teaching us what we are. Such writers as Hugo and Balzac, Dostoevsky and Tolstoi, Dickens, Hardy and Conrad perpetuated, by the example of how they spent their own lives (in the study of Man), as much as in their writing itself, the Socratic understanding that Man is the proper study of man: that he is a unique being, both part, and not part, of Nature. But, in the 20th century, this last perpetuation of the Socratic tradition died out. The Arts succumbed to the waves of Modernism, becoming first enfeebled or deformed, and then converted to the materialistic metaphysic. I will not here articulate these complex and painful developments, but come directly to the point: Jack Vance is one of the few artists who has traversed the modernist storm unravaged. Part of the reason his work is great is that it speaks to us from a forgotten place, which might be called the 'Socratic vantage'.

† It will be objected that the phenomena which today go by the names 'ethnic cleansing' and 'racism' are present everywhere and at all times. I do not contest this, but would point out that 'inter-ethnic genocide', before the great triumphs of scientism in the 19th century, was simply 'xenophobic murderousness'—in other words, a typical form of human nastiness. But, with the triumph of modernism (by which I here mean scientism and a material metaphysic), xenophobic murderousness gained a 'scientific' base, as witness the various 19th and 20th century racial theories—which should not be mistaken with the confusion caused in the past when races encountered each other for the first time, and were xenophobically unsure of the metaphysical status of odd-looking strangers. We enter the 21st century dragging the ball and chain of a new, horrific, yet widely accepted theory of 'personhood' according to which only some degree of 'self realization' makes a 'human' a 'person'. According to these theories, which are comforted and promoted in such places as Princeton University, Alzheimer patients in advanced stages, completely insane people, or babies at whatever selected stage of development (take your pick), can be liquidated at no moral cost.

Are there no other such artists presently at work? It should be emphasized that there are, in any case, few artists, living or dead, who command as much poetic power or such a broad humanistic vision as Vance. Secondly, and to respond more directly to the question: no, there are very few. Popular literature may, with the exception of Vance, be more or less dismissed. These writers, whatever their qualities, lack either a full dose of poetic power, or a truly humanist vision. What about 'serious literature'? Take a writer like Umberto Eco, one of my favorite examples of the poverty of contemporary Art because of the combination of his popular success, 'succès d'estime' and artistic worthlessness. Eco is both desiccated and baroque. He apes richness with complication, and depth of thought and feeling with smart-alec sophistication, which, once stripped away, is found to mask mere intellectual conformity with the prejudices of the day.

But there are real artists. One would be Solzhenitsyn; a giant, whom the intellectual elitists have been doing their best to discredit (witness his absence from the public stage since the furor over his notorious Harvard address). Yet he is alive, and working! Solzhenitsyn, however, does not need our help. He has already made a deep impression on our culture, and he has thousands of allies who will do for him all that can be done. As for Vance: at the moment he only has us.

Solzhenitsyn was the most important pro-Western voice to come out of Russia during the Cold War. It was impossible, for the people who count most (the intelligent and honest), to read him and remain sympathetic to Communism. The Cold War, as not everyone is aware, was a real war which took place all over the world from 1945 until 1989. The body count was in the millions. The battles were fought in Korea, Vietnam, many parts of Africa, the Middle East, Central and Southern America, and even included flare-ups in Europe (such as the 1947 Communist coup in France, or the suppression of the 'Prague Spring'). Most of these wars have been labeled 'colonial wars' by communist propaganda, a label that has been made to stick‡. This is exemplary of the deeper aspect of the Cold War, the propaganda battle between Communism and the West. Solzhenitsyn, on the propa-

‡ This label, however, does not fit and is becoming unglued. 'Post colonialism' has been, for the most part, a disaster. The majority of post-colonialist governments have been more or less Marxist and such countries are almost all in a state of chaos, misery, or mutation toward a more Western model, for better or worse. The dishonest tactic of blaming all post-colonial difficulty on the after-effects of colonialism itself, is crypto-paternalistic, because it treats post-colonial people like children incapable of running their own affairs. However, at one

ganda front, was as valuable to the West as nuclear superiority was on the military front. Though the Cold War was won by the West, most of the local battles were won by Communism, and the ruins, both material, intellectual and spiritual, are still far from being cleared away: in fact this work has not even really begun. The great success of the West in the Cold War was to avoid the worst, to hold Communism's tyrannical worldwide ambitions in check. In his Harvard lecture, which was closely attended to by pro-Western Americans, Solzhenitsyn not only, as expected, demolished Communism, but—terrible surprise!—fustigated America and the West as a whole. Solzhenitsyn's critique of the West, however, had nothing to do with the Communist critique. He attacked the West not for being 'imperialist' and 'capitalist' but for its galloping atheism and materialism. It should be carefully noted that, though atheism and materialism, as virtues, pre-date Marx, they are both first-order Communist virtues. Solzhenitsyn turned out to be a practicing and convinced Russian Orthodox Christian, and his critique of the West, like the Popes', was Christian-based. However, large parts of the non-Communist left, and even some parts of the non-Communist non-left, are anti-Christian. These parts dominate almost all Western educational institutions and media, and largely determine the content of public debate. But Solzhenitsyn's work, like Jane Austen's—daughter of an Anglican minister—is profoundly informed by Christianity.

Christianity, with Greek openness, is the other major element in Western Culture. I will not elaborate on this here, except to acknowledge that Vance is not a 'Christian' author in the sense of Jane Austen and Solzhenitsyn. However, though Vance himself may be an atheist, and there are a certain number of jabs at religion in his writing, his work cannot be characterized as 'anti-Christian'. I will reserve my ideas on Vance and religion for a different essay, mentioning here only that several of the basic ingredients of Christianity, which are also at the foundation of Western culture, are present in the work of Jack Vance.

The situation of Western culture at the moment is, in my opinion, precarious. To say nothing of Art—or culture in the primary sense—our humanity itself is under attack. To me the work of Jack Vance is a salubrious force in this situation. It has been so, to an important extent, in

level, the critique is correct: had it not been for the aggressive Communist propaganda of the Cold War (obviously a Western phenomenon, though not exactly a flower of Western civilization!), much post-colonial tragedy could have been avoided, quite apart from the fact, or moral status, of de-colonialization itself.

my own life: so much so that I, like many others, am devoting myself to the VIE. Though it teaches no lessons directly—which is part of its charm—Vance’s work seduces irresistibly into a world impregnated with important truths, and is, I continue to believe, an antidote to some of the worst errors of our time.

Paul Rhoads

The Space Station

The International Space Station (the ISS, or just the Station) is now in orbit and home to three astronauts. As it happens, it’s easy to see in the night sky, and there are some Web-based tools to help you locate it. It’s a neat thing to see, since it’s quite bright, and moves quickly. A typical pass might take less than 10 minutes, so if you plan to watch, you’ll need to set a wristwatch carefully, and be prompt. If you have a compass handy, or know the cardinal points around your viewing site, that’s also a big help.

Because the orbital inclination of the ISS is so high (a little greater than 50 degrees) the station may be seen in latitudes of 50 degrees above and below the equator, which accounts for most of the population of the planet. If you live within 50 degrees or so of the equator, you can see the Station pass overhead.

However, you do need sunlight on the ISS in order to see it. This means you can only see the ISS during “orbital day.” And of course, we need a relatively dark sky to see the Station, so your only chance is between sunrise and sunset. One last factor makes sightings tricky: the Station orbits so low that good geometry to see the Station is only to be had a little after sunset, and a little before sunrise.

Finding the Station

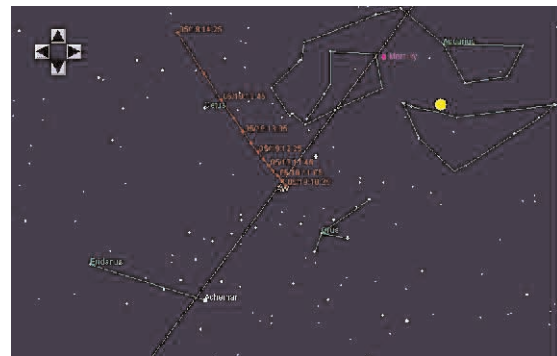
It’s a bit of tricky business to calculate the orbit of the Station, so NASA and other organizations have a number of tools to predict just where the Station will be at any given time. Some of these programs are also capable of keeping track of where the Sun is, and what time it is on Earth, so that they can be used to predict whether or not the Station is visible at any point on Earth.

There are two good sites that I know of on the Web for sighting information. For cities in the US, you can look at <http://www.bester.com/satpasses.htm#iss>. This site will provide you with a textual description of passes by

your selected city, and indicate which passes will be visible to the naked eye. The listing indicates where on the horizon the Station will appear, how high overhead the Station will be at its peak, and when the Station will disappear (usually because it has entered orbital night.)

For graphic information, information for cities around the world, or completely arbitrary points on the Earth’s surface, visit <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/realdata/sightings/index.html>. This is a NASA site which has interesting features.

If you are outside the US but near a major city, you may find your city listed here. A few clicks later you will know the date and time of the next visible pass of the ISS. There’s also a feature to obtain a star chart showing the path the Station will take through the night sky. This is neat for kids, who may wish to see just how close the prediction and the event are to one another. (Usually pretty close!) Here’s a sample sky chart:



If you are far from a major city, the NASA site allows you to enter your latitude and longitude, and the difference between local time and GMT. Then it will calculate visible Station passes just for you, along with the information available for the “canned” cities.

This ability to customize the passage information is more useful than you think. Again, thanks to the low orbit of the Station (it flies “only” 220 miles, or 350 kilometers over your head), you don’t have to move far on the earth’s surface before the prediction for a given city becomes inaccurate. Clearly, if your home isn’t in view of the Station, you can’t see the Station either. And moving only 50 miles will alter the position in the sky of the station drastically.

Another issue is related to stray light in the sky. Knowing visible passes over Paris or New York may not be useful, depending on the amount of stray light thrown up into the dusty air over a city. If you can’t see stars, you won’t likely see the Station. You may have to get outside the city to see the vehicle on its route.

Sighting the Station

Now, let's assume you have a date, time, and the position on the horizon for the next passage of the Station near you. The time is the easy part: make sure your wristwatch or other timepiece is within 30 seconds or so of some good time standard. . . some passes are over in a few minutes.

You'll know the azimuth, or point on the horizon from which the Station will appear, from the tables on the Web sites. A compass will help here, unless you are pretty familiar with the cardinal points of the compass for your viewing spot. Don't make the mistake I did one evening, and try to sight from my office, only a few miles from my home. I misjudged true north by about 45 degrees, and only my girlfriend's quick eyes picked up the station for me that night.

Don't worry about mistaking the Station for an airplane. Have a look some night, and you'll see why. . .

R. C. Lacovara



DD: So Far So Good

Last fall I received from the Textual Integrity team the following list (with a couple of addendums) of first priority items for DD. Our charge is to obtain 3 usefully different OCR's for each item. The table on the right indicates our progress so far.

As you can see, we've made some progress, but as you can also see, we have a long way to go (and this list doesn't include all the VIE volumes).

Let me once again make a plea: please volunteer for DD duty. I promise I'll work your tail off, *if you let me*. I also promise that you'll have to tell me 'no' only once. In the unlikely event that you have OCR software and no scanner, or do not care to do delicate DD scanning work, I can still use you. We need lots of pure OCR-work, and I can send you a CD-ROM containing scans needing OCR-ing. These are usually pretty easy to OCR: the time-consuming and tedious work of scanning has already been done. DD doctrine calls for the widest variety of OCR technology to be brought to bear on the DD scans, so even older programs can be very useful to DD. Depending on the OCR program you have, OCR-ing can be done 'manually' (as with TextBridge 9, which can be set to ask

for your help with stuff it thinks it doesn't recognize—it won't ask about what it thinks it can recognize!). Other programs only do the work automatically.

Once again, Please Volunteer for DD! Right now, all the work is being done by about 10 people. If this continues, it will mean that completion of the VIE will be delayed. To translate this into words of one syllable: you won't get yours so soon!

(C = complete, IP = in progress)

JACK VANCE WORK	OCR1	OCR2	OCR3
Araminta Station	-	-	-
Blue World	C	-	-
Book of Dreams	C	-	-
City of the Chasch	IP	-	-
Dark Ocean	C	C	C
Deadly Isles	C	-	-
Dirdir	-	-	-
Eight Fantasms	-	-	-
Emphyrio	IP	IP	IP
Eyes of the Overworld	C	-	-
Face	C	IP	-
Fox Valley Murders	C	IP	-
Gift of Gab	C	C	C
Green Magic	C	C	C
Green Pearl	-	-	-
House on Lily Street	IP	C	C
Kragen	-	-	-
Last Castle	C	C	-
Magnificent Riverboats	-	-	-
Men Return	C	-	-
Nopalgarth	-	-	-
Palace of Love	-	-	-
Pleasant Grove Murders	IP	-	-
Pnume	-	-	-
Rapparee	C	-	-
Rhialto the Marvellous	-	-	-
Roguskhoi	-	-	-
Rumfuddle	C	C	C
Sanatoris Short-cut	C	-	-
Servants of the Wankh	IP	-	-
Space Opera	-	-	-
Strange People	C	C	C
Vandals of the Void	-	-	-
View from Chickweed's	IP	IP	-
Wyst	C	C	C

Richard Chandler



Proofreading Update

No newbies have snuck into the one-hundred-thousand-word club this month, but completed assignments have changed the internal order. The VIE is grateful for the dedication of its volunteers; and I express my thanks to Suan Yong for the following table:

NAME	WORDS
Steve Sherman.....	1,319,200
David A Kennedy.....	874,499
Michel Bazin.....	620,000
Suan Yong.....	449,000
Till Noever.....	432,799
Ronald A Chernich.....	378,600
John A Schwab.....	345,199
Christian J Corley.....	310,800
Rob Friefeld.....	269,000
Patrick Dusoulier.....	249,000
Peter Bayley.....	246,800
Rob Gerrand.....	237,200
Deborah Cohen.....	216,100
Evert Jan C de Groot.....	200,000
Dave Worden.....	194,899
Richard Chandler.....	191,000
Tim Stretton.....	181,899
Lee Lewis.....	176,100
Jeffrey A Ruszczyk.....	170,699
R C Lacovara.....	147,099
Richard Linton.....	127,699
Jody Kelly.....	127,600
Erik Arendse.....	126,100
David Mead.....	115,400
Gabriel Stein.....	107,199
Linnea Anglemark.....	102,799

Last month I wrote about how we intend to implement PostProofing—that is, proofreading after Composition. We’ve been kicking some ideas back and forth since then, and, while nothing is final, we’re closer to having our methods in place. I want to thank John Foley and Paul Rhoads for valuable suggestions in the preparation of this article.

The first rule of the game is that PostProofing will be done from hardcopy: goodbye Word docs! This is

because, first of all, once a VIE volume is composed it is, to use VIE jargon, ‘owned’ by the Composition team, under John Foley. The composed volumes will be made available for proofing in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) and can only be opened, like Cosmopolis, with Acrobat Reader. (This program can be downloaded free from Adobe’s website: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>. Most of you will already have it, unless you’re reading this in the HTML version.) Some of these files will be very large—as much as four megabytes—and PDF files don’t compress very well, so WinZip won’t help us. If need be, we will send these files either on CD or as hard copy, by regular mail. If received as an electronic document, the proofreader must print the file, because PostProofing output will be ‘marked-up’ hardcopy. But we do not want the whole script back, just the pages where you have found problems. As a PostProofer you must make copies of those pages with your marks, and send these pages, by regular mail, to the designated collator (who may be the composer, or someone else) of the 10 proofs. Some of the reasons for sending copies are: 1) because nothing more is needed, 2) to make mailing less onerous, 3) so that PostProofers retain a complete copy of their work, as a permanent archive in case of loss in the mails or some other mishap. Composition will correct the set-up volumes from the collated errata.

While, as much as possible, we want One Job to equal One Volume, for proofreaders who prefer not to work on large texts, we will try to make smaller jobs available: individual stories, or shorter novels from volumes containing several novels.

Regular mail runs us up against the barrier that the Internet has been saving us from up until now: the world-wide distribution of our volunteers. We will try to organize things so that people are not mailing big envelopes of paper all over the world. Though we hope people will pay for their own stamps, if necessary the project can help with your postage bills.

I’ve had positive reactions to my remarks last month about deadlines, and I want to thank those proofreaders who sent them. PostProofing is the *VIE*’s homestretch; if it becomes a bottleneck publication will be delayed. Our plan is to ask for a commitment from PostProofers of, on average, an hour a day of *VIE* work. For some this will seem like a vacation; for others, it may be too much. However, it is absolutely necessary: late jobs will be of no use to us. We have to get through all our work in order. As each new text comes out of TI it must get com-

posed, and then post-proofed, at which point final corrections will be inserted. Then we must move on to new texts. For the next year and a half we will be on a fast treadmill and will not have time to create new work loops for errata that come in late.

Using the methods described in *Cosmopolis 8*, I proof-read about 10 Word pages per hour, and can turn around a short story in a week with no difficulty. Therefore a long novel, of say 250 pages, takes about 25 hours, or about five weeks. There will be some flexibility, but assignments of such a novel must be completed within a range of four to seven weeks, and PostProofers must commit to such deadlines for each job. It's asking a lot, but we'll be in it all together, and in the end we will have done something we can be proud of for the rest of our lives.

There will be exceptions to the ten-jobs-per-volume rule. People who know a lot more about it than I do tell me that a two-person proof, where each holds a copy of the text and one reads to the other, is significantly more effective than a one-person proof. So we will encourage volunteers to make themselves available for two-person proofs (Joel and Robin, I'm thinking of you!). If you're interested but don't know any other VIE volunteers in your neck of the woods, we can help with proofreader matchmaking.

As I noted last week, the end of PreProofing is in sight. There are, as I write, still 30 assignments outstanding, and I expect there will be about 20 more before we're done. *Night Lamp* and *Ports of Call* have only just entered the system, and we are all waiting with bated breath for *Lurulu*. The number of assignments completed stands at 300—ten and a half million words—a truly remarkable accomplishment in just a little over a year. Proofers, you can be proud of what you have achieved, but it is no reason for complacency: 135 texts times 10 proofs is 1350 jobs! Clean your glasses, sharpen your pencils, turn on a strong a light: let's read some Vance!

Steve Sherman
Proofreading Team Lead

Letters to the Editor

Dear *Cosmopolis*:

I saw Steve's article in *Cosmopolis* and wanted to comment. While I also disagree from time to time with what I see from Paul Rhoads (I wrote in criticizing early versions

of the font, for example, although it seems to have improved considerably and now has charm) he has some really fascinating comments as well that I want to touch on below.

Whatever your position on his essays, however, one must remain completely in awe of the VIE effort. I've never heard of anything like this being carried off before. What a bold and ambitious project—and to do it purely with fans, not just a few fans but so many fans in so many countries, and to the level of quality you are pursuing—it's colossal!

I hope that you and the other volunteers are not disheartened by any criticism you may receive. Surely I represent the overriding sentiment of subscribers when I express, notwithstanding any such quibbles, a deep gratitude and appreciation and tremendous enthusiasm for what the VIE team is doing. November 2002 cannot come soon enough for me, and will make the Christmas shopping that year very easy for my family. I am sure I will treasure the VIE on my shelf for the rest of my life, the more so because I will have had a glimpse through *Cosmopolis* of the intense love and effort *it* received. You are all to be congratulated for such a bold and groundbreaking project.

Further, I did greatly admire Paul's wonderful essay in the last *Cosmopolis*. It was unbelievably lucid. I particularly enjoyed the balance of his gentle but wry dissections of Tonio (had me grinning like an idiot—sorry Tonio) against the serious passages, where he defined science fiction and literature and ultimately, shares his passion for Vance's work. The line of thought expanded my perspective so I could see why he was saying Vance is not a science fiction writer. Further, I begin to agree with him.

Two of his themes that I really liked were (1) Man as the essential literary subject and (2) the triad of observation/reality, feeling/caring, and expressiveness/art. When he built from that foundation to connect with Vance's special ability in world construction and Vance's focus on humanity, this created for me the vision of an artist who uses the conventions of science fiction only because he wants to distill reality into concentrated aspects—which necessarily demands a non-real world. What could be better than another planet for this, just as many science fiction writers create? But, Vance does so with such detail that the result is believable and inhabitable by real human beings. Lacking the scaffold of an ordinary world, it may be the careful precision of Vance's prose that best reinforces this reality. This

realism pulls him back into a zone where he really can comment on Man in a way relevant to us on Earth, even though the action takes place elsewhere.

And so across such fantastic landscapes of warped yet human characters and societies, Vance asks us to follow a protagonist, often a traveler, who remains our rudder of normalcy. To propel the hero through the story Vance may use various devices, often a mystery, but this gives us a reason to visit the scenery more than anything else—I don't think plots are his main legacy. Instead, where Vance achieves his Art is in his expression of how the protagonist interacts on a human level with his surroundings—including the strange settings and perplexing locals. What makes his specific Art so pleasing—and instills such passions in the VIE volunteers I would bet—is what Vance tells us is best about Man in these stories. For me, it is a message of self-reliance, and intelligence, and decency, and perseverance (though some characters speak better by counterexample—Cugel comes to mind). Vance's future is a hopeful one.

If literature is about Man, then perhaps Vance's contribution to literature is his use of science fiction trappings to put human beings into near-real settings, the better to reveal their humanity.

Phew! As you can see, it's not just the VIE staff that deserves thanks, but also the *Cosmopolis* team for bringing us fun and thought-provoking articles.

Thanks again.

Russ Wilcox

Notes from Management

Down-Payment

This time it really is going to happen! We thought we could be ready to make the call earlier; it turns out to have taken us longer. This is mostly due to the facts that we'd like to be sure that everyone's deposit is properly accounted for, and receipted, and also that everyone, including non-US subscribers, will have the option of paying by credit card.

But all the structures necessary to receive payments, in full security and efficiency, are at last falling into place. The call will soon be made, by e-mail direct to each subscriber. Forgive our delay. For those of you who have been clamoring at the door to hand us money: the time is soon upon you, but thank you for your enthu-

siasm. There have been distractions of various kinds, including arrangement of the Oakland TI conference (Feb. 10-11). Text work, at least, is proceeding apace!

Stay alert for the call, which should be out . . . soon!

Management

The VIE E-Mail Lists

The VIE maintains a variety of e-mail lists. Most of these are 'internal' working groups, whose members are active participants. Other lists include our volunteers, the subscribers to *Cosmopolis*, and subscribers to the Edition itself.

These lists are never intentionally disclosed to third parties. Further, the VIE does not make unsolicited contacts to the members of the *Cosmopolis* and Edition lists, except in specific cases. In those cases, the e-mail will be sent by a member of the VIE management, a listing of which appears at the end of each issue of *Cosmopolis*.

For all other communication, *Cosmopolis* is the 'official' voice of the VIE. If you receive unwanted e-mail from the VIE, or from someone who claims to be associated with the VIE, contact Paul Rhoads or me. We have a zero-tolerance approach to unauthorized use of our lists, and will do what we can to prevent such use.

For casual communication among interested parties, we endorse the use of the Vance EZ-Board, which can be located by navigating <http://www.vanceintegral.com>.

Bob Lacovara

Miscellaneous

Crunching up our frosted walkway early one cold morning, I looked up and saw the ISS—that beautiful thing—hurtling east—well worth seeing.

Cosmopolis will be issued every 5–6 weeks, and labeled, possibly eccentrically, with issue numbers and month/year designation.

As usual, we welcome comments/articles/praise/criticism.

Thanks to Joel Anderson, who sets both the *CLS* and *Cosmopolis* in Amiante; and to all our contributors.

Deborah Cohen, Editor

The Cosmopolis Literary Supplement, No. 5

Is now available at the VIE download page:

<http://www.cs.wisc.edu/~suan/vie/cosmo/>

We have further chapters of *Tergan* and *The Zael Inheritance* this time, and a new story in which a suave traveler visits an unusual town, where he learns something of the central dynamic of the universe.

Most readers were probably not aware of this, but *CLS* No.4 was briefly available in an early, non-illustrated version. If you downloaded this and would like to have the official, final edition, it is still posted along with previous numbers of *Cosmopolis* and the *CLS*. Those with an eye to early retirement will not overwrite the first file, however, since this version is bound to be come a collector's item, and will no doubt someday take its place on eBay along with low-production Beanie Babies and 128k Macintoshes, inspiring vigorous bidding wars.

Writers: keep in mind that the *CLS* is currently reading submissions!

Joel Anderson & Paul Rhoads

The Fine Print

Contributions to *Cosmopolis*:

Letters to the editor or essays may be published in whole or in part, with or without attribution, at the discretion of *Cosmopolis*. Send your text to Debbie Cohen.

Cosmopolis Delivery Options

Those who do not wish to receive *Cosmopolis* as an e-mail attachment may request "notification" only.

An HTML version is available at the VIE website. The PDF version of *Cosmopolis*, identical to that distributed via e-mail, is also available at the website. If you wish to have the most current version of the free Adobe Acrobat Reader, follow this link:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>



Cosmopolis is a publication of The Vance Integral Edition, Inc.
All rights reserved. © 2001.



Adobe, Acrobat, and the Acrobat logo are trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated.

VIE Contacts

The VIE web page:

www.vanceintegral.com

Paul Rhoads, Editor-in-Chief:

prhoads@club-internet.fr

Richard Chandler, DD:

chandler@math.ncsu.edu

Christian J. Corley, DDJ:

cjc@vignette.com

John Robinson, Techno-Proofing:

johnange@ix.metcom.com

Steve Sherman, Proofing:

steve.sherman@compaq.com

John Foley, Composition:

johnfoley@lucent.com

Suan Yong, Process Integrity:

suan@cs.wisc.edu

Alun Hughes, Textual Integrity:

a.hughes@newi.ac.uk

Tim Stretton, Textual Integrity:

tim.stretton@bigfoot.com

Deborah Cohen, *Cosmopolis*:

chaschcity@hotmail.com

R. C. Lacovara, Editor Emeritus,
Cosmopolis:

lacovara@infohwy.com